



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

400 City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
www.stpaul.gov/parks

Telephone: 651-266-6400
Facsimile: 651-292-7311

January 27, 2015

Rice Park Revitalization Design Advisory Committee (1/21/2015)

Meeting Location: Landmark Plaza, Saint Paul, MN

6:00 – 8:00pm

Attendees:

Design Advisory Committee: Colleen Fitzpatrick (SPGC), Dave Haley (Parks Commission), Andrea McKennan (Central Library), David Lilly (Ordway), Nancy Huart (Travelers), Amy Mino (Landmark Center), Timothy Wolfgram (in lieu of Kathy Ross),

Missing Committee Members: Greg Fouks (JJ Hill Library), Ruth Huss (resident- landmark towers)

Other: Kevin Murphy, Gigi Williams, Jeff Bartlett (Lighting Designer), Anne Gardner (Staff-Saint Paul Parks), Tim Griffin (Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation/Capitol River Council Representative), Amy Spong (HPC), John and Colles Larkin, Catherine Nicholson, Christine Umhoefer

Meeting #1 Goal:

Review design goals, 2 concept plans and precedent images, provide feedback to city staff, select one plan to develop for the final meeting and open house.

- 1) Introductions and meeting #1 recap-
 - a. Anne Gardner welcomed the group and individuals introduced themselves and who they represented.
 - b. Meeting #1 recap- Review of meeting #1

- 2) Historical Significance -
 - a. Since meeting #1, the period of significance has been determined as 1849 – 1936. Amy Spong elaborated on this to explain what this means to the design process.
 - i. Make sure that the park design negatively impact the eligibility status of the Rice park historic district or the impacts to the historical character
 - ii. Look at details and cues to bring back lost features and enhance the historic character of the park and district
 - b. Review of historic photos available during this time to see the character of the park, particularly looking at the paving, seating, urns, entry columns, flower bed configuration, and open quality of the park because of shade trees

3) Design Goals –



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- a. Based on the discussion from the previous meetings, survey results, and discussion, the design goals for this project are:
 - i. Enclose – Preserve the sense of enclosure from the building as a significant historic feature of the park.
 - 1. Selectively remove trees to preserve sightlines to buildings and maintain sense of enclosure
 - ii. Invite – Create a welcoming and safe place for all users
 - 1. Reinforce entry points and edges
 - 2. Improve lighting and decrease hiding places by selectively removing trees
 - iii. Upgrade – Improve infrastructure to support operation staff and programmed use of space
 - 1. Upgrade irrigation and electrical system for improved lawn and to accommodate events
 - iv. Accommodate – Maintain space for large events but also provide space for small groups and ‘conversational seating’
 - 1. Provide seating for small groups to sit for lunch such as moveable tables and chairs
 - v. Consolidate – Organize and limit the number of monuments and plaques on site
 - 1. Design a location for all significant plaques and historical signs
- 4) Precedent Projects
- a. Review of precedent projects: Bryant Park, Place des Vosges, Agnes Katz Plaza, Post Office Square, Squares of Savannah, Georgia,
- 5) Presentation of Plans and Preliminary Sketch up Studies
- a. Sketch up model developed for neighborhood study – will be developed further for final plans
 - b. Process includes: internal meetings with public works, police, HPC, and operations to gain feedback on questions from meeting #1. Internal charrette with design staff to develop concept plans.
 - c. Result includes development of two plans:
 - i. Plan 1- The existing fountain remains and the central gathering space is elongated to create room for a grouping of shade trees. A large open lawn in the south half of the site accommodates large group gatherings. A secondary pathway crosses midway through the site.
 - ii. Plan 2 – A secondary pathway bisects the site to create more options for moving through the space. The park is subdivided into additional flexible space for seating, group gatherings, or performances. Shade trees are arranged inside the central space to provide shade and create comfortable seating.
- 6) Discussion and comments:
- a. Relate to Landmark Plaza and acquaint with the Gordon Parks
 - b. Contact U of M Agronomy department regarding new developments in turf grass
 - c. Concept 2 - Bosque to sit under is a nice idea
 - d. Make sure pathways are wider
 - e. Safety is a concern
 - f. Trees- ginkos are a nice tree- reconsider the removal. Add Japanese maples
 - g. Corners- need to be addressed and developed with more detail
 - h. Stormwater- where will it be treated? Can it go in the trenches where the trees are?
 - i. River meander- it flows through Landmark and then starts again at the Science

Museum. Include a pathway at Rice Park

- j. Wall along 5th street- show more images of what that will be like. Can Landmark connect better to Rice Park across 5th street
- k. Flexible space in the middle area is good
- l. Pergola Structure – can this go in the center area? It could be lighted and draw people in

8) Feedback: Please give preference of which concept plan should be further developed.

i. Committee Members:

1. Amy M. – Pathways are good throughout the site. Both plans have merit, but concept 2 is preferred. Breaking up the paving is positive, but do not add too much more paving. Addition of lighting is needed and can be a focal point.
2. Andrea – Concept 1 preferred. Seating at the south end facing either direction is positive. Concept 2 planting bed is not big enough – needs to be more integrated into the space
3. David L.– Concept 2 preferred. Encourage meeting with the Arts Partners. Make the north end more ‘pours’ and connected to Landmark across 5th street. Careful ‘thinning’ of shade trees. Connect and relate to Landmark Plaza
4. Dave H.- Concept 2 preferred. Circular concept is preferred. Add garden plantings on the east and west
5. Nancy H. – Concept 2 preferred
6. Colleen – Concept 2 preferred. Safety issue is a big concern. Sign lines throughout the park- limb up trees. Address north end to relate to Landmark Center- open up and connect. Add fence at corners.

ii. Non- committee members:

1. Jeff – Concept 2 preferred. Curving cross path is preferred. It is positive to break up the paving area. Open flexible structure in the center could attract and activate the space
2. Tim – Concept 2 preferred. Present sections of diagonal paths. Add activity and light in the center of it. Explore structure in the center of the building
3. Catherine – Consider adding grass around the fountain. Add better seating around fountain. Globe lighting gives character. Trees to be selectively removed.
4. Amy Spong- Follow up later with Anne
5. John – Japanese maples could be added to the site
6. Colles – Ordway entrance needs to relate to the park design. Framed along street opposite Ordway. Crescent alongside opportunity for gardens

9) Next steps:

- a. Develop concept plan 2 with comments above particularly:
 - i. Develop corners with more detail
 - ii. Selectively remove trees for the strength of the project
 - iii. Garden plantings- strengthen form, shape, and planting theme
 - iv. Stormwater design
- b. Prepare preliminary cost estimate:

10) Upcoming Events :

- a. Gordon Parks Memorial Reception – January 27 (4:30-6:30) at Landmark Center
- b. February 28, Ordway opening
- c. Next meeting: March 4, 2015
- d. Public Open House: April 1, 2015 (tentative)

Notes by: Anne Gardner – 1/29/2015