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CITY OF SAINT PAUL

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March 4, 2015

Rice Park Revitalization Design Advisory Committee (3/03/2015)

Meeting Location: Landmark Plaza, Saint Paul, MN

3:00 – 5:00pm

Attendees:

Design Advisory Committee: Colleen Fitzpatrick (SPGC), Andrea McKennan (Central Library), David Lilly, Jr. (Ordway), Nancy Huart (Travelers), Amy Mino (Landmark Center), Timothy Wolfram (MN Wild/Xcel Center - in lieu of Kathy Ross), Greg Fouks (JJ Hill Library), Ruth Huss (resident- landmark towers), Tim Griffin (Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation/Capitol River Council Representative), Pat Steineman (St Paul Hotel), Betsy Kelly (SPGC)

Missing Committee Members: Dave Haley (Parks Commission)

Other: Jeff Bartlett (Lighting Designer), Anne Gardner (Staff- Saint Paul Parks), Diane Voyda (Staff- Saint Paul Parks), Stacy Gillings (Staff- Saint Paul Parks), Mark Granlund (Staff- Saint Paul Parks), Jody Martinez (Staff- Saint Paul Parks), Don Ganje (Staff- Saint Paul Parks), Patricia Mitchell (Ordway), Jack Becker (Forecast), Gigi Williams (St Paul Garden Club), Catherine Nicholson (St Paul Garden Club), other garden club members and public

Meeting #3 Goal:

- Review and approve updated concept plan***
- Committee to make final recommendations or suggestions for open house***
- Review next steps for the project.***

- 1) Introductions-
 - a. Anne Gardner welcomed the group- design advisory committee member and staff around the front table. Individuals introduced themselves and who they represented.
- 2) Review and Recap:
 - a. Design Advisory Committee role - Anne Gardner reviewed the role of the Design Advisory committee
 - b. Recap from Meeting 1 & 2 –
 - i. Meeting 1- Site analysis, survey results, Historical significance
 - ii. Meeting 2- Presentation of 2 Concept plans
- 3) Presentation of Concept Plan



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- a. The concept plan activates Rice Park by adding a central space for activities and gatherings. The park is visually open and offers new experience to Rice Park with a new pathway, colorful display gardens, flexible seating options, and engaging light features throughout the park
 - b. Overall layout- The layout is very much the same as what exists currently. However, the pathways are adjusted to be a true diagonal and narrowed to 18' width. An additional arcing pathway enables an east/west connection to guide people through the park. Additional gardens are added around perimeter and at corners. Entry corners are reinforced with a new arc form and low seat wall to be an entry monument. Central space is opened up visually north south by removing trees to improve sightlines from Landmark Center to Central library. A central gathering flexible stage space is elevated by 1' max for seating, performance, weddings, etc. Trees are introduced in the central circle area to offer shade to visitors.
 - c. Paving and Pathways- There has been a strong call for a paving material that can withstand the extreme use of large events. Hexagonal paving pattern (available in different material options is available) is proposed for parts of the park and relates to the history of the city. Stamped concrete, granite pavers, or bituminous pavers are proposed with additional research as to the best option. Pathway widths meets the operation requirements of 10' minimum for clearing.
 - d. Plantings, Furnishings, Monuments- Display gardens are proposed as the second ring around the existing yews. The views from Saint Paul Hotel and the Ordway will be towards these bright colorful display gardens- offering interesting views into the park from the East and west side. The gardens on the north side are adjusted and remove almost all of the turf in that area. Turf on the south side will be reinforced and irrigated to better accommodate large crowds and events.
 - e. Lighting-Globe lanterns are required for this area (confirming with HPC staff) and will be replaced as needed along the pathways. Bollard or path lighting that gives a 'wash effect' on surfaces will be proposed to highlight pathways. Where possible, lighting will be integrated into other elements such as benches, columns, walls, stairs
 - f. Lighting- Artistic- Interactive lighting is proposed for the fountain, pathways, trees to offer changeable features that mark time and space as people pass through the park. LED lights are proposed to add interest in the fountain where current fixtures do not work. Jeff Bartlett will take the next steps towards developing the lighting concepts for 'Entice into Rice'
- 4) Discussion and comments related to the plan presentation:
- a. Pathway is a 'meander' through the park
 - b. 'Scramble' option at intersection of 5th and Market Area – more planning for the pedestrian circulation at the east corner
 - c. Consider speaking with district energy about snowmelt in new path
 - d. Lighting is important to safety of park
 - e. What is the size of lawn and how many people does it sit
 - f. Linden allees are too dense and dark- future tree replacement will consider a different tree species, but current plan will leave them in place
 - g. Consider adding more interpretive signs to talk about buildings. One idea is to use the columns and inscribe or integrate artful interpretive signage
 - h. Lighting colors should be elegant and classic to relate to the space. Plan shows pinks and purple- not the right color palette
 - i. Stages- Seems unfortunate to remove trees to allow space for a temporary stage. Noise is loud regardless of where the stage goes for the Winter Carnival or other events. Having two stage locations seems inefficient

- j. Lighting needs to provide the safety and security in the park at night
 - k. Utility box can be buried in a vault and will remove the vertical box in the center of the park space
 - l. Portable garden for the garden in front of the stage.
 - m. A place to store the tables and chairs (under the stage?) Chairs could be blown away.
 - n. New benches should prevent people from sleeping on them.
 - o. Signage with historic value
 - p. Cigarettes litter issue
 - q. Garden beds/ raised beds could help to hide the sources for light features and deter people from walking through them
- 8) Rough Budget & Phasing
- a. Budget is based on concept plan and does include design time to prepare drawings. 1% included for public art
 - b. Priorities for phasing of installation would follow the natural order of construction: demo, electrical, irrigation, and lighting.
 - c. Possible funding sources for the project include: CIB request, private donations, grants. Funding is not identified for this project at this time.
- 9) Feedback: Is there consensus for moving forward with the concept plan presented?
- i. Committee Members:
 - 1. Amy M. – accept
 - 2. Andrea – left before voting
 - 3. Ruth – left before voting
 - 4. David L.– does not endorse the plan as it is. Path takes away too much green space
 - 5. Nancy H. – yes
 - 6. Colleen – yes
 - 7. Pat – yes
 - 8. Betsy- yes
 - 9. Tim G- yes
 - 10. Tim W- yes
 - 11. Greg-yes
 - ii. Non- committee members:
 - 1. Raised planters are easier to maintain
 - 2. Add lighting and activity in the park and people will come!
 - iii. SUMMARY: In general, the majority of the group endorsed moving forward with the concept plan to be used for fundraising. Concept Plan will be detailed for installation once funding is available for construction. The changes on the plan from what exists currently includes: a new pathway, additional gardens, lighting features, irrigation upgrade, and improvement an upgrade of current paving and plantings. Parks staff will proceed with the concept plan and develop details in the next phase of construction document development.
- 10) Next steps:
- a. Continued conversations:
 - i. Traffic calming along 5th (Public Works and HPC)
 - ii. Homeless Population (Parks Dept to bring to the Design Center)
 - iii. Event needs and electrical upgrades
 - iv. Support lighting artist- Jeff Bartlett and “Entice into Rice” proposal

- v. Garden Club- discuss garden improvement and responsibilities
- vi. Funding- research grant options

11) Upcoming Events :

- a. CIB presentation: March 9, 2015
- b. Public Open House: April 8, 2015 – 5-7pm

Notes by: Anne Gardner – 3/4/2015