Pedro Park Meeting #4 Notes (09/11/2012)
Meeting Location: 81st on 7th, 81 E. 7th St, Saint Paul, MN
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Attendees:
Design Advisory Committee: Kate Swenson (Rossmor), Julia Schrenkler (MPR & Rossmor), Vince Gillespie (The Pointe), Pat Wolf (CRES, Inc.), Marcus Young (Public Arts St. Paul)

Staff: Jody Martinez (Saint Paul Parks), Don Ganje (Saint Paul Parks), Anne Gardner (Saint Paul Parks), Karin Misciewicz (Saint Paul Parks)

Other: Will Weisert (The Pointe), Pat & Gary Mahre (The Pointe), Linda Lette (The Pointe), Carla Smith (The Pointe), Andrea Mathern (The Pointe), David Washburn (resident), Kristina Nelson (CRES, Inc), Pamela Neal (The Pointe)

Meeting #4 Goal:
- Review design goals and objectives, review concept plans for phased park implementation, and gather input from committee members in order to move plans to the next stage of design

1) Welcome – Don Ganje welcomed the group

2) Anne Gardner presented the agenda

3) Anne gave a brief recap of the first three meetings (Oct 25, 2011 and Nov 29, 2011, and May 1, 2012) including a brief summary of the survey results.

4) Anne presented the overall Project Design Goals and also the Design Goals and Objectives developed from previous meetings and the online survey. Goals and Objectives are:
   A. Provide a Park Design which combines elements of “Natural Landscape Design” (informal, organic, asymmetrical) with elements of “Traditional Landscape Design” (formal, structured, symmetrical).
      • Investigate site layout ideas which contrast informal/organic shapes with formal/symmetrical shapes

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Utilize a combination of informal/asymmetrical tree and shrub planting schemes with more structured/symmetrical planting ideas.

B. Develop a Park Design which includes a hierarchy of individual, small group and large group gathering space within an overall family friendly setting.
   a. Provide small seating areas for quiet contemplation
   b. Provide small group gathering areas for neighborhood interaction
   c. Provide open unstructured space for informal recreation

C. Provide a Park Design which emphasizes activities conducive to more passive recreational experiences.
   a. Provide an open and/or enclosed structure for shade such as a gazebo, pergola or conservatory
   b. Provide a space for outdoor performances
   c. Provide a water feature
   d. Provide open lawn area for gatherings

D. Provide a Park Design which is viewed as a “green oasis” from the surrounding urban neighborhood
   a. Surround site with street tree plantings and places to sit and view adjacent park
   b. Provide opportunity for bike parking and a dog run
   c. Relocate bus stop at NW corner of Minnesota and Ninth Street into SW corner of new park
   d. Remove asphalt surrounding childcare center and substitute green space

5) Anne presented the existing land ownership of the block and the proposed buildout of the park to occur in 3 phases:
   a) Step 1 – Temporary park or Pedro Parcel – Donation requirement that this is a park by 2014. All current uses remain.
   b) Step 2 – Half block park – Public Safety Annex is removed and the parking lot land at 10th and Minnesota corner is acquired. Childcare center remains. Remaining block is redeveloped or reconfigured for surface parking lot
   c) Step 3 – U-shaped – All parcels except the Childcare center are converted to park use. Childcare Center building remains

6) Don Ganje presented concept plans
   a) Scheme A – Historic Wall is removed
      Full Block - Half block - Pedro Parcel

   b) Scheme B- Historic wall remains
      Full Block - Half block - Pedro Parcel

7) Discussion & Responses to plans
   a) Lighting – Question was regarding what the plan is for lighting. Response is that we will go with standard downtown lighting for perimeter. Interior lighting will be a part of the next stage in design development
   b) Residents do not want additional assessment to develop the park
C) Seating- There is some concern for safety and presence of homeless people
D) Noise- there is currently a lot of noise from the fire station, bus traffic, and kids in street. Comment was to not increase noise- no big concerts with lots of people. Response was that trees and water will help to mitigate the noise levels
E) Other comments included that having noise is a part of downtown living- park should add to more ‘positive’ noise
F) Question regarding what is the barrier for removal of the public safety annex? Response was that removal and relocation of the building is a priority for the city, but there is no current plan or funding to do so
G) Comment- do not want to compete with Mears Park or create such a large concert space. There is too much noise at Mears Park
H) Comment – it doesn’t make sense to create a pocket park
I) Comment- Like the wall feature (preserving the existing foundation wall and adding water feature)
J) Question regarding dog use: Dog area would be fenced in and separate. Artificial turf will be considered
K) Question: would Plan A or Plan B be easier to build out? Response- The two plans have differences and are probably about the same
L) Question: Does it make sense to keep both the Public safety Annex and the Childcare Center and create a H shaped park? Response: Preference to keep a continuous park area. Keeping both buildings would create areas that are not visible
M) Question: what are the risks of keeping the existing foundation wall and using as a ‘feature’ on site? Response: Unknown- it’s condition requires further evaluation once the Public Safety Annex is torn down. It will require engineering to maintain or preserve it.
N) Suggestion: Create a plan for the next steps for the childcare center building should they decide to go.
O) Question to consider: Is it preferred to have a tax generating parcel on this block?
P) Ramps and walls will deal with grade change where site is not filled.

8) Park Staff listed the following as required feedback for moving forward:
   A) Stone wall- Should the existing stone foundation wall stay as a historic element on the site or should it be removed?
   B) Parking removal- Should parking be incorporated into the long-term planning of the block?
   C) Half-block vs. Full –block- does a half block concept accomplish the goals and objectives? Should we pursue the full block plan?
   D) Grade change/Orientation – A main difference between the two plans is that Option A has the potential to be at grade with the sidewalk. Option B (Stone wall remains) requires the park to be at a lower grade due to the existing stone wall. Which option is preferred?
   E) Design Style- Which option is preferred: A or B?

9) Meeting Attendees attached post-it notes with comments to the different concept plans. Comments will be available on the Pedro Park website.
10) Next Steps:

a) Park staff will gather input and will select one concept to move forward with.
b) Prepare cost estimate for build out.
c) There will be one more committee meeting
d) There will be a final open house to review the final plan.

Notes by Anne Gardner
0918/2012