



March 4th, 2021

MEETING MINUTES

Victoria Park Multi-Use Athletic Field, 852 Thurston St, Saint Paul MN

Virtual Meeting held on Microsoft Teams, 6:00pm to 7:00Pm Thursday, March 4th 2021

If you need translation services please email mary.norton@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Attendees:

Mary Norton- SPPRD Landscape Architect, Project Manager
Brett Hussong SPPRD Lead Landscape Architect
Andy Rodriguez – SPPRD Recreation Services Manager
Karin Misiewicz – SPPRD Operations and Maintenance
Barb Klick – Chief Executive Officer, Sholom
Christian Rovn - Athletic Director, Nova Academy
Eva Hilton- Sholom Resident
Jennifer Verbuegge - Resident
Joe Roedler – Co-Chair St. Paul Blackhawks
John Yust - Resident
Paula Faughender – Resident during Master Plan, Business Association
Sara Chamberlain – Resident, Saint Paul Parks & Recreation Commission
Tanya Beck – District Council Representative
Tonya Johnson-Nicholie – Co-chair during Master Plan

Link to slides shown at meeting: https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2021-03/Victoria-Field_COMMUNITY%20MEETING_20210304.pdf

MEETING NOTES:

Presentation (Mary)

Presented guiding principles and Role of Design Advisory Committee (DAC) and mtg agenda

1. Advisory role to Parks and Recreation
2. Input balanced with larger citywide needs, Parks and Rec Systems & Vision Plan, Great River Passage & permitting



3. Committee members are representing larger interest group. City website will become central source of information
allowing committee members to network and share information.
4. Decisions by consensus, not voting
5. Work respectfully in group setting
6. Understand and balance needs of all park users
7. Join Committee with open-mind and willingness to listen and hear views or ideas

Described City of St Paul Decision making Process

Recapped Master Plan Process in 2012-2013 and adopted by Parks and Recreation Commission. We have identified a funding source and multi-use project. We presented to FRF and now we reconvening to refine scope for construction summer 2021. Explained that Parks and Recreation has completed a variety of projects and this multi-use field is the next project strategically.

Project to be designed with alternatives for bidding in order to get a base project built this year.

Existing Conditions and Site Review

Native grass and groups of trees with low quality undergrowth.

Estimates 80 car need, 152 on-street availability & 138 car surplus on-street. (Note: Map and figures have been updated to show no parking in front of NOVA, reflects **137** on-street spaces)

Discussion questions:

- How would this multi-use field affect your representative group?
- What other amenities would improve the experience?
- How would you like this space to feel in the next 5-10 years?

John Yust - Clarified that astroturf being used. How is it disposed of? Joe Roedler suggests there is less maintenance and turf has come a long way and use of recycled material could be used. Christian - watering fields great impacts watershed too. Brett commented that systems plan suggests high quality fields and the programming use is lengthened. Mary - noted that the conveyance of water through and under the field is going to be integral to the planned stormwater feature and intent to celebrae water. We want to make sure we're not precluding that connection with this field. John suggested making and on-grade connection to NOVA and to the south parking lot across the railroad tracks.

Paula - This would affect her residents negatively. People that live around here would see and parking would be a negative. Lighting: wonderful that we're looking to use International Dark Sky guidance for field lighting design.

Committee was adamant about not using astroturf.



Brett: Artificial turf allows us to significantly extend the life of the programming, it offers far less upkeep compared to turf grass.

Tonya: pre-design and master plan. What are the effects on kids by using artificial turf? What happens at the end of life? Suggestion to add signs to show length of loops so people know how far they are walking. Open field and not restricted is nice. It would be nice to see photometrics in dark sky. Glad the parking lot was not included.

(Andy)Parking: Ways to notify community about onsite parking, larger programming, and to encourage using parking lot. Don't expect many multi game tournaments.

(Christian) Planning: Do we have the funding available? Suggestion to consider neighboring parking lot for shared parking use.

Mary: Yes, funding is available for final design and construction of the base design and will include the 'advanced design' elements during bidding to have pricing for installation should additional funding become available. There are additional spaces close to the field where if the City had an agreement with private businesses, they could be used. It's something we can certainly look into to see if there is interest.

(Joe) turf and lighting are essential to extending play.

Andy: Programming would not be scheduled past 9pm and Parks can shut lights off at that time.

Mary: Next steps in the process include a third meeting in the coming weeks that will be open to the public to share the final concept and scope.

MEETING CHAT:

This meeting chat is muted. Settings

Christian Rovn (Guest)

6:20 PM

It is a bus lane in the front of Nova Classical Academy. No parking anytime.

Hussong, Brett (CI-StPaul)

6:20 PM

Christian Rovn (Guest) Thanks Christian. We'll adjust our numbers and revise the map.

Tanya Beck (External)

6:27 PM



How many people do you expect at larger game/events and how many street parking spaces are there?

Tanya Beck (External)

6:28 PM

How did this get funded first before other parts of the park?

Hussong, Brett (CI-StPaul)

6:28 PM

Tanya Beck Estimates 80 car need, 152 on-street availability & 138 car surplus on-street.

Tanya Beck (External)

6:29 PM

Where are these 300 on street parking spots? Is there a map?

Guest (Guest)

6:29 PM

With lighting added, how late will park be open for use?

Hussong, Brett (CI-StPaul)

6:31 PM

@Tanya Beck yes we have a map that we can show

Tanya Beck (External)

6:39 PM

Good point, Paula. It does seem like the advisory committee's perspective isn't really affecting the outcome.

Guest (Guest)

6:41 PM

How would use of the field be moderated?

Christian Rovn (Guest)

6:43 PM

Can you send us a copy of your slides?

Rodriguez, Andy (CI-StPaul)

6:43 PM

we actively oversee all turf facilities through a centralized athletics office

Guest (Guest)

6:43 PM

From a chemicals perspective, isn't artificial turf much better?



Rodriguez, Andy (CI-StPaul)

6:46 PM

We issue permits for private use but maintain a schedule that emphasizes community use and programmed time (parks and rec) private permits, last.

Guest (Guest)

6:46 PM

Because the field is multi-sport use, how much of its available time will be programmed by Parks & Rec and how much will it be available for community use?

Rodriguez, Andy (CI-StPaul)

6:46 PM

that would be worked out with the community and built into the seasonal schedule we can be flexible in that regard.

The next meeting will be a public Open House, date is to be determined but anticipated for late March.

03/04 Comments received by Design Advisory Member Kent Petterson:

- 1) Please honor the preferences of the previous neighborhood Advisory. Building a soccer field next does not follow those preferences. Naming the Park and promoting with appropriate entry markers and signage should be a top priority. Shelters and other facilities including water management are also needed to activate the park for users that would like all of the passive uses a park usually includes. Much of this can be accomplished without adding unnecessary controversy to implementation as this long overdue park work can start as previously planned with the money now available.
- 2) There have been a lot of residential changes in the area since Parks last checked in with the neighborhood. Those folks must be consulted.
- 3) The use of mast night time lighting for the field is not in keeping with the needs of birds that use the river as a natural flyway. The field lighting should go away. I suspect that a lot of the neighbors will not be happy with this lighting either.
- 4) The original intent for this park was for a more natural environment that is sympathetic to the river. Public funds used to build an artificial turf field is not appropriate for this park.
- 5) A pause is very much appropriate at this time to engage the community and get better and updated information. It is hard to understand what might be the rush other than Parks has its own agenda for the park. Fact of the matter is most Park facilities are shut down and the trajectory of opening is not known. There is time to take that pause and do this public process correctly.