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City in America

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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Jimmy Lee Play Area : Community Advisory Committee Meeting #2 : Meeting Notes

December 14, 2016, 5:30-6:30pm – Multipurpose room, Oxford Community Center

Attendee (per sign in sheet): Jim Robinson, Vonnie Copeland, Dave Peterson, Adrian Perryman, Michael Bridgeford, William Moore

Parks and Recreation City Staff: Andy Rodriguez, Dan Berchem, Deb Williams, Ellen Stewart, Anne Gardner- Project manager

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Anne Gardner, Project manager, started the meeting. Attendees went around the room to introduce themselves and who they are representing as a committee member (attendees listed above).
- b. **Project Goal Stated: Create a concept plan for improvements to Jimmy Lee Play Area to improve the play area and create a vibrant public space.**
- c. Meeting #2 Goal:
 - i. Update committee on project status,
 - ii. Review proposed play area layout and equipment options,
 - iii. Discuss plan and get feedback from community (we will take a week to decide the preferred option- review with your representative organizations),
 - iv. Determine community preference for public art
 - v. The goal is to start construction next summer
- d. Funding update: we have received a grant of \$25,000 from the Capitol Region Watershed District for a stormwater management feasibility study. This is a wonderful gift because with the contamination soil issues, there are some unknowns once we start digging in the ground. The partnership with the watershed will help to cover the additional costs.
- e. Committee questions CIB funding process: Were there notes from the CIB committee? Who wrote letters of support? Can we get CIB initial information presented, discussion summary and minutes and notes from CIB committee on this project beyond what was shown in the presentation?
 1. December 16 follow up- *no additional notes from the CIB committee*
- f. Site update: Parks department management reviewed request for fire pit and basketball court on site near play area/tot lot. From parks staff/management perspective, this is not an ideal location for a basketball court or a fire pit because they cannot be supervised by parks staff to the extent needed.
 - i. Some committee members expressed disappointment that there will not be a basketball court in the play area.
 - ii. Jimmy Lee Upper Field – may be opportunity to add it to the upper field area project when that is funded.
 - iii. Combination of activities not wholly compatible
 - iv. Frustration expressed at waiting another 5 years. This is an athletic community and they should have a place to play basketball outside beyond adjacent facilities at Dunning, etc.



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- v. Project Manager will provide the feedback to the management for their information.
- vi. The funding received from CIB is specifically to replace the play area which and refurbish the immediate area around it.
- vii. The basketball court will need to be funded and sited separately from this process.

2. Concept Plan Introduction

- a. Using input from the survey, the pop up meeting, and our first Design Advisory Committee meeting in October to finalize our plan layout. Generally, people like the idea of a combination of modern and traditional equipment. Also, preference is for climbing, swinging, sliding components in the new play area. Drinking fountain, more shade, landscaping and extra seating and picnic space are also desired by survey participants.
- b. Process to develop the plan was shown- using scribble drawings as an example. The big idea which was used to develop the concept are TWO WORDS: “ELEVATE AND UNITE”. Though I like the feeling of this play area being nestled in the site, having enclosed by the topography, the trees, the building, there is a certain amount of sunkenness that is felt. The idea of tall towers was introduced by community members as a really cool experience for the kids- so that is shown in the concepts. UNITE is represented by expanding the central area for more seating and to create a shared space in the middle- more like a plaza. This area has some work and development, but will essentially be an opportunity for art, gardening or some component of water.
- c. Out of the input to date and the initial sketches are two plans. They have some similarities:
 - i. The parking lot is removed in both plans and what is left is an open lawn space for play – running, tossing a ball, etc. in both,
 - ii. Perimeter fence is added to the edge.
 - iii. The swings are in this upper corner
 - iv. The picnic knoll remains as is with picnic slabs and a grill- the tables, however, would be replaced.
- d. Concept 1: Concept One – uses a lot of the existing container (curb surround), saving some of the costs. Use of existing sidewalks as entry points also reduces new construction costs. SWINGS, 2-5 TO SOUTH, 5-12 towards the hillside. Enlarged picnic space for two tables, Sign, New shade tree in the center, Central shared space (Details TBD),
- e. Concept 2: Concept Two – similar layout, with more curved and rounded form. The 2-5 and 5-12 play containers are switched for the reason of using the hillside and topography. All new concrete and play container curb. Emphasizing the organic shape of this design, there are additional mounds for added interest and play opportunities. The picnic area is close to the 2-5 equipment. Seating surrounds the central Arc shape. Central shared space (Details TBD)

3. Play Equipment Options

- a. TOWER CLIMBER – modern style, but classic play elements: Slides, climbers, monkey bars. This proposal shows a little of everything and quite a few single play components.
- b. SKYWALK – This is a very unique play element. Our budget allows two tall skywalk huts and one smaller version for the 2-5 area. Swings bay includes 4 swings. Metal posts, Clad material. Activities in the netting beneath.
- c. SKY CLIMBER – Custom version. The company who designed looked at urban sky tower customized for this space. The little kid elements are more about climbing and bars
- d. TOWER HUT – Classic company- reputable landscape company. In many of our parks.

4. Discussion

- a. Dislikes:
 - i. Tower concept that “looks like 80’s but just redone”
 - ii. Same old that looks like everything else

- b. Likes:
 - i. Monkey Bars, Racing Slides, embankment slide
 - ii. LSI – more play components – not so high end
 - iii. Want something new and special
 - iv. Concept #2 due to the large size of the 5-12 play area
 - v. Things for older kids to do
 - vi. Embankment slide
 - vii. Variety
 - viii. Monkey bars
 - ix. Racing slides
- c. Concerns:
 - i. Safety
 - ii. Wood
 - iii. Ropes
 - iv. No basketball
- d. Overall preference (from discussion and hand-outs):
 - i. Option 2 layout
 - ii. Towerhut 2 option (Landscape Structures Equipment)
 - iii. Requested input through the next week and that Design Advisory Committee members seek out the opinions and feedback from others in the community. Important that the committee represent the larger neighborhood.

5. Next Meeting will be January/February 2017 (date to be determined)

Visit (www.stpaul.gov/jimmyleeplayarea) for more information and presentation graphics.

This document shall serve as the official record of the community meeting and information shared. If there are additions or modifications that are required, please contact Anne Gardner via email anne.gardner@ci.stpaul.mn.us by Wednesday, December 28, 2016.

Notes by Anne Gardner & Ellen Stewart – December 20, 2106

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