

Field Code Changed

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



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Jimmy Lee Play Area : Community Advisory Committee Meeting #3 : Meeting Notes

March 9, 2017: 5-6:30 pm – Multipurpose room, Oxford Community Center

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

Parks and Recreation City Staff: Andy Rodriguez, Gwen Peterson, Kirsten Lindsay, 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 #3 Goal:
 - i. Update committee on project status
 1. Goal to bid project this year and construction this summer
 - ii. Review final play area concept
 1. If plan is acceptable, we can move towards developing final construction docs and more detailed soil analysis
 - iii. Select 5-12 play area equipment
 - iv. Discuss community preference for public art
2. Recap of process
 - a. Meeting #1: Included: site analysis, survey results, pop up meeting results
 - b. Meeting #2: Play equipment options and concept planning for reorganizing the space
 - i. Equipment choices not quite right – wanted unique style, memorable and have equipment, no net equipment
 - ii. Tower Hut 2 was the most preferred. Lots of kids use the play area so increase the 5-12 area as much as possible
 - iii. Parking lot - preference for it to be removed
 - iv. Will provide more play space within the play area
3. Concept Plan Introduction
 - a. Took a step back to consider what matters to the larger community including those at community design advisory committee meetings and other input to date:
 - i. Importance of athletics (A big draw and identity for this community)
 - b. Incorporated athletics as a theme into play area design
 - i. Site organization includes keeping the 2-5 area by the building, making the largest space for 5-12, Swings remain where they are, add a sport court (4 square, hopscotch, 6' height basketball) to serve 12 and under crowd,



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Open lawn for more open play space, and colorful mounds for play shaped like basketball and football

- ii. Each area is separated and organized around the central activity zone, Central Activity Zone has potential to have a water feature, art space, garden area,
- iii. Picnic tables added to the existing, 4 benches in plan, Drinking fountain- approximate location shown on plan
- iv. Parking lot = open rec lawn space would be fenced at the corner to direct pedestrians to the two sidewalks leading into the space.
- v. Storm water will need to be addressed. Would have depressions where the storm water would be directed. Located near existing storm sewer connections.

4. Detailed descriptions of plans:

a. Play area Option A 5-12

- i. Includes: Tower form - lifting people up physically & metaphorically; Various play features that are part of the space; 23 play components in the larger structure alone; The climbing geometrical elements could accommodate 24 kids per the manufacturer; Has a larger feature with more height and more play elements; Has swings – would be there in either case but could be 4 or 6 bays

b. Play Area Option B 5-12

- i. Includes: A zip line – bar seat and there is an option to have a chair seat; Have to pick one or the other; Play element has some height but not as big of a platform; Two levels on the platform; Has 11 components; More rubber ball climbing elements; Zip line takes up a lot of space
- ii. Comments:
 1. *Would there be a way to include additional components? We could look into that. Not a direct correlation to the number of kids who can play on it but it does give us some information*
 2. *How close is the rendering what it would be? That is what it would look like unless there is a budget issue. Usually a set feature*

c. 2-5 Play Area Layout

- i. Includes: Slide- built into the topography, Intended to accommodate two at a time, Three small children or parent and child can go on it, 3foot height, Mound are also a play element, Small bobble toy feature

d. Comments/Discussion:

- i. *Make sure there is shade over the features so they don't get hot*
- ii. *Can we take the zip line out of option A and put it in option B? It is possible but the zip line takes up a lot of space so there is a difference in the two designs. It does come at a cost.*
- iii. *Are plastic slides a good idea? And do they last and work?*
 1. *Metal slides at the Bean in Chicago*
 2. *They used to have metal slides here but they got hot. People had to toss sand on them*
 3. *Plastic is affordable so if we went with metal slides we would have to make other adjustments. Taller height slides would be costly*
- iv. *What is the surfacing? Most of the surfacing we are looking at would be poured in place. There are many colors that it comes in. There is a chance of using wood fiber mulch and that is something that can save money but we are planning on having the poured in place surfacing. Project manager will navigate as we get into construction documents and will keep you updated if that changes.*

- v. Color preference: Blue as strong feature (Blue and Gold are the colors of the team). Tangerine preferred by community group. Silver can be added in too.
- vi. Zip line-*Important but it is unfortunate that you lose a lot of play features.*
- vii. Rec staff comments: *Went through the building with the layouts and talked to the kids to get feedback about important features:*
 - 1. *Zip line was important to them.*
 - 2. *Also really liked mini=basketball court. Would also like to have a large court.*
 - 3. *Would also like a water feature.*
 - 4. *Conclusion from youth is the main playground with two slides and miniature basketball. They didn't weigh in very heavily on mounds which may be because of lack of familiarity.*
- viii. *Is there a way to put the zip line over in the open play area to get in more play components?*
 - 1. *Zip line was 10-12K but the surfacing was almost \$20K. SO there is the space, but the cost is what is limiting the options. Better to have play features overlapping*
- ix. *Option A comes with the play features vs. the balls. How do those compare with the cost of the mounds?* Mounds are low cost because it is essentially just the cost of surfacing with some of the grading as well. The mounds were also intended to bring forward the sports theme.
- x. *I would like to know what would need to happen to have option A and a zip line? How can we tweak it to make sure it all comes together?* Anne will look at adding zipline with Option A.
- xi. *There is still a high need for a large basketball court outside*
- xii. *One member likes having the green space since there isn't much of that around*
- xiii. *Zip line- Concern for sticking or rough sliding down the track- maybe technology has changed. Also, lack of sand in play area should help.*
- xiv. *Other feedback with Dan and staff was that the hoop would be constantly dunked on or broken. Is there a way to have hoop covers or something more durable? If it is 6 feet, would they hang on it? Compare with other sites to see how it works best. No reported, known issues at other sites with low basketball hoops.*
 - 1. *How many small bball hoops do we have in our system?* Two
 - 2. *Looked at other options for something more like a funnel that would feed the ball back but it wasn't well received.*
 - 3. *Is there much damage on the other 6 foot hoops?* No. And the one at Dunning is a lower hoop too and is intact.
 - 4. *Is there some kind of cone type thing to lock it?* Would require staff commitment
 - 5. *We could go with it and see if it is an issue and address it later?*
- xv. *See if we can incorporate larger play structure with zip line or at least have additional play compliments.*
- xvi. *Option B- the top part that look like wings is cool- Like the canopies.*
- xvii. *Location of basketball court - they should be shooting toward the trees.* The reason it is there is due to the contours and the grade change so avoiding building a retaining wall on that end. Will look at that again and see if we can turn it without requiring a retaining wall.
- xviii. *Will the fence be ornamental?* It would be nice to have ornamental, but the existing fence is chain link.- No plan at this time to replace that and make it ornamental. We would suggest vinyl coated fence to match existing.

- xix. *Can we do something with the fence?* We can have an alternate in bid docs for an upgrade from chain link. The goal is to make it as nice as we can and do as much as we can with the budget we have. Will do an alternate for an ornamental fence and it may be something that does work out in construction.
 - xx. Grills: *Grill is out there now are we adding more?*
 - 1. *There is one grill existing. No desire to get rid of the grill. Upgrade/replace if necessary. Add one more for two family groups*
- 5. Art at the Jimmy Lee Play Area- Propose to recognize and describe who Jimmy Lee was since many people do not actually know who he is (Kirsten). The image in the original presentation is incorrect! Gwen can provide pictures.
 - a. Budget for art is roughly \$6000
 - b. Would be good to recognize his contribution to the community and create a way for people to understand why the park is named Jimmy Lee.
 - c. Options: Plaque, panel or a bench with information or profile or Letters, signage
 - i. Jimmy Lee just passed away last summer and Frank White and others could provide memorabilia
 - ii. John Lee his grandson could also provide info and pictures that would be helpful – was just here last weekend
 - iii. Other contacts for Info: Steve Winfield & Jim Robinson
 - d. Put the art somewhere that is visible – entrance to the park or play area
 - e. *Would the letters be an option?* We would have to choose between the plaque for Jimmy Lee and the letter play area component. Similar to MLK- maybe not a good idea to have the same items so close in proximity to each other.
- 6. Add a park sign to the play area-
 - a. Proposal to add it on the Oxford side of the play area
 - b. Trying to be consistent with the identification of our play areas
 - c. Maybe put it somewhere close to the entrance of the building
- 7. Water feature concept. Working toward incorporating the water feature in the center of the play area. Funding is specific to the feature. We cannot put in something major but it would be a smaller element. Idea of a misting water feature. Concept is to have maybe 3 misting features
 - a. *Interactive water feature:*
 - i. Trying to figure out if that could be a feature where there will be water to play with and manipulate channels. Haven't always worked well – they require a pump and are hard to maintain. If that is a direction that we want to go, then she will continue looking but currently being discouraged by the amount of maintenance it will require. We don't have sand and that is something that would be better in a sand play area
 - b. *Are those all operated manually?* Would be a touch feature.
 - c. Other options: Sometimes there are rocks with a spray feature. Trying to avoid jets that would be require “splash pad” mechanical system.
 - d. *What is the upkeep in the winter time?* Would not require a lot of maintenance. Just drain it out.
- 8. Final Comments:
 - a. 5-12 option A preferred for equipment and with added zip line if possible
 - b. *If you are looking at options, I tend to want to go to things people will use. Zip line vs. other equipment. Does it get more use than other things? Want to make sure we are maximizing implementation of useful equipment.*

- c. *We want to have enough equipment to accommodate all of the kids who use it.*
- d. *This may be far reaching but you have samples of the surfacing, would it be possible to get samples of the mounds? Is there a way to get a few of them and set them together?*
 - i. *It is tough to get samples of mounds- local play areas have them to look at*
 - ii. *Kids do play on them and will enjoy them. It is something different. They will love them once they are in. They are cost effective.*
- e. *If we can get the zip line and other features, that would be great. The green space isn't large enough for anything. If anything, it needs to be bigger. Need to keep the green space rather than adding other equipment. People are playing football in front of the door now because it is the only flat surface. That or the alley.*
- f. *Green space will provide a flexible space for recreation or picnicking.*
- g. *With budget has there been any ask for the community to pitch in if we can get them to do it? Likes the changes proposed. Artwork is a big thing!*
- h. *Gwen: I know this is a BIG DEAL for the community. It is important to have a place in our back yard for kids to come and play. This facility is already a destination and that will make it even more so because it will draw people for more than athletic reasons like it used to. Play area at west mini got bombarded because it was the play area in the community. Will be a destination. It will change the community a little bit. Will look and feel like it used to 20 years ago. The project will have a ripple effect. Once it gets done it will be constantly used.*

9. *Next Steps:*

- a. *Planning for construction:*
 - i. *We will plan to coordinate with activities and minimize disruption and any planned events as much as possible.*
 - ii. *Upcoming Events:*
 - 1. *Safe Summer Nights*
 - 2. *Police Academy*
 - 3. *Family Fun Nights*
- b. *Open House: Anne will coordinate with Kirsten and set up an informal open house to show the plans (not intended to gather more input, but to inform community of process and status)*

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, March 22, 2017

Notes by Anne Gardner & Ellen Stewart – March 14, 2017