



**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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**McQuillan Park – Play Area Improvements**

June 9, 2016 6:00 p.m.

**Minutes – Meeting One**

In attendance:

**Staff**

Bryan Murphy, Parks Design and Constructions  
Bianca Paz, Parks Design and Constructions  
Kathy Korum, Interim Design and Construction Division Manager  
Karin Misiewicz, Parks Operations

**Public**

Mary Fredickson with daughter Luda  
Dick Wyland with son Andrew Wyland  
Mark Tande  
Debra Elias Morse  
Steve Morse

Meeting began at 6:05 p.m.

1) **Project Introduction/Overview**

- a) Project Purpose. Replace play area equipment. This is an opportunity to look at the entire park and provide improvements as funding allows. These improvements will help carry the park through the next 20 - 25 years
- b) The play area assessment is ranked based on age, type of park, conformance with current design guideline. Primary focus of the project is to replace the play area.
- c) Project Schedule  
June-Inventory/analysis/Programming/Schematic Design  
July- Refined Park Concept/Play Equipment concepts  
August- Design finalization, HPC Review  
September – December Construction Documents, HPC Approval  
March – Project Bid  
May – Begin Construction
- d) Community Engagement Process started in May with an Input Stand at the Community Event Hunger Con. Project introduction at the Summit- University Neighborhood Development Board Meeting
- e) Online Survey Results. 80 people responded by June 9. Survey will be open until the end of July. Survey feedback indicates desire to have a larger green open area, improve the play equipment, improve the tennis court, and keep the cozy, friendly and



neighborhood feeling of the park.

- f) Existing play area is small and there is an opportunity to expand of the play area and green open space. The Parks Systems Plan indicates the single tennis court is 'not recommended for replacement'.
- g) Bryan explained the precedents of Margaret Park and Griggs Play Area, where the single tennis court was removed to expand and improve the play area.
- h) Review of the Park Context and relationship between McQuillan Park and the neighborhood.
- i) Review of Goals and Objectives.

#### **Comments:**

- **Could construction be postponed to the fall of 2017 in order to keep the Park functioning during next summer?**
  - **Projects are usually bid in the spring to capture the most competitive pricing for bids. Weather can be a factor in starting and completing construction so we generally prefer to start as early as we can. We will look into a different timeframe for construction of McQuillan.**
- **Open green lawn area is being used frequently**
- **Discussion about System Plan. Kathy Korum explained how the System Plan was developed to address the built components of the park and recreation system and it is necessary to assure Saint Paul Parks system is economically sustainable.**
- **Tennis court is being used by the families that live around the park. It was mentioned that MLK is a 'destination' tennis court and the single tennis court is a 'neighborhood' tennis court.**
- **People use the tennis court as 'open space' for dogs to run or children for other activities.**

#### **2) Inventory and Analysis**

- a) The historical background of the neighborhood and park was presented. The area surrounding McQuillan Park is recognized as Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District because of its large and valuable concentration of nineteenth century architecture. It is the historical home of people that contributed to the culture and development of Saint Paul.
- b) The park is generally in good conditions but the play area is too small and doesn't meet the current playground compliances and ADA accessibility.

#### **Opportunities:**

- Update the play equipment and expanded play area.
- Consider expanding open lawn area for more play space when tennis court is removed
- Addition of picnic area
- Addition of natural play elements
- Addition of planting beds and gardens
- Retain and trim existing trees

**Comments:**

- **Karin Misiewicz from Parks Maintenance and Operations asked the attendees how important it is for three park entrances.**
  - **Fewer entrances would be good in order to have more control of the children playing at the park**
  - **Keep main entrance on the corner, secondary entrances are not necessary.**
- **Park never felt too small**
- **Consider more places to be active**
- **Trash containers are located next to benches and smell very bad. Relocate trash containers.**
- **Add doggy bags dispensers**
- **Look into having an ice skating rink during winter on the open lawn.**
- **It was suggested to replace chain link fence with ornamental fence.**
- **Consider expanding the ornamental fence.**
- **There is underutilized space between street and the play area. Study ways to integrate to the park.**
- **Consider expanding the play area toward the open space facing Laurel Street.**

3) Design Concepts

- a. Concept A – Existing play area container is expanded to the west. There is an expanded open lawn area north of the play area. One of the secondary entrances is relocated to the west.

**Comments:**

- **Expanded area will provide more space for active play like soccer, football, etc.**
  - **The area between the sidewalks and the play area is not being used...consider expanding the play area to that part of the park.**
- b. Concept B – Play area is expanded to the northwest. An expanded open lawn area wraps around the play area. The two secondary entrances are removed.

**Comments:**

- **The configuration of the open lawn could be modified to be more functional.**

- c) Concept C – The existing play area container is expanded in an informal fashion. There are small informal lawn areas to the west of the expanded play area. A larger open lawn area is expanded north of the play area. The three entrances would remain.

**Comments:**

- **Consider removing the secondary entrances.**
- **The informal lawn area is not currently being used, consider expanding the play area to that side.**

4) Play Equipment

- a. Three different styles of Play Equipment were presented: Traditional, Modern, and Sculptural.

**Comments:**

- **Consider having a swing bay separated from the main structure.**
- **Swing benches are good idea. Locate them around the play area or separated from the park.**
- **Artificial turf was preferred by the kids**
- **Small sand area**
- **Add a hammock**
- **Are there play areas that the community could visit for reference?**
  - **The following list of play areas offer good examples of play equipment and surfacing types.**
    - **Griggs Park (1188 Hubbard Avenue)**
      - **Traditional style play equipment**
      - **Site where single tennis court was removed to expand play area**
      - **Poured in place rubber and sand surfacing**
    - **Hamline-Hague Park (1328 Hague Avenue)**
      - **Central dome climber structure with artificial turf**
    - **Liberty Plaza Townhomes (290 Arundel Street)**
      - **Modern/sculptural style of equipment**
    - **West Seventh Community Center/St. Clair Park (265 Oneida St)**
      - **Central dome climber structure with artificial turf**
      - **Play mounds**

5) Public Art

- a. 1% of CIB funding will be assigned for Public Art. A brief summary of what the community expressed on the online survey about public art and recommended artists was presented. Recommended local artist: Seitu Jones, Brad Kaspari, Sara Udvig, Kinji Akagawa.

**Comments:**

- **An interactive sculpture is a good idea**
- **Consider a sculpture for children**
- **Sidewalk poetry for kids is a good idea**
- **Rocks with children art work around the park**
- **Community could be part of the art work process**
- **No historic statues, they are boring**

The next meeting will be on July 12, 2016 at Hallie Q Brown Community Center (270 North Kent Street, St. Paul MN 55102) in the Canteen from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.