



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

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Parque de Castillo : Community Advisory Committee #2 : Meeting Notes

November 19, 2015, 4-6pm - Room 212#, Wellstone Center

Attendee (per sign in sheet):

Rick Hernandez, Westside Community Organization and West Side Boosters; Sarah Foster; West side Transit Team; Gilbert de la O, Resident; Shad Lukas, Neighborhood House representative; Gail Merriam, Neda; Virginia Hernandez, Resident; Carol Neumann, Resident; Mark Thomas, Resident; MolliAnn Hernandez, Resident; Marjie Castillo and Lolo Castillo, Resident

City staff: Mark Granlund, Parks and Recreation; Dave Danielson, Wellstone Center Recreation staff; Andy Rodriguez, Parks and Recreation; Ellen Stewart, Parks and Recreation; Bianca Paz, Parks and Recreation; Anne Gardner, Parks and Recreation; Karin Misiewicz, Parks and Recreation; David Ronzani, Parks and Recreation

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Anne Gardner, project manager, started the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves
- b. Project Goal reviewed: **Create a concept plan for improvements to Parque de Castillo to improve the play area and create a vibrant public space.**
- c. Meeting Goals
 - i. Update committee on project status and Gilbert de la O Field project
 - ii. Review proposed concept plan
 - iii. Discuss plan and get feedback from community
 - iv. Determine community preference for public art, play equipment, splashpad design
- d. Meeting schedule -revised
 - i. We will add a meeting in late January (prior to the open house) to have more detailed discussion about the art, splashpad details, and finalizing play equipment

2. Gilbert de la O Field Project

- a. David Ronzani, project manager, reviewed the Gilbert de la O project.
 - i. Brief History of the Fields: Until the 1970's single family housing was the predominant feature on the site. Once the houses and the sections of Winifred Street and Greenwood Avenues that cut across the site were removed, they were replaced with athletic fields. These fields have been used heavily but poor playing conditions resulting from compacted soils, poor drainage, utility manholes, and surface debris in the soil have been a burden.
 - ii. CIB Funding for the Athletic Field Project was received in 2014.
 - iii. With the help from the West Side Boosters and Neighborhood House, additional Grants were received from the NFL, Ramsey County Soccer, and ESPN.
 - iv. The main feature of the new field project will be a 93,000 sq. ft. Multi-use Turf Athletic Field.
 - v. Multi-use Field Components: Football, Soccer, Baseball, Softball, Lacrosse (optional)



- vi. 6' tall perimeter fence in plans to surround the artificial turf fields -8' fence to be an alternate option.
- vii. Field programming is yet to be determined.
- viii. Additional amenities may include: A new scoreboard, drinking fountain, landscaping, ADA access from Clinton, Wellstone Center, and to the North side of the field from Congress, entry sign on Clinton Avenue, and batting cage for use with both baseball and softball. Additional lighting for both the new field and walkways may also be included.
- ix. There is a preference to keep the gates along Robie.
- x. 4 – 5 row bleachers. Capacity roughly 40 people (each).
- xi. Factors such as underground utilities, stormwater runoff from on and offsite sources, and concerns regarding the capacity to handle that water has had a big influence on the design.
- xii. Due to depth of excavation and debris found in preliminary soil sample results, the city will be conducting soil contamination testing. Onsite contaminants have the potential to affect the budget, the extent will be unknown until testing has been completed and soils are excavated and removed from the site.
- xiii. Mid Block Crossing: Saint Paul Traffic Engineering would approve a mid-block Crossing for safer access between the Athletic Field and Parque de Castillo projects. The crossing would be marked on the street and parking would be restricted within 50 feet on each side of the crossing.
- xiv. Public Art Component: Per public art ordinance there is a potential of working with the Parque Castillo project on the public art component.
- xv. Priorities Checklist: At the conclusion of the Field portion of the meeting, Dave Ronzani passed out a priorities checklist of project elements to consider if the project comes in over-bid. This checklist will also be made available online as well as distributed to the community. Some of the meeting attendees submitted their checklists upon completion of the meeting.

3. Concept Plan Introduction

- a. Review of site analysis and goals
 - i. Establish a presence along Cesar Chavez
 - ii. Create a strong visual connection to Gilbert de la O
 - iii. Widen sidewalks and enhance pathways
 - iv. Flatten the lawn space
 - v. Reduce the strong presence of the utilities
 - vi. Trim plantings around the memorial
 - vii. Create a vibrant, active play space for children
 - viii. Create and open plaza area for community events
- b. Process and overall concept plan design
 - i. After review of the site analysis, the survey results, the history of the park and neighborhood, and feedback from meeting 1, we spent time reworking the physical layout of the park space
 - ii. A circle concept was a strong theme that came through during the design process. The circle is symbolic of many themes that resonates with this community
 - iii. Other metaphors: inclusion, wholeness, unity, cycles, everything, centering, revolution, infinity, completion, mobility
 - iv. The circle represents the neighborhood, which is shared by people of diverse backgrounds and cultures

- v. Physically, the circle creates a large, open shared lawn space in the park as opposed to a path through the center that would divide the space. The center lawn area will be graded out to be more flat to be used for yoga classes, performances, etc
- vi. The zones of use radiate from the center of the circle: the play area is closest to the fields and towards the north corner of the site. The splashpad/plaza space is centered on the space and will be situated to look out over the fields, school, Neighborhood House, and apartments beyond
- vii. The Cinco de Mayo plan was referenced to understand the spatial needs of the event
- viii. The circle stage will remain in place and we will propose a way to reuse it
- ix. An 'event lawn' will be created on the East side of the park- a large open lawn space that will accommodate groups and gatherings. The center stage can be used or a new stage can be set up in that central location
- x. Points of entry are located towards the four corners and the circular path allows for a curving pathway so that people throughout the site- from one corner to the next or along one side

c. Committee Feedback

- i. The committee is very happy with the cleanup that has recently occurred at the park- THANK YOU to operations staff
- ii. No tall grasses or prairie plantings along the parking lot side- concern that it would catch trash and make it look messy
- iii. More tables and benches are needed than what is shown on the plan
- iv. Repurpose or finish the stage- right now it is a concrete circle that looks unfinished- it does have existing power outlets
- v. The circle idea ties to Native American culture
- vi. Is the play area big enough? Response: we have had to make the play area smaller since we are adding the splash pad area
- vii. Is the splashpad too big? Response: the spray features can be turned off and it can be a paved 'plaza' space. Operations staff suggested that it will get used and loved by community-there has been great success with the other splashpads
- viii. People from the Clinic come to the park during lunch time.
- ix. Additional park lighting would be nice
- x. Comment about tall grass: create junk
- xi. Look into cooperative projects with the clinic
- xii. During snow removal, snow is push to the edge of the park on the side of the parking lot.
- xiii. More trash containers
- xiv. Historical interpretation/kiosk related to online information about the neighborhood.
- xv. Try to connect the clinic visually

4. Plan details

- a. Water Feature – A splashpad (an paved area with ground sprays coming out of the water) will be located along the Clinton Ave side of the site, central to the park space
 - i. The splashpad is in the shape of a wedge, pulled from a 'ray' from the center of the circle- a part of the whole
 - ii. The paving and layout of water sprays will convey a theme of some kind. Possible themes for the splashpad include a sun, Sun ray, Flowers, musical notes
 - iii. Music would be a great theme to integrate as it relates to Nicolas Castillo's musical heritage
 - iv. What is the length of time the splash pad is operable? (June – September – weather and staff time dependant)
- b. Play Elements
 - i. Three play area concepts: The Colorful: Bright colors are the main theme in the play area, with colorful modern play structure.

- ii. The Urban Traditional: Classic play structure with slides and platforms. Traditional play elements.
 - iii. The Musical playground: This playground introduces musical instruments as play elements combined with a climbing and sensory structure.
- c. Art Opportunities
- i. Based on the feedback provided by the community in the surveys and community pop up meetings, we selected two tentative general art concepts for Parque Castillo.: 1. - Vertical Iconic Sculptures integrated in the Park landscape. (like totems or touchable sculptures) 2. Interactive Musical elements that could be related to the Mexican Corridos or a generic music style.
 - ii. We also proposed 4 locations where the public art could be placed: 1. Along Cesar Chavez Street. 2. Around the circle path. 3. Replacing the existing memorial. 4. at the play area, as play elements.
 - iii. These suggested locations could be combined or could be alternate with a public artist proposal.
 - iv. Feedback included the need to address the condition of the Castillo memorial, integrate the art into the site (around the path?)
- d. Budget: Anne reviewed the proposed budget at this time. The majority of project budget will go to the splashpad construction. There are significant costs with the mechanical system, paving, etc that are necessary for the splashpad installation

5. Discussion

- a. Comments overall:
- i. Can we replace the memorial- we will look at funding options for this. It may not be possible to work with our current budget to rebuild the memorial. We may need to look for other sources of funding or take this on as a separate project
 - ii. Use the lyrics of Corridos in art or displayed somewhere in the project
 - iii. Add in signage and consider a kiosk structure to talk about the history of the neighborhood
 - iv. Add a fence along the parking lot side of the park – *move path away from the parking lot so there is more space between the parking lot and pathway for safety reasons (per Tom Legeros email)*
 - v. There may be private funds available to help with memorial/project costs. Anne to look into how to proceed with this.
- b. Results of a meeting questionnaire:
- Splashpad options: Please select your favorite option for Splashpad Design-** The top choice was Music (6) or Sun (5). There were no votes for the flower theme
- Art options: Please select your favorite option for Art-** The top choice was to redo the existing Castillo memorial with equal votes for art along Cesar Chavez (2) or around the circle(2). There were no votes to integrate art in the play area
- Play Equipment: Please select your favorite option for Play Equipment-** The top choice was the ‘colorful’ option (5 votes) or Traditional (3). There were no votes for “musical”
- c. Other written comments
- i. Redo the Castillo memorial
 - ii. Bike rack near Clinton please (and play area)
 - iii. More culture of Mr Castillo
 - iv. Improvement to the memorial and timeline event for Chicano Movement
 - v. Integrate art lyrically throughout the park- the ideas presented are too structured and symmetrical

- vi. Existing memorial is in need of repair- committee wondered where the missing plaque is located. Castillo family to contact the artist.
- vii. Church services are held in the park every Tuesday evening during the summer months (*per Gilbert de la O email*)
- viii. Food clothing drives take place on Wednesday (*per Gilbert de la O email*)
- ix. *Request for more police or park security presence at the park to limit the illegal activities at the park.*

6. Next steps

- a. Design staff will work on RFQ for artist and RFP for consultant
- b. Next meeting will be late January, 2016 to review the progress on art, splashpad details, and final play equipment selection

Visit (www.stpaul.gov/parquecastillo) for more information

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 16.

Notes by Anne Gardner, Dave Ronzani, and Bianca Paz- 12/2/2015
Modified 12/16/15 per committee feedback