MEETING MINUTES

Noyes Playground Community Meeting #1

Date: Tuesday March 21, 2017
Time: 7:00pm-8:30pm
Location: BCYF Pino Community Center, East Boston, MA
Prepared by: Danielle Mellett & Scott Landgren

Project Name: Noyes Playground Renovation Project

Attendees: Nathan Frazee, Project Manager Boston Parks and Recreation (BPRD)
Marchelle Jacques- Yarde, Project Manager, Boston Parks and Recreation
Claudia Correa, ONS Representative, City of Boston
Scott Landgren, Project Manager, CDM Smith
Danielle Mellett, CDM Smith
Steven Fusco, CDM Smith
Adrian Madaro, State Representative
Sal LaMattina, Boston City Councilor

Meeting Objective: Noyes Playground Design Improvements Community Meeting

Meeting Notes:

- Interactive discussion with the audience and the Presenters:

  - An audience member commented on how the "underutilized" portion of the park used to be flooded in the winter for ice skating, had a shade shelter where they used to do arts and crafts, but as time passed kids would use the shelter for drinking and cause trouble. Low fencing around the site caused errant balls to hit people's home windows and kids would drive around the fields in their "souped-up" cars and wreak havoc tearing up the fields.

  - Neighbors feel that the existing fields need updating. This was a major point of discussion during the meeting. How do we accommodate soccer and baseball at the same time? Several concerned community members stated that the baseball games over take the fields and that they force soccer games to be played elsewhere. There is very little green space in East Boston that can accommodate soccer games and kids are forced to commute/ walk to Revere play. How do we resolve this issue and make the soccer fields a more integrated part of the park? Also, how we resolve scheduling between the sports to help alleviate some of this tension.
    - The design team will come up with multiple concepts on how to best incorporate all sports and user groups.

- The neighbors have concerns with dog owners allowing dogs to use the fields and do not pick up after them, even though there are clearly posted signs saying keep dogs off fields. Can we add an area exclusively for dogs?
    - The design team will examine this as part of the overall design.
- There were discussions on working with developers who own parcels on Boardman Street and Saratoga Streets adjacent to parkland. A representative from the developer side of the former DJ's Autobody site on Saratoga Street was present and is interested to have discussions relative to the park site. They had no formalized plans for the former Auto Body Site at the time of the meeting.
    - Nathan and Scott responded that we will have discussions with all parties involved so that we can work together to appropriately design at the property boundaries and work on updating fencing surrounding those areas.
- The neighbors asked if we could add parking.
    - The response from BPRD was that this is a neighborhood park and there is no additional room to add parking.
- The neighbors were concerned with the lack of bathroom facilities and storage. Would there be options to install some type of structure for toilets?
    - The manager of the BCYF, the Boston owned community center adjacent to the site, said that kids are welcomed to use the site when the center is open. BPRD stated that they are not adding brick and mortar type buildings at this time and limited resources make maintaining them difficult.
    - Other parks sites have added concrete pads for porta-potties to their sites and that outside donations have funded the use of porta-potties on-site for use during playing seasons and removed during downtimes.
    - Sal LaMattina stated perhaps a relationship could also be formed with the developers to sponsor the temporary facilities.
    - Nathan commented that we can certainly look into storage options on site for equipment.
- The neighbors commented on finding needles outside field areas.
    - Marchelle and Claudia stated that residents should call "311" for these types of matters and that they would consider placing a biohazard boxes on site.
- Neighbors asked if artificial turf would be considered due to issues with maintenance of natural grass.
    - Nathan answered that if budget allows, we will look at artificial turf as an option. One option could be the infield in artificial turf.
- A little league representative asked about seeking specific input from various coaches in the specifics of the field design.
    - Scott responded we always incorporate coaches and Athletic Directors' desires for specifics to field layouts. Their desires are always taken into consideration and the Design team is very willing to meet and discuss what they would like in separate meetings.
- Different field elements were discussed and requested. Not enough spectator seating is provided, especially at softball field. There was a request for a batting cage. Could we add dugout shelters?
    - The design team will examine these as part of the overall design.

- Discussion of the Design Opportunities Board ensued. The question was asked if the playground was adequate aside from accessibility issues and how often it was used.
    - The audience responded that the playground was used heavily by camp groups and older kids easily get bored with equipment there. Someone mentioned adding climbing equipment to the side of the existing building.
- We asked about interest in a water play area.
    - There was no specific response from the audience.
- We asked if a circumferential walking path with stationary exercise stations was desired.
    - The response was that it would be great if it did not interfere with making the field improvements.
- The question was asked if other amenities should be added to the park such as picnic tables and benches.
    - The response was that there are many amenities like that at neighboring parks and if it takes budget away from the sports fields than they would rather have the sports field improvements.
- Lighting was discussed at length.
    - The park is very dark at night and currently not lit for safety. Women and children walk through the park and it would be preferable to have some type of security lighting so that it was a much safer park at night and would deter criminal activity in the park. Sports lighting was also greatly discussed. Scott mentioned we would be integrating all new energy efficient sports field lighting at all fields and basketball court and we could incorporate security lighting. The lighting would be able to be turned on and off but someone's remotely that had the correct access.
- The next community meeting was discussed.
    - Nathan indicated the design team would provide three different park design options to discuss.