

Greenwood Phinney Park Development

Edward B. Murray
Mayor

Samuel Assefa
Director, OPCD

Ross Tilghman, Chair

John Savo, Vice Chair

Lee Copeland

Ben de Rubertis

Thaddeus Egging

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Commissioners Present

Ross Tilghman, Chair
John Savo, Vice Chair
Lee Copeland
Ben de Rubertis
Laura Haddad
Jescelle Major
Brianna Holan
Rick Krochalis

Commissioners Excused

Rachel Gleeson
Thaddeus Egging

Project Description

The project site is located along Greenwood Ave N in the Greenwood Phinney Neighborhood. The site is located within a retail corridor (zoned Neighborhood Commercial 2) and abuts single family zoned properties to east. The project is one of 14 landbanked sites acquired by Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) to provide additional open space in neighborhoods throughout the city. The original plan included development on one parcel located at the northeast corner of Greenwood Ave N and N 81st St. An updated plan includes an additional parcel, which is located north of the original parcel at the southeast corner of Greenwood Ave N and N 82nd St. While both parcels will be designed to concept level, only the south parcel has received full funding. The south parcel will be designed and constructed by mid-2018, while the north parcel will be "lightly developed" to create a usable space. The north parcel will be fully developed once funding is secured.

Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) third review of the Greenwood Phinney Park Development project. The purpose of this meeting was to review the design development phase of the project. After the presentation, questions, and deliberation, the SDC voted, 8-0, to approve the design development phase of the Greenwood Phinney Park Development with several recommendations

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

August 3, 2017

1:00 – 2:30 pm

Type

CIP

Phase

Design Development

Previous Reviews

[4/6/17, 12/1/16](#)

Presenters

Katie Bang

SPR

Lisa Corry

Cascade Design Collaborative

Tristan Fields

Cascade Design Collaborative

Attendees

Danielle Devier

Natural Systems Design

Even Fowler

Incoming SDC commissioner

Rachel Huck

SDOT

Sarah Wallace

SDOT

Rachel Ware

Summary of Presentation

Katie Bang, of Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), and Lisa Corry and Tristan Fields, of Cascade Design Collaborative presented the design development phase of the Greenwood Phinney Park Development. Katie Bang provided project background and site context for the park (see figure 1). Existing buildings on the project site have been demolished and the site is being prepared for an interim use as an open lawn until construction begins in early 2018 (see figure 2). Although the project will be constructed in two phases, funding has been secured for the development of Phase I only. Phase I will include the development of the entire project site, while phase II will include additional development on the north end of the park. Today's presentation focused only on the updated design and development of phase I.



Figure 1: Site context map

There have been several design updates since the previous meeting held on April 6, 2017. Updates include the relocation and expansion of the natural discovery trail, relocation of the reading nook, increased accessibility to the digging area, and the addition of lighting as an additive. The natural discovery trail includes an expanded interactive area with a nurse long, stumps, and reused stone slab seating as well as wider access points for universal accessibility. The reading nook has been relocated to the northeastern corner of the park and will include five benches that overlook the lawn. The digging area will include loose digging material which will be surrounded by a low seating wall on all sides. The digging area will also include a ramp for accessibility. Although it is not a standard for SPR to provide lighting, a lighting plan has been included as an additive due to community concerns about safety. see figure 3 for more detail.

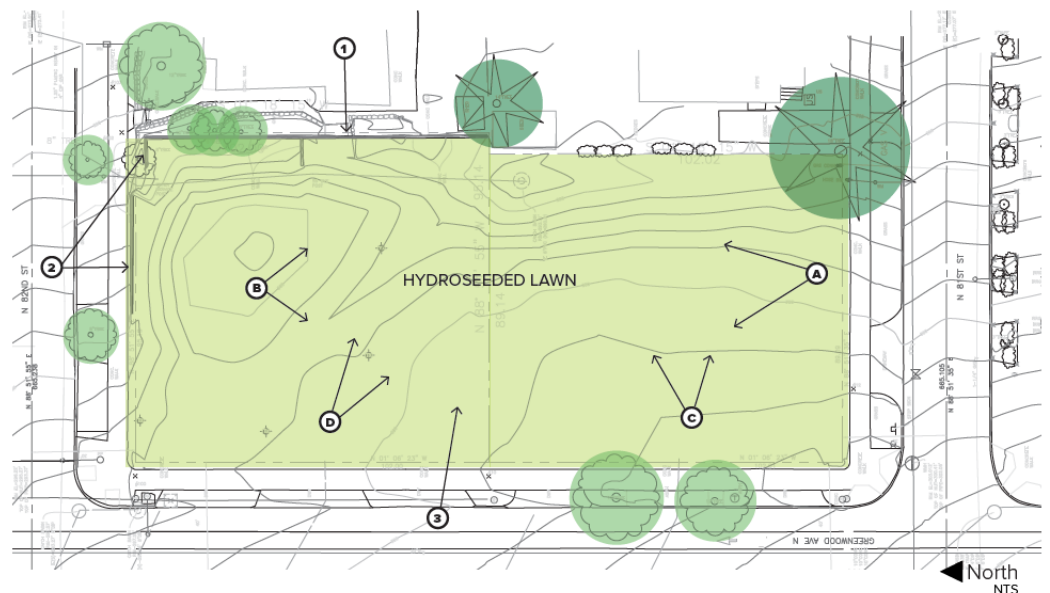


Figure 2: Interim condition plan

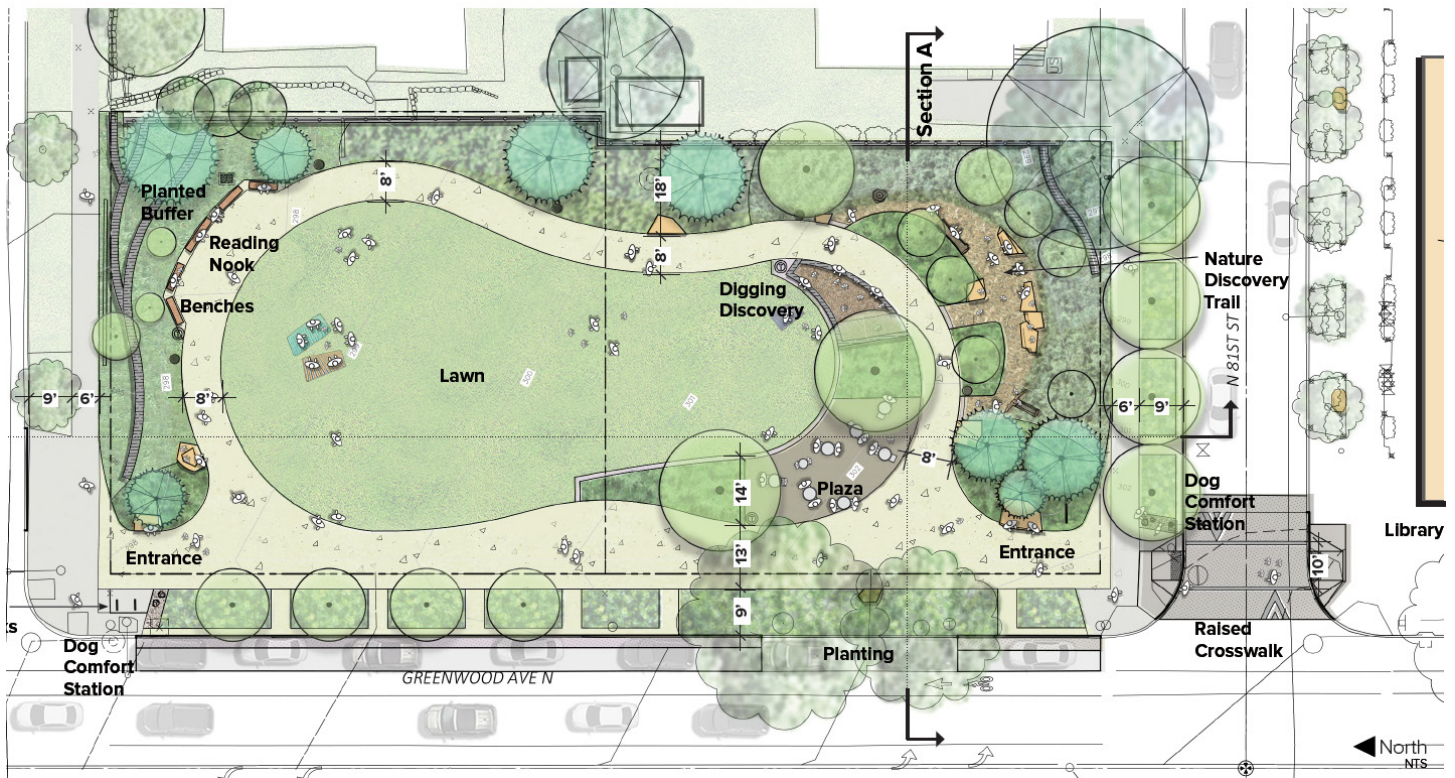


Figure 3: Previous design proposal (top) and updated design proposal (bottom)

The project planting palette includes native and adaptive plants to help provide a natural sense within the surrounding urban context. The project site is divided into five distinct planting zones, with plantings in each zone representing a different environment of the pacific northwest. A variety of low lying vegetation and trees with a high canopy will be used to maintain site lines throughout the park. see figure 4 for more detail.

The project team is working with Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) on the design of the raised crosswalk crossing N 81st St along Greenwood Ave N. Four alternative schemes were provided, with each design scheme representing a unique aspect of the surrounding neighborhood.

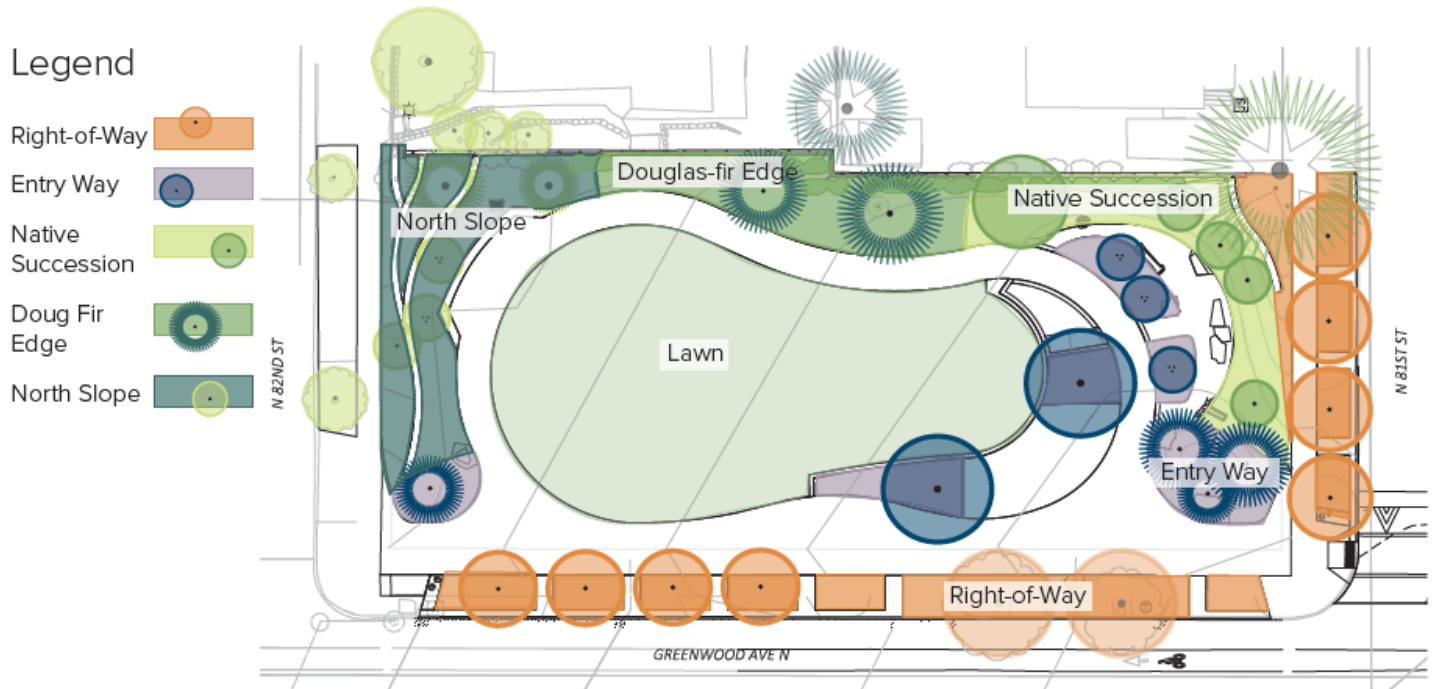


Figure 4: Proposed landscape design

Agency Comments

None

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The SDC organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Interim use, programming, and phasing
- Design development changes
- Materials
- Interpretation
- Lighting

Interim use, programming, and phasing

The SDC commended the project team for their design proposal. Commissioners mentioned the programmed areas provide flexibility for different types of use. The commission highly recommended the project team observe how the park is being used prior to implementing phase II of the park design. Commissioners also recommended phase II occur together, rather than providing elements as funding occurs. The SDC will review any design elements that are a part of phase II. Acknowledging the park space is too small to provide an escape from the urban environment, the Commission also recommended the design team provide a balance between the design of the natural discovery trail and the surrounding urban environment.

The SDC expressed concern with the lack of programming provided for the period before the park is constructed. Commissioners encouraged SPR to understand how they will manage the space during the interim period.

Design development changes

The SDC acknowledged the positive changes made to the design proposal. Commissioners agreed the updated design provided connectivity throughout the park. The commission then commended the design team for the further integration of the plaza and sidewalk. Several commissioners encouraged the project team to include a small reading area within the natural discovery area, while other commissioners acknowledged park users would already be able to read anywhere throughout the park.

Although the SDC expressed a preference for the third alternative crosswalk design, commissioners recommended

the project team receive feedback from the community regarding a preferred design scheme. Commissioners recommended the crosswalk design include contrasting colors.

Materials

The SDC commended the project team for their reuse of materials, specifically for the reuse of the large stone slabs which were recently removed from the public library. Commissioners recommended all bench seating included in the park proposal include bench backs. The Commission mentioned their preference for including wood benches, but acknowledged the challenge of including wood material, which is not a standard used by SPR. The SDC recommended the design address enhancing the transition zone at edges between ground materials within the park as well as on the perimeter. Specifically, commissioners are concerned with the transition between the permeable sidewalk edge and adjacent impermeable sidewalks located with the right of way. The commission also recommended including a transition strip between the permeable pathway and open lawn.

Bike Parking

The SDC recommended the design team relocate the bicycle racks to be closer to the plaza.

Interpretation

The SDC questioned the importance of representing different landscape zones throughout the park. Given the small size of the park and proposed zone areas, commissioners are concerned the landscape zones will blend together. The commission recommended adding small signs, identifying the plant botanical name, for small number of plants throughout the park.

Lighting

The SDC expressed concern with the lack of lighting within the interior of the park.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for their presentation of the design development phase of the Greenwood Phinney Park Development. The commission appreciated the design team providing a proposal for phase I design that will include both parcels. The SDC also appreciated the prioritization of community feedback as well as providing flexibility in the park design to accommodate future community needs. The commission thanked the project team for improving universal accessibility to programmed elements and for providing lighting studies. The SDC voted, 8-0, to approve the design development phase of the Greenwood Phinney Park Development with the following recommendations:

- Return to the SDC with a cohesive phase II design, rather than designing for individual elements as funding occurs
- While the Commission does applaud the team for salvaging the site's existing electrical hook ups, consider including lighting within the park as a regular, not add-alt, budget item in phase I.
- Explore opportunities to provide additional interpretative elements throughout the park
- Consider relocating the bicycle rack near the plaza, to separate from the dog comfort station
- Provide bench backs on all bench seating within the park
- Provide greater attention to how edges are addressed throughout the design proposal.