

Meeting Notes

Loyal Heights Play Area Renovation - Meeting #1

December 11, 2017

7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Loyal Heights Community Center, 2101 NW 77th Street, Seattle

Attendees: Approximately 23 participants

Project Team	Libby Hudson, Planner; Pamela Alspaugh, Sr. Landscape Architect; and Shannon Glass, PLA, Project Manager
Project	Loyal Heights Play Area Renovation will update play equipment with play structures accessible to children of all abilities, ages 2-5 and 5-12. Additionally, the project will enhance safety and improve play area accessibility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
Budget & Schedule	Budget: \$600,000 for planning, design and construction Schedule: Planning & Design: Fall 2017 – Early 2018 Construction: Fall 2018

Introduction & Project Presentation

Hudson presented the project overview explaining that the purpose of the renovation is to improve the play area safety and meet national safety standards (including ADA) by replacing the existing play equipment and access to the play area. Two other projects are also being planned – Community Center upgrades & field synthetic turf replacement for construction in 2018/2019. All these projects will be coordinated. The play area will be constructed first. Shannon Glass will take the project over at the construction document phase.

Pamela Alspaugh presented the site analysis, explaining that the site gets good use, the play area is 20 years old and doesn't meet current safety and design standards and pathways and equipment do not meet ADA standards. The play area is undersized for the use.

Alspaugh presented three conceptual site design alternatives which included play area expansion and then presented play equipment design options geared toward the two age groups, and explained each to the meeting participants, discussing their likes and dislikes with the design alternatives and play equipment options.

Comments and Questions

Site Design

- Like the grassy Lawn Area (between play area and community center)
- Maintain as much as possible the grassy area for free plan and flexible use
- Save trees- Pines important
- Seating on west side is nice – sunny area in cool temps/ under trees also nice for summer shade
- Like the seating placement between grassy area and play area; like tables in sun



- Like to see hillside (between athletic field and play area/basketball court) enhanced for play – with rocks, logs, etc. – would be great for natural play
- Like the original circular path best; Existing circular path is nice & heavily used
- Like circular path – keep it circular. Preserve site lines for the kids using the path

Concerns:

- Concern that additional seating could attract transients
- Concern about parking and conflicts with pedestrian and bicycles; also, the safety of kids crossing the street on 77th

Equipment Design

- Like swings, teeter totters, monkey bars, climbing nets, platforms, tunnels, endless combo
- Like the surfer piece
- Like the yellow/blue equipment for 2-5 year-olds (in lower left of board)
- Like the ramps, multi-levels, circular paths for play, areas for little and big play equipment, plus two separate structures

Style:

- Like the modern look, whimsy, sparking the imaginations, natural-looking materials, not plastic look
- Like the nets in upper levels - in the air
- Like to see durable equipment (don't like equipment that will break down or be difficult to fix)
- Like designs with more metal and wood, less plastic
- Like the bright colors are nice on rainy, grey days
- Like the different platforms
- A ninja course would be great –obstacle courses with monkey bars, spinning equipment
- Would like to see rocks & tree stumps – climbing structures (Not natural, but rather the plastic ones, such as those in Webster Park)

Age & Play Focus:

- Playground heavily used by all ages – including when siblings are doing sports in the athletic field below
- Neighborhood is constantly changing as families grow and change out - Need a balance
- The play area should balance the needs of the 2-5 year-olds and the 8-11 year-olds
- Co-op and preschools use play area daily and can't walk to Salmon Bay Park
- Play equipment should be appropriate for 2-5 year-olds
- Play area used by all ages – preschoolers during day, older kids after school - Balance needed in design

Concerns:

- The “baby bucket” swings are odd
- Make equipment look more like the natural looking structures
- Don't like flowers
- Complexity - Grandkids don't know how to use play equipment at Madison Park
- Concerned about on-going maintenance - Would like more metal and wood, less plastic
- Keep wood chips
 - Woodchips not assessible – Should have a small area without wood chips to assure play is accessibility

Questions

- Could you include a zipline?
Parks Response: the site too small to meet space requirements for a zipline
- How would the seating wall help in the design? (Some liked, others not- nervous with little ones)
Parks Response: Seating walls act as a barrier for the little ones and are easily cleaned when tagged
- What's the construction Timeline?
Parks Response: To be determined, hoping Fall 2018
- Will berm be leveled?
Parks Response: Likely, to expand the play area to meet play standards
- Will lighting be included? Neighbors don't want large lights, but pathway lights would be welcome
Parks Response: The budget does not allow for the cost of new lighting
- Will the metal edging be removed? It's a tripping hazard
Parks Response: Yes, that's an old design - metal edging will be removed as paths replaced
- Are there play-equipment consideration due to rain conditions?
Parks Response: Equipment systems are durable and modular, and can be mixed and matched
- 8-year-old on climbers, while 2-year-old w/disability cannot move wheel chair in woodchips - A better surface that kids enjoy is the playground outside the zoo and on spiral equipment there
Parks Response: That rubber surfacing on the equipment has been replaced and it does not last, plus is costly to replace - Parks is now using "playground grass" instead
- Surface at Salmon Bay school play area good example, not Salmon Bay Park
Parks Response: "Playground grass" is for accessibility - it has a pad under it and it is meant for play areas to provide wheelchair mobility
- Concern about location and number of bike racks – Can these located and designed for the park users and community center visitors?
Parks Response: Bike racks will be coordinated with the other projects at the park

Summary Comments

Site Design:

- Sacrifice the lawn vs. the path to accommodate more area for play needs and balance the design
- Make sure the multiple design teams are talking and coordinating
- Bike racks seem to be primarily used by those going to the center
 - visibility of the rack is important
 - Seattle Parks behind other city agencies in accommodating bike racks and meeting needs of bicyclist
- Don't plant trees that will shade the center roof so that a future solar array can be installed
- Grassy lawn is used for lots of parties



- Existing wall tiles are nice - If they can't be saved maybe something similar could be integrated into the design, like the salmon/leaves imbedded in pathways, such as at Carkeek Park – Something that is organic and kids would need to hunt for throughout the park pathways

Equipment:

- Don't lose the tower/platform and the circular thing (spinner? Component) when mixing equipment types
- Like the separation of equipment for different ages
- Consider music component in the play, provided it's not disturbing to neighbors and is simple (low maintenance – no phone aps)

Comment Cards from the Meeting

Concepts:

- Like concept C. Love the “woody” style look
- Love woody, natural; organic design

Site Design:

- Please keep grassy/lawn area so preschools can utilize (during construction too)
- Keep trees, picnic tables, path for bikes, and basketball court
- Keep path, trees, picnic tables

Equipment:

- Please keep the playground appropriate for 3-5 year-olds – Local preschool (ages 3-5) uses Tuesday-Friday (morning & afternoon) and community center preschool uses daily
- Would love more swings, (2nd) slides and climbing for 3-5 year-olds
- Include climbing, slides, swings for 3-5 year-olds
- Add boulders tree stumps, natural elements for free play. Like leaves, salmon, organic symbols
- Bike Racks must be usable for all types of bikes
 - visible from both the center and play area
 - located near the community center entry (high use) to serve center, not just play area
 - would be more appealing if covered and on hard surface
- Play area design team and center rehab team must coordinate in respect to access and equipment