

Meeting Notes: Puget Ridge Playground - Play Area Renovation

Meeting #2 Schematic Design

June 6, 2018 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Open House at the Park - 6929 21st Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98106

Attendees: Approximately 20 participants (including 8 children)

Project Team Libby Hudson, Planner; David Bader, Landscape Architect; and C. J. de Leon, Project Manager

Project Puget Ridge Playground Renovation will update play area and play equipment with structures accessible to children of all abilities. Additionally, the project will enhance safety and improve play area accessibility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Budget & Schedule Budget: \$300,000 for planning, design and construction
Schedule: Planning & Design: Spring & Summer 2018
Construction: Fall/Winter 2018

Open House Discussion

Staff presented the preferred schematic design which was developed based on the input from the last meeting and the on-line survey. The project will maintain the basic layout of the small park, including keeping it fully fenced. It will enhance the interior perimeter trail to make it loop the entire small park, and provide new play structures with a “forest-inspired theme” that includes a play structure with multi-levels and a slide in the upper terrace, and toys for younger tots in the lower terrace. A new seating plaza will be provided with new picnic benches, including a child-sized picnic bench to replace the existing one. The play area is also being enhanced for accessibility. A new drinking fountain will be placed in the existing location, with an accessible pathway to it.

Holding the meeting at the park allowed the community members to discuss the park renovation proposal and provide specific design comments to the landscape architect, at the drawing board and while walking around the park. Community members brought their children to view the plans and play equipment and provide comments and suggestions regarding the park renovation project. Following is a summary of comments.

Comments and Questions

- When is construction expected?
Response: We are hoping to start construction in fall 2018, after school starts.

Site Design:

- We cherish the existing base of the drinking fountain and hop that can be retained; The glass pavers were a fundraiser for the original park and used to recognize the many volunteers.
- I don't see swings? Wasn't that possible?
Response: We did a design with one child swing, but the park is just too small; in order to meet required safety zones, the swing ate up the lawn area and changed the character of the park significantly from the charming little park that it is.
- What about the existing gate?
Response: We will incorporate it into the design in some manner, and try to retrofit the opener if we can, so that it can meet required accessible standards.

- Could the whole park be accessible? What about kids that cannot walk, what's available for them?
Response: Wheelchair access is available to the seating area, drinking fountain and the upper and lower play terraces. The climbing structure will have wheelchair transfer.
- Love to see more plants & shrubs, especially in the north and east sides that are bare
- Seating – Include Adirondack chairs and small chairs for kids
- Raised planters that can be planted by the neighbors
- Keep the shrubs!!!
- Like the log benches along the trail; Suggest adding cutout niches for kids to find and put things in, or other little touches to discover along the trail
- Kids love the hidden trail; enhancing it shouldn't take away the discovery aspects of the trail.

Play Structures:

- Provide a treehouse/clubhouse - Kids love the "treehouse" at the top of the play structure; It's like a clubhouse - A place to sit and create- there is a little bench and table under the roof and it always has a collection of stuff inside the little house
- Include imaginative theme with the forest theme
- Include a place to climb (keep the see-saw toys or something like it)
- Include an obstacle course – maybe incorporated with the climbing structure
- Would like to see a bigger slide than what's there

Site Issues:

- Dogs occasionally come into the park, although there is a "no dogs" sign; Suggest putting up a sign indicating where the nearest off-leash park is located
- What about the drainage issue in the roadway?
Response: We discussed the issue with SPU and SDOT staff and they went out to the site and are suggesting some improvements that might help the road drainage situation, but there are other higher priority drainage issues on their list, and it is not likely that funds will be available soon.

Trail:

Staff led the children along the proposed looping pathway to solicit kids' ideas about what they would like to see and do along the trail.

- I'd like corn or something edible
- Flowers, maybe like woodland wildflowers
- Something that attracts owls
- How about placing bird houses and/or bat houses in the trees along the path?
- Like to climb on the rockery; Would love to find hidden treasure in niches in the rocks
- I like going under the bushes
- I like climbing the trees
- Finding hidden leaves along the path would be fun
- Finding a bird's nest
- Finding little treasures or art in trees & shrubs– there used to be a geo-cash here somewhere
- How about a sundial or something that reflects light?
- A little fort or hidden spot would be fun along the trail

Other Comments Received

- The current drop between the two terraced play areas, doesn't seem to be an issue with kids
- People want to see the play equipment rather than the theme because a theme can be expressed in different ways; they want to see the function of the equipment, rather than color
- "Nature-theme" implies natural wood, not green and brown metal poles and netting; hope color is not the deciding factor for the theme; A broader interpretation can incorporate a more diverse set of play equipment
- Playhouse is important; everyone loves the little house – we need something similar
- Think about a bench swing somewhere
- Small art pieces to hang in tree or mount among shrubs might be appealing to the community (fairy houses or pretend animal dens or nests, etc.)
- A perimeter trail is fine, but the section running along 21st, next to the ugly fence isn't as appealing – needs a buffer of plants there
- Leave as much of the lawn as possible
- Can the fence be replaced?

Comments can be sent to Libby Hudson

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