

Meeting Notes

Lakewood Play Area Renovation - Meeting #1

October 16, 2019

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Hawthorne Elementary School – 4100 39th Ave S, Seattle

Attendees: Nine participants

Project Team	Libby Hudson, Planner and David Bader, Landscape Architect
Project	The Lakewood Playground Play Area Renovation project will update the play area with new play equipment that meets current safety standards and improve access to the play area in conformance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
Budget & Schedule	Budget: \$320,000 for planning, design and construction Schedule: Planning and Design: Through Early Summer 2020 Construction: Later Summer through end of 2020 (beginning after Labor Day)

Introduction & Project Presentation

Libby Hudson described the project, budget and schedule noting that the project has a small budget and will be focused on the play area only and does not include the ballfield. The intent is to maintain the structure of the play area and replace the equipment, retain the beautiful stone wall, and protect the lovely, large Empress tree that is located on the west side of the main walkway into the play area. The project will also provide accessible routes to the play structure, sand pit and restroom.

An online survey has been on-going and will stay open for a few more weeks, closing at the end of October. So far nearly 100 people have responded to the survey. Libby summarized the survey results:

- Most people come to the park two or more times a week, and usually visit in the afternoons
- The most popular activities are playing on the play structure, swings and sand pit and the most important play elements desired in the updated play area are climbing, sliding and swinging.
- Responders enjoyed the nature theme the most, compared to imaginative and modern styles.
- The survey also asked what people liked most about the playground. The location, variety of play, and the green trees and field were the favorites, along with the sand pit and swings.

David Bader, Parks landscape architect, described the proposed conceptual renovation design, reiterating that that the budget is very small and the focus of the renovation will be to keep the basic layout, improve the access to the play area and to the restrooms to meet the standards of the Americans with Disability Act and to replace the existing wood play structure and update other pieces of play equipment. The swings are in pretty good condition, so the small budget would be focused on providing new play equipment that would need similar safety zone area, replacing the play structure and other pieces with more modern equipment that responds to the desires of the community.

We definitely will be retaining the stone wall and may want to add more seating. The existing Empress tree has significant roots within the play area (where the bouncy toys are situated in the wood chips), and we want to be

very careful what type of excavation we do in that area. We are thinking it would be best to replace the toys in the same place and utilize the existing holes for new footings, therefore minimizing disturbance of the trees root zone.

We understand that the community values the stone wall and upper-level sand pit. Providing ADA access to the sand pit and meeting the required slopes is a little challenging and may require lengthening the stone wall. If this is the design, we would match the wall material if we do that.

Discussion

Seating

- Berm under trees currently used for seating in summer months
- Add, picnic tables with shade
- Could use additional seating facing both directions – field and play area

Play Components

- Slide
 - Metal slides get too hot in summer; Like the covered plastic slide that is there now. It would be good to keep that type of component
 - Don't like those bumpy slides
 - Like the slide at Othello with the "elevator," weighted lift
 - If the route to the slide is very accessible, don't need a lift
 - Like the Seward Park slide that drops to the ground
 - Want a tunnel slide
 - Consider the best location for the slide if metal – so it doesn't heat up in summer
- Climbing structure
 - Want regular monkey bars, not those plastic sliders – they are too difficult for kids to move
 - Covered play structure is good – can use rain or shine
 - Add hand-holds on the outside the climbing structure to allow older kids to climb along the structure
- Play Panels
 - These don't weather well
 - Kids get bored with those; don't add much play value.
 - Better to replace with spring toys or teeter totters that get more use
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- Musical play elements
 - Not good here; neighbors too close
- Stone Wall
 - Keep the natural stone wall; Such an important feature of the play area
 - This is currently a climbing wall and a play element for climbing; Increase the challenge in some way Enhance and increase focus on was a climbing wall; Incorporate into play feature in some fashion
- Sand pit
 - Kids love the sand pit



- Could use more seating near it
- Other Possible Play Features
 - Add big rocks for climbing; enhance natural play here
 - Add spinning feature
 - Web spinner like Mt. Baker Playground
 - Zip line
 - Open the play to older kids; add components that will be attractive to kids aging out of the play area; Field has been used to set up a Ninja Warrior-type challenge course; make sure something like that is possible- birthday party obstacle course
 - Merry-go-round
 - Georgetown web climber would be cool
 - Like play areas at Powell Barnett and Seward parks

Landscaping

- Laurel hedge near the sand pit has good informal play value

Play Area Theme or style

- The castle theme or other?
- Don't make it "fake." Construct with cool natural things.
- Like color, but something that is straight forward, don't make it up.
- Leave room for the children's imagination. Play value is more important than how it looks
- Simplicity

Other

- Include picnic tables near soccer field -with shade
- Consider playground grass for more accessibility -could be in limited area if too expensive
- Basketball was adjustable; maybe repair
- More garbage cans
- Comfort station is dark; Like the Jefferson Park restrooms; make it gender neutral
- Add bike racks (big enough for cargo bikes) that allow bikes to be locked; Many come to park by bike

Next Steps: The next community meeting is planned for Tuesday, December 10, 2019 from 6:30 – 7:00 p.m. at the Hawthorne Elementary School in the Cafeteria – 4100 39th Ave S