

Meeting Notes

Madrona Beach Play Area Renovation - Meeting #2

October 30, 2019

7:00 p.m. to 8:20 p.m.

Spectrum Dance Studio at the old bathhouse – 800 Lake Washington Blvd., Seattle

Attendees: Approximately 8 participants

Project Team	Libby Hudson, Planner; Shwu-jen Hwang, Sr. Landscape Architect; and Kent Scott, Sr. Capital Project Coordinator
Project	Madrona Beach Play Area Renovation project will renovate the existing sand and water play area by restoring play features at the popular Lake Washington beach park. The renovation will enhance the water sand play experience and improve accessibility to the beach from the parking lot in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
Budget & Schedule	Budget: \$550,000 for planning, design and construction Schedule: Planning, Design & Bidding: Through Early Summer 2020 Construction: Late Summer through the end of 2020 (beginning after Labor Day)

Introduction & Project Presentation

Libby Hudson described the project noting that this was the second community meeting. She summarized the previous meeting that was held in late August, noting that the previous input from the meeting and the online survey (139 responses) indicates that the majority of those participating were interested in continuing to enjoy the lakeside park for its access to water views and swimming, and desired that the project enhances the free sand and water play, keeping a natural play theme for the beach play area with use of sand, rocks, driftwood and water. The desire is to repair the water pump and stream system for sand and water play and to keep the restoration simple. The comments primarily indicated that there was no need to do a whole new play area, but rather restore the sand/water play and expand the beach area if possible. Other comments included providing natural vegetation along the shoreline south of the sand beach and play area to enhance the environment. Kent Scott added that at the last meeting, community members expressed a desire that maintenance of the beach play area be reinstated as part of the restoration project.

Shwu-jen Hwang presented the Schematic design that was developed after receiving comment received from the community. Shwu-jen described the proposed renovation plan:

- The non-working water pump will be replaced with a new wheel water pump with water-table that has a series of drops and opportunity for water play. This design allows play access for kids in wheelchairs because it is raised. The water pumped from the wheel will then fall from the series of raised metal channels. There are also opportunities for kids to dam the water with weirs as the water flows through the channels. From here the water moves to a more natural area through the existing designed stream bed.
- We plan to restore the stream bed. At the last meeting we explored discovered that the stream is filled with sand and may be able to be restored by removing the sand and debris. It may need some re-engineering to provide enough drop to allow the water flow to move the sand from the stream bed.



- Since the community expressed that they want the play area to be “natural,” we are keeping the logs and rocks and expanding on these elements too.
- More benches and picnic areas are planned for the area. The accessible route will connect to the picnic area with ADA tables
- Musical play elements are proposed near the dance studio at the open lawn area. These will be soft-sounding elements that can be used for outdoor dance performances that the Spectrum Dance Studio does occasionally
- The accessible paths will lead from the ADA parking areas to the main entrance of the dance studio in the old bathhouse (which is in good condition) and also along the existing channel where the existing seating wall is located. This pathway will be improved to meet standards for slope and width. The existing “island” in this walkway will either be removed to widen the path or modified to reduce maintenance issues from the grass growing in-between the cobbles surrounding the larger rocks. Also, the existing social path leading to the beach – which is located along the lakeshore at the southern end of the play area beach. This path will be enhanced and graded to meet accessibility slope requirements. During the summer months a “Mobi Mat” will be added so that those in wheelchairs can follow this path right down to the waters-edge.
- If budget allows, we plan to remove more of the existing concrete steps that are located at the northern end of the beach and extend the beach another 15’. The original design had hoped to do this, but funding restricted the amount of beach enhancement possible. The plan is to move the existing logs and rocks upslope, remove more concrete steps, grade the area to a natural slope for an extension of the beach area. This will create a more natural and less steep slope and will also be edged with logs and rocks to dissipate the winter storm waters, to reduce scouring of the new beach or undermine the base of the trail or concrete steps.

Kent Scott noted that in the previous meeting, attendees noted that the maintenance of the beach play area fell off through the years and that the Seattle Parks Grounds and Maintenance groups review projects in anticipation of adequate maintenance is possible for park renovation projects. The project team is working with these groups to assure that the play area can be maintained properly to continue the designed play functions.

Discussion

Water Play Feature

- Q: The water table might not be durable enough to withstand teenagers and other people abusing the metal water tables. Has this product been used in other parks in the city?
SPR Response: No. SPR has not installed it in our system, but it is produced by a company that has very durable equipment and has been installed in city parks in Massachusetts. Also, Seattle Center has a different piece of similar equipment (Archimedes – outside) and it has worn well there.
- Q: Could the same sort of function be provided without a purchased product? Something built to fit the site, such as building a masonry surround that would be durable for the site and house the water pump that serves the same purpose? Can the water pump and water table be more hidden and the metal frame for the water feature be softened and made to look more natural?
SPR Response: The water table offers wheelchair access for kids, providing a play opportunity that is not possible otherwise. We will look at other options and take the “more natural look” suggestion into consideration as we refine the design.
- Q: Won’t the pump just break again with the situation of water and sand at this site? Won’t the sand be an on-going maintenance issue with the pump mechanism



SPR Response: The wheel rather than lever pump mechanism involves less moving parts and will hold up better than the previous farm pump. The play feature was designed with sand play in mind.

- Q: Kids like to pump the water and the pumping mechanism; will the wheel be too complicated?
SPR Response: The wheel will provide another opportunity to understand how the water is pumped with a wheel rather than a lever. As the water moves away from the pump it will be a more natural play experience.
- Q: Can you clarify where the new water pump and water table will be located in relationship to the existing site?
SPR Response: Yes. The new water feature will be situated close to the existing water pump location, closer to the entrance of the play area and include and expanded concrete pavement to provide for wheelchair maneuver space.
- The pump and slope of the channels need to provide a strong enough water flow to move sand from the channels, so we don't end up with the same problem – the stream/channel being filled with sand. This might be a maintenance issue.
- Q: Where is the water coming from?
SPR Response: The pump water source is potable water. We are required to remove the chlorine from the water before it reaches the lake.
- Q: Could the water source come from the lake?
SPR Response: This might not be possible as special permits are needed to draw any water from the lake.

Gathering Space

- Q: Could you explain the gathering area and the area proposed for beach expansion?
SPR Response: Yes. The picnic area will be level and raised above the beach to provide good observation. Lawn or plants will be incorporated with an additional shade tree to provide comfort and define the beach space. A portion of the existing concrete steps to the beach will be removed to expand the beach. A trail next to the picnic area will be lined with large rocks and driftwood and will continue to the lakefront concrete steps. This will expand the area for additional sandy beach, while reducing the hardscape along the lakeshore. Expansion of the beach and picnic area will depend on the budget and permits.

Circulation Pathways

- Q: What type of material will be used for the newly constructed pathways?
SPR Response: The existing path is stamped concrete and we will probably do something similar. We will consider porous pavement if needed for onsite stormwater management, but it will be budget dependent.
- Kent Scott asked how the accessible route to the restroom would function since it is not going to be part of the completed project but rather a future component. Shwu-jen explained the accessible route- which leads from the ADA parking through the play area, along the concrete steps, zig-zagging on the sloped lawn to get up to the bathhouse, where a ramp will be needed to accommodate the steep grade change up to the bathhouse. This walk is designed to meet ADA standards and would require cross-slope

correction and ramps with handrails and landings to meet these very specific slope standards. Our existing budget does not provide sufficient funds to complete the route to the rest room. Later work will need to pick up from here and lead to the bathhouse restrooms.

Play Element Design Consideration

- Q: My kids are aging out of the natural play at the beach play area and the water play function is really only usable during the short summer months. Maybe there is a better play function for this park, something that could be useful all year round. It would be great if the play area could broaden the age group by providing a bigger play structure that older kids could climb on.
SPR Response: This is one small and unique water/sand play area that is part of a larger Madrona Park. We will explore other parks and other play opportunities within the park system and consider where older kids might be provided play opportunities.
- In refining the plan – suggest not focusing on musical play elements. They are not appropriate at this park. The water is the main feature and that should be the focus.
- Suggest that the priority should be on maximizing the playability of the site, while also providing access to those of all abilities.
- Like the plan to convert concrete to beach. If this component requires longer period of time because of permit process, neighbors are OK and encouraged the project team to get the permits.

Friends Group

- As discussed at the previous meeting, the neighborhood might consider forming a “friends” group to help enhance the on-going maintenance of the play area. SPR would encourage such a friends group, and it would need to originate from the community effort. SPR could help connect interested parties through information from the meetings sign-in sheets.

Schedule and Next Steps

- Q: When will the project be constructed?
SPR Response: The construction is planned for the fall of 2020, after the busy summer season.
- Next steps: Libby Hudson explained that this is the last community meeting. There was a meeting in August on conceptual ideas and an online survey that solicited 139 responses. The input gathered was considered in developing the schematic design being discussed tonight. The project team will consider the comments made tonight and any we receive afterwards as we refine the schematic design. People can follow the project on the project web page. The notes from this meeting and the project drawings will be provided on the project web page which is listed on the agenda. Any further comments can be sent to Libby Hudson’s email – also listed on the agenda. Shwu-jen noted that the refined schematic will be posted on the project web page in Spring 2020.