Resolution 2015-207

Resolution Accepting the Appointed Citizen Advisory Committee Recommendations and Approving the Concept Bossen Field Park Master Plan and Phasing Plans

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) is the steward of the Minneapolis park system;

Whereas, The MPRB has allocated $4.25 million from the Neighborhood Park Capital Improvement Project Budget for play area, athletic field and site improvements between 2012 and 2017 at Bossen Field Park;

Whereas, MPRB approved the composition and charge for an appointed community advisory committee to develop a master plan and phasing to guide the development of Bossen Field Park;

Whereas, The community design process included a site tour, three appointed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings, three Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, two meetings each with Keewaydin AVID Club students and Keewaydin/Wenonah PTA and Benefitting Bossen, outreach meetings with Latino neighborhood residents, and door-to-door and electronic surveys in English, Spanish and Somali and;

Whereas, The CAC finalized its recommendations supporting the Concept Plan titled C1-Flow and phasing for project implementation at their April 21, 2015 meeting; and

Whereas, This resolution is supported by the MPRB 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan, which envisions “Dynamic parks shape city character and meet diverse community needs;”

RESOLVED, That the Board of Commissioners accept the appointed Citizen Advisory Committee recommendations and approve the concept Bossen Field Park Master Plan and phasing plans; and

RESOLVED, That the President of the Board and Secretary to the Board are authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

TO: Planning Committee

FROM: Michael Schroeder,

DATE: May 20, 2015

SUBJECT: Resolution Accepting the Appointed Citizen Advisory Committee Recommendations and Approving the Concept Bossen Field Park Master Plan and Phasing Plans

BACKGROUND

This action recommends for Board approval a concept master plan for Bossen Field Park and a phasing plan for implementing the design. In November, 2014 the MPRB approved the composition and charge for an appointed community advisory committee to develop a master plan to guide the development of Bossen Field Park.

Bossen Field is a 37-acre city-wide athletic complex and neighborhood park on the south edge of the city at 28th Avenue South and 56th Street East. The park currently has 9 softball fields, 1 baseball field, 1 football field, two parking lots, 2 play areas, a basketball court, informal picnic areas, a wading pool, and a support/restroom building. The park was developed between 1955 and 1960. It has had small updates since then, but overall the park facilities are worn and in need of accessibility and safety updates. Most of the fields are undersized for today's standards; outfields overlap, lack fencing or clear circulation patterns, and do not provide adequate player protection. This aged facility does not function well for its intended use, and is not welcoming to other park users when fields are in use, leaving few amenities accessible to the surrounding neighborhood.

The neighborhood surrounding Bossen has a higher than the city average percentage of families of color, comprised of Latino, Somali and African-Americans concentrated in multi-family rental properties on the east side of the park. The rental properties also house many seniors, as do the single family houses in the surrounding neighborhood. These demographics led to identifying this project as a pilot to use racial equity impact analysis to achieve a better balance between neighborhood and city-wide athletic use of the park. Communities of color are often underrepresented in government decision making processes that directly impact them. An equity lens assisted in developing appropriate, effective engagement methods and tools and in defining decision points. The goal was to identify and mitigate potential negative impacts to communities of color and to develop design solutions which benefit all park users.

The charge of the 20-member appointed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was to develop a concept master plan to better meet the needs of the current park users. The charge was to:

- Become knowledgeable about the project and its scope and advise MPRB staff and consultants throughout the planning process.
- Contribute to broad community engagement by acting as primary contact for represented communities, and by enhancing the project's interaction with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Make recommendations to the MPRB Commissioners for an updated Master Plan for Bossen Field Park which strives to meet both citywide recreation and neighborhood recreation needs, and ensuring sustainable, accessible, safe and welcoming design.
- Make recommendations to the MPRB Commissioners on prioritization of improvements to the park so that they can be implemented in phases.

The community design process was structured through CAC meetings but the content of the information provided to the CAC was gathered through many other types of outreach and data gathering which occurred outside of meetings. This outside information provided the CAC with key and relevant information on which to base decisions and shape a design that balances community desires and athletic needs.

To connect with area residents, project Information was sent out on paper using required postcards and mailings to over a three-block radius (704 postcards). Flyers translated into Spanish and Somali were posted in multiple locations at the park, distributed to nearby residential buildings and on the MPRB's web site. Door-to-door surveys in English, Spanish and Somali were conducted in multi-family residential buildings near the park. Electronic communications, including the project page, news releases, gov-delivery, Survey Monkey, Mindmixer electronic forum and Commissioner Musich's District 5 newsletters were used to share information and elicit comments.

Stakeholder group meetings included three Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, two meetings each with Keewaydin AVID Club (middle school) students, Keewaydin/Wenonah PTA, Benefitting Bossen (a group of service providers in the neighborhood) and outreach meetings with Latino neighborhood residents and Latino CAC members. Three members of the CAC were Latino: Chair, Alberto Monserrate, Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) appointee Maribel Osorio and Councilmember Quincy Appointee Paola Buenos.

Assistance from Community Outreach staff, Michelle Kellogg and Elise Niedermeier, MPRB interpreter Abdillahi Mohamud, racial equity consultant Julie Nelson (Government Alliance on Race and Equity Director) and, especially, NENA outreach staff person, Maria Alcaraz, were invaluable for outreach efforts. Maria helped facilitate individual and group meetings to ensure two of our Spanish speaking CAC members were comfortable and engaged through this

process. She also led a NENA community survey at the same time as our baseline park survey and teamed with our Somali-speaking outreach staff in the apartments near Bossen so we could reach Spanish-speaking and Somali-speaking residents. She also led a Spanish focus group meeting on the three concepts which weighed heavily in the final design.

Targeted translation and interpretation were employed to communicate with stakeholder groups with language barriers. Spanish interpreters were scheduled for all CAC meetings and surveys, CAC agendas, and meeting presentations were translated into Spanish.

Using these methods, over 180 people were reached in person through CAC, PAC, focus group meetings or door-to-door surveys. Close to 2,000 people (with some potential for overlap) received information or provided comments through mail, e-mail, newsletters, surveys, forums, or paper comments.

To begin the CAC process, a site tour was held on a sunny day in February. Many tour participants saw areas of the park they did not typically see and saw some of the grading and other problems with the park.

The first CAC meeting focused on scope of the project, existing conditions, current standards, needs and desires of park users. Resident information was collected through door-to-door surveys and neighborhood appointee CAC members. Non-resident information was primarily from the electronic survey on Survey Monkey.

Themes on why people used the park include:

- Resident stakeholders used the park for self-directed activity, childrens' play and quiet enjoyment.
- Non-resident users were more likely to be involved in sports activity, self-directed activity, and childrens' play.

Themes on what most needed improvement include:

- Resident stakeholders requested bathroom, wading pool and picnic area improvements
- Non-resident users supported bathroom improvements while other preferences were evenly spread over the rest of the park, including ball fields and parking.

All park users—residents and non-residents—shared a common desire for soccer/flexible field space, a picnic shelter, and nature/gardens.

An interesting fact came out of NENA door-to-door surveys regarding MPRB programs. The survey asked if the respondent knew how to register for MPRB programs and if not, would they like to learn. Of the Spanish speaker responses, 78% answered that they didn't know how to register and would like to learn how.

The second CAC meeting presented survey themes from the first meeting and three draft concepts: A-Lawn Games, B-Gardens and C-Swings. Feedback was collected at the CAC meeting, PAC meeting, Spanish focus group and other discussions.

Most stakeholder groups preferred concept B—Gardens, which showed a four-field softball pinwheel in the south side of the park. The northeast corner was focused on varying kinds of gardens and nature play. Open field space was located near the center of the park.

However the focus group with Spanish-speaking apartment residents strongly preferred Concept C—Swings. They liked the proximity of the open field space to the apartments and also liked the connections through the park. Swings, slides and gardens were all popular features for the NE corner. Parking accessed off of 31st Avenue was not recommended, as traffic was already seen as too heavy and dangerous for children accessing the park.

With a split preference, staff considered weighed the other stakeholders preference for Concept B and how to consider racial equity. In discussions, Concept B was preferred because it was believed that locating the pinwheel closest to the freeway impacted the fewest people because of the existing highway noise and light. In looking at the adjacent properties, however, more people (and communities of color) lived adjacent to the park on the east (on 31st Avenue) than adjacent to the park on the north (at 56th Street). 56th Street has two lots per block adjacent to the park. In addition, one block is occupied by a church. On this side of the park, the pinwheel actually only impacted a few housing units in comparison to dozens along 31st Avenue. In addition, 31st Avenue is a quiet residential street; while 28th Avenue is a neighborhood collector with a bus route and a freeway entrance and exit. Focusing more intense activity toward 28th Avenue and 56th Street is less impactful than placing it near 31st Avenue. With this analysis, it became clear that Concept C would impact fewer families and also allow for adjacent community open space strongly desired by residents.

The third CAC meeting presented the feedback on the three previous concepts, as well as the above analysis and Concept C-1 Flow was discussed. Several questions about the northeast corner were raised and preferences were recorded on paper feedback forms. The consensus of the CAC was that the concept for the NE corner should be modified to better support community needs, incorporating a small picnic area and shelter, gardens and fewer hammocks and swings, which were seen as niche ideas. Bench swings or gliders at the sunset viewing area were supported. These changes are reflected in their resolution.

Staff presented the preliminary finding of the historic consultant evaluating the existing building, which indicated that it may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Staff will prepare plans to protect the integrity of the character-defining features of the building, such as its “heroic” overhang, simple finishes and fixtures. A full report is expected in mid-May.

In addition, field information from the Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment suggests that most test pits showed relatively clean fill. A full report will be coming later in May.

The CAC also heard comments about the desire of the community to have fixed soccer goals in the open field spaces along 31st Avenue. Staff responded that installing permanent goals would open this space up to reserved league use, and that was not thought to be supporting the community goal for accessible open field space. The CAC recommended that staff continue to work with neighbors to provide goals the community can access.

Upon concluding the discussion the CAC voted unanimously to support Concept C-1 Flow. Among all of the feedback forms, only one indicated that they opposed the concept, while 21 supported or strongly supported the concept. The CAC offered the following resolution:

> The Bossen Field Master Plan CAC resolves to accept Concept C-1 Flow as presented with a recommendation that the NE corner is further tweaked, exploring more opportunities with nature and picnicking and to support what the community would like to see in NE corner rather than niche ideas.
>
> Amendment: Recommendation for a serious exploration on how to accommodate soccer nets for usable space in the open field spaces in the plan for neighborhood use.

Project Funding and phasing

The current funding is estimated to support the first two phases of the concept master plan. The third phase includes items seen as more “nice to have” rather than needs and will require additional funding sources.

> Phase 1: Play area, two lighted softball fields on the south side of the site, re-habilitation of the existing building, and, while it was not shown in the CAC diagrams, a new maintenance garage which is needed in order to re-habilitate the existing building.
>
> Phase 2: lighted softball pinwheel, open field spaces, two basketball courts, expanded parking on the south side, and modified parking on the north side.
>
> Phase 3: Baseball diamond improvements, northeast corner improvements, splash pad (or wading pool), concession/restroom building (at center of pinwheel).

Concepts for phasing work on the park based on the funding available were presented.

The CAC unanimously supported the proposed phasing plan with one amendment which received a 7-6 vote in support.

The Bossen Field Master Plan CAC Resolves to support the phasing plan presented at the meeting tonight (April 21st 3rd CAC meeting).

Amendment (7 in favor, 6 opposed): To include lighting for the pair of softball fields to the resolution (in the funded phases).

FUNDING/COST SUMMARY

Sources			$4,252,300.00
2012 Capital Levy Funds-Playground and Site	$	250,000.00	
2015 Net Debt Bonds- Athletic Fields and Site	$	640,000.00	
2016 Net Debt Bonds- Athletic Fields and Site	$	2,500,000.00	
2017 Net Debt Bonds- Athletic Fields and Site	$	450,000.00	
2017 Capital Levy- Athletic Fields and Site	$	412,300.00	
Uses			$4,252,300.00
Design and Construction Admin (5%)	$	212,615.00	
Consulting-Stantec Contract	$	299,250.00	
Construction Budget-all (72%)	$	3,400,435.00	
Contingency (10%)	$	340,000.00	
Balance			$0.00

RECOMMENDATION

MPRB staff recommends acceptance of the appointed Citizen Advisory Committee recommendations and approval of the concept Bossen Field Park Master Plan and phasing plans.

This action supports the 2007-2020 MPRB Comprehensive Plan through Vision Theme 3 and 4:

Vision Theme 3: Dynamic parks that shape city character and meet diverse community needs
Goal: Parks shape an evolving city.
Goal: Park facility renewal and development respects history and focuses on sustainability, accessibility, flexibility, and beauty.

Vision Theme 4: A safe place to play, celebrate, contemplate, and recreate
Goal: Parks are safe and welcoming by design.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Concept FLOW 11x17 - 2015-04-21v2 (PDF)
- CAC 3 presentation final phasing slides all 3 (PDF)

Prepared By: Andrea Weber, Project Manager, Design and Project Management
Review:
Cliff Swenson Completed 05/08/2015 1:50 PM
Michael Schroeder Completed 05/08/2015 5:07 PM
Jayne Miller Completed 05/11/2015 5:26 PM
Planning Committee Pending 05/20/2015 5:20 PM