



Community Mtg 3

Barrie Park Community Meeting #3

Location: Barrie Park Center

Date: April 22, 2015

Time: 7pm

Minutes of Meeting

Ms. Jan Arnold, Executive Director of the Park District, made the introductions to the meeting.

Jan Arnold welcomed the attendees and Park District Commissioners and staff that were present. She provided a brief summary of the park planning process thus far noting the previous Community Meetings and Focus Group sessions. The next community meeting is scheduled for May 13th at which Altamanu, Inc. would present refined concepts and results of the third online questionnaire.

Presentation to the Transportation Commission	April 27 th , 2015
Community Meeting #4	Wednesday May 13 th , 2015
Present Recommendation and Costs to Board At Committee Meeting	June 4 th , 2015
Park Board to consider accepting final plan at Regular Board meeting, 218 Madison St.	June 18 th , 2015

There will be a questionnaire posted on the Park District website starting on April 24, 2015 and residents can also contact the Park District through telephone, emails, and mail.

Website: www.pdop.org

Contact: Diane Stanke Email: Diane.Stanke@pdop.org

Ms. Arnold then introduced the design team and handed the meeting over to John Mac Manus of Altamanu, Inc. Mr. Mac Manus presented a PowerPoint presentation and responded to comments throughout the various discussion points.



The PowerPoint presentation can be viewed on line at Website: <http://www.pdop.org>

Summary of the Presentation

The purpose of the meeting was to review feedback from the previous Community Meeting and Public Survey and to gain input from the proposed concepts and ideas.

Mr. Mac Manus reviewed the following:

Main Issues:

- Lack of Park Space
- Artificial Turf or Grass Field
- Organized Sports or Spontaneous Play
- Playground w/ Mulch or Soft Surface Rubber
- Parks as ecological systems
- Connecting young people to outdoors and nature

Ranking activities from the recent survey:

- Playgrounds
- Spontaneous Play/Passive
- Landscaped Areas
- Picnic Grove
- Native Plantings
- Soccer
- Garden Spaces
- Picnic Shelter
- Baseball

Traffic Concerns at Barrie Center

Proposed Speed Table

Barrie Center and Previous Suggestions

Barrie Tot Lot and Exterior Treatments and Previous Suggestions

Barrie Center Reservoir and Previous Suggestions

Barrie Park Entrances

Stormwater Management and Drainage

Sled Hill



Barrie Park Playground and Survey Suggestions

Playground types (Conventional and Natural)

Playground Surfaces

Barrie Park Field and Suggestions

Artificial Turf field

Concepts for Barrie Park

Natural Areas and Unstructured Play

Public Comment on Concepts for the Field Surface (Artificial Turf or Grass Field):

- If you can resolve the drainage, can you have active sports on a natural surface?
 - Yes, but we would have to address the solid clay barrier, it is 10 feet deep of compacted clay until you reach the barrier impermeable cap.
- Do you know how many cubic yards it is to go down 10 feet?
 - Not off-hand.
- I would like to note that many people took the questionnaire before the announcement of the Julian and Brooks Artificial Turf field projects.
- What is the artificial turf made of?
 - It is a plastic material filled with rubber and sand depending on the use.
- Can it be made without the rubber material, only sand?
 - It is not recommended to only have sand as a base.
- There is a new material and it is the product proposed at the Julian and Brooks Artificial Turf projects. (NIKE Grind)
- What are the injury concerns with Artificial Turf?
 - Speaking from the Oak Park Youth Baseball and Softball (OPYBS), I would like to say I had similar concerns (about potential injuries), but Ridgeland convinced me; there have been few injuries due to the playing surface at Ridgeland. I'd also like to add that I am surprised about the usability seen at Ridgeland especially in the use of spontaneous play; I thought we would just have a field to be used for just 9 months out of the year, but I have seen kids make paths in the snow, dig it out to play on it, so we actually have a field that can be used 12 months out of the year. As a safety issue, I have no concerns.

- This question is for the baseball representative – If you use Artificial Turf can you do both sports? Can you play soccer on the dirt infield?
 - Playing both sports on the same (artificial turf) field works at Ridgeland. The field lines look like a maze, but the surface is continuous so it is not an issue. The issue is on a natural surface when soccer players need to play on two different surface-types. When they run off of the grass onto a clay infield field, there is potential for injuries.
- What is the plan for the excavation? Will you need to dig into the clay regardless?
 - We will have to dig no matter what. We would dig into the clay to set a base for the Artificial Turf field or to resolve the drainage issues anyway.
 - Mr. Mac Manus is mentioning the 10 foot deep limit to the clay because last meeting we didn't know what the limits were. But after discussions with the environmental engineer who worked on the park, we know that there is an impermeable barrier 10 ft. below the surface. We therefore have plenty of depth to work with.
- How do you deal with drainage on an Artificial Turf field?
 - In a typical Artificial Turf field, there is a 24" base of gravel and all of the surface material is permeable. The stormwater will drain into the gravel base for retention. Some water will be released slowly into the sewer system while some water will slowly percolate into the ground.
- Has there been a ruling on whether a fence was required for an Artificial Turf field?
 - The board discussed this issue. There is no official policy. It just happens to be that the Artificial Turf fields in Oak Park are surrounded by a fence. But they do not have to be.
- The neighborhood does not want turf. The kids come here for a natural space. Irving School is the only school that does not have an adjacent park and I believe the kids come here for an open park. I also think there will eventually be a fence. I think turf in this tiny park is a huge mistake.
 - I would only respond because the kids could use the space more, the space will become more usable.
 - It depends on what you consider usable.

Public Comment on Scheme 6:

- I have concerns about the adjacent playground to the baseball field. There is a significant safety issue with the players hitting foul balls and other kids are playing nearby in the playground. This can be an issue equally dangerous along the 1st and 3rd baseline. (OPYBS)



- I have a question about the orientation, is it an issue to switch the orientation to face the setting sun?
 - It is not such a big deal, the kids are used to playing into the sun and some wear sunglasses. It is helpful to have a different orientation, but not essential. (OPYBS)
 - We did a survey of baseball fields throughout Oak Park and found a wide variety of orientations, many fields face the South-West.
- Why did the soccer orientation switch? There seems to be a lot of conflict with the ball going into the street if the goals are on the East/West.
- In Forest Park, the fields are orientated North/South and there are no fences. A lot of balls go into the street.
- One issue I have is that I think the worst part of the park is the hill and this concept is to extend it further East. I don't want to close-off the entire South side of the park for more hill.
 - We have heard this comment from other neighbors. This is only a concept. We would investigate the height of the wall in detail. We could make the hill lower than the existing hill and we could berm it or use a different treatment than concrete.
- I was just thinking back to my youth and it was a lot less regimented. If I was a kid now, I would use the baseball field a lot more. I used to swing a rope across the creek.
- By reducing the 'wow' factor of this hill concept, is there a material or solution that can stand up to erosion?
 - We had initially researched an artificial surface for the hill, but the maintenance seemed costly. We are considering changing the slope grade and using native plants that have a strong root system.
- Will the height of the sled hill come down?
 - People have commented that the hill is a little steep and that is perhaps one cause for the erosion.
- For clarity – is the green space on the perimeter of the artificial turf field a different material? Natural grass? Will that create a maintenance issue with the proximity of different materials?
 - The maintenance crew will be able to address the edges with a wire trimmer and then address the broader areas with a wide mower. (PDOP)
- I'd like to comment on the separated Tot Lot – at one point there are 18 kids in the program and they will all need to use the bathroom at different times. There are 2 staff members and they will need to shuttle each child back to the Center (across Lombard) for bathroom breaks. This is a safety issue.
- What size is the soccer field in this scheme?



- 210x135'
- I am here to represent American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO). We have 2,300 soccer players and our preference is to have a bigger field. A U12 field doesn't do us much good. I don't know what the sizes are on the other schemes, but currently we have a full-size field and it would be a disappointment to lose fields in this project.
- The sled hill is great, but how often will it be used?
 - The hill is used all the time. It is the most popular element in the park.
- Are you planning to keep scheme 6 as an option? It seems like there are many things discussed tonight that are wrong in scheme 6.

Public Comments on Scheme 4:

- Will you discuss scheme 4? If we don't end up with an Artificial Turf field, then it appears in this scheme that the field sizes have been diminished. What is the field size in this scheme?
 - The field dimensions are the same as the other scheme. We had worked with a focus group and have been designing under the information we have received.
- I like the running course integrated into the hill.
- I like the picnic grove along the West edge.

Public Comment on Barrie Park in general:

- I live across the street on Taylor. I like the unifying space you have created and I would like to recognize that we have a close proximity to the Arts District on Harrison Street. I'd like to see if we can have a unifying element in Barrie Park to tie in to the nearby Arts District. Does the Park District have a program to consider such things?
 - The Park District has an Arts Advisory committee and they have just selected an art piece to purchase. We are considering this piece for the GRC, currently we have 2 pieces on loan, but there is an advisory committee that reviews such opportunities.
- I commend you on working hard to make things fit. In the past public meetings we have given a lot of varied direction and I can see that you have given a lot of effort to fit all of the requested needs.
- I'd like to know what percentage of the soccer fields will be used for parochial students?
 - All kids are welcome to participate in AYSO.
- Soccer is currently being played at Barrie and there is no fence, so I don't think we need it.
- How can the height of the hill and the proposed change solve the erosion issue?
 - The hill size could be reduced or stay at the same height.



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- I'd like to add that the height of the hill is a benefit for the exercise people. They complained when the Ridgeland hill was demolished and now they all come down to Barrie for exercise.
- I know the Board said they didn't need to fence the artificial turf field, my concern is that at some point they will change their decision to preserve a proposed Artificial Turf field and then fence the entire field.
- We just don't have enough space, that's why people immigrated to America is because where they were there wasn't enough space and trees.
- It appears that you have 3 great plans to discuss and I encourage you to listen in-between the meetings. You have made great progress and we are getting to the finish. No matter what is finally determined, we will get a place where recreation, socialization and friends and neighbors can all come together. I want to express my thanks to the Park District for getting all of the people here to facilitate these conversations.
- The original playground was on the North, but it was moved to the South because Garfield is so busy.
- I have a general comment on the Tot-Lot – just because one concept has the Tot-Lot moved, doesn't mean the space that is there now would be a non-play space. It could be a garden or a space to play around in.
- Can you talk a little bit about the phasing plan? What kind of timetable is considered?
 - This can be complicated because we are talking about the water reservoir structure, the Center building and the field
 - The Park District has a 5 year Capital Improvement Plan with a phasing plan. We would be looking at 2018 or beyond. One of the considerations to be made is what makes most sense in how you can phase it – what you move at what time.
 - If you need to phase and dig deep, you will lose a whole season of the park. That will be hard for a lot of us neighbors who have been here through the long construction phase of the site remediation.
 - Regardless, this will all be done in pieces. Some items could be phased with little impact – Baseball, soil replacement, drainage, Tot-Lot, Sled Hill.
- The reason the clay was graded and compacted was so that water would shed to the corners of the park.
- Is it possible to berm-up the field? (crown?)
 - I believe that's what they tried to do. We know that doesn't work.
- We have lived through this change and the 5 year remediation project and I think it's a shame that the park is only 10 years old. It is a fairly new park and already it needs to be changed because there are already so many problems.
- Is May 15 the final meeting? And then what happens then? Will we vote on the final concept?



- We hope it is the final meeting, I hope we can find resolution. Your feedback and survey responses are very helpful.
- The survey will be written tomorrow based on the questions and conversations discussed tonight. It will be important to include language to define both sides of the discussion about artificial turf or a grass field debate.
- If this project happens down the road in several years, there will be more information on Artificial Turf and surface materials and we could find resolution in any existing health concerns.

Public Comment from the OPYBS representative:

- I wanted to make a statement before I have to leave, I am speaking on behalf of our 1500 members, most of which who wish to be here, but are currently at various games as this is our busy season.
 - Batting cages - We consider them essential. We need them to bring our kids up to a similar level as other Park Districts. The presence of batting cages alleviates a lot of practice space issues; please keep them in the plan.
 - Artificial Turf – Our organization can go either way on this matter, but when there is an Artificial Turf field, the kids can spend more time on the field and it will not get torn up. Last year we discovered that we can had a 30% increase in field time because the Artificial Turf fields remained in great shape.
 - One other scheme had 2 baseball diamonds and I no longer see a response to that in the public survey. We have an enormous shortage and have to go outside of the Village for field space. A second field does not need to be large. It could be for T Ball. But it would be an enormous relief to the congestion.

Comment from audience member post-meeting:

- I have a concern about the scheme with Artificial Turf and the goal is placed in front of the playground. I think there could be a real issue of the ball flying beyond the field similar to the issue at Irving School.

Comment from previous attendee via email (Ben Ahring) to Jan Arnold:

- My overall concern is cost if the direction is to substantially overhaul the park.
- I like simply opening up the entrances, removing the playground planters and redoing the playground. No water feature or sand. Improve drainage for all grass field. Add adult fitness activities / stations up the side of the hill.
- Barrie Center - like redoing the entrance to expand tot lot and reduce pavement redundancy. Paint the building wall by the tot lot.



At 8:30 PM Mr. Mac Manus took the final comments and thanked the attendees and encouraged them to attend the next meeting on May 13th. He encouraged the attendees to tell other residents, neighbors and friends about the park discussions and to please come back to the next meeting. The online survey would be set-up and available online as well as the presentation. The meeting ended.

End of Minutes