



Taylor Park Master Plan Update

March 8th, 2017





Tonight:

A look at the Master Plan from 2008

The “Plan” has to be flexible for changes over time

What has been added or changed since 2008?

A look at some suggestions that have been made since 2008

Discussion



First who are we? Altamanu



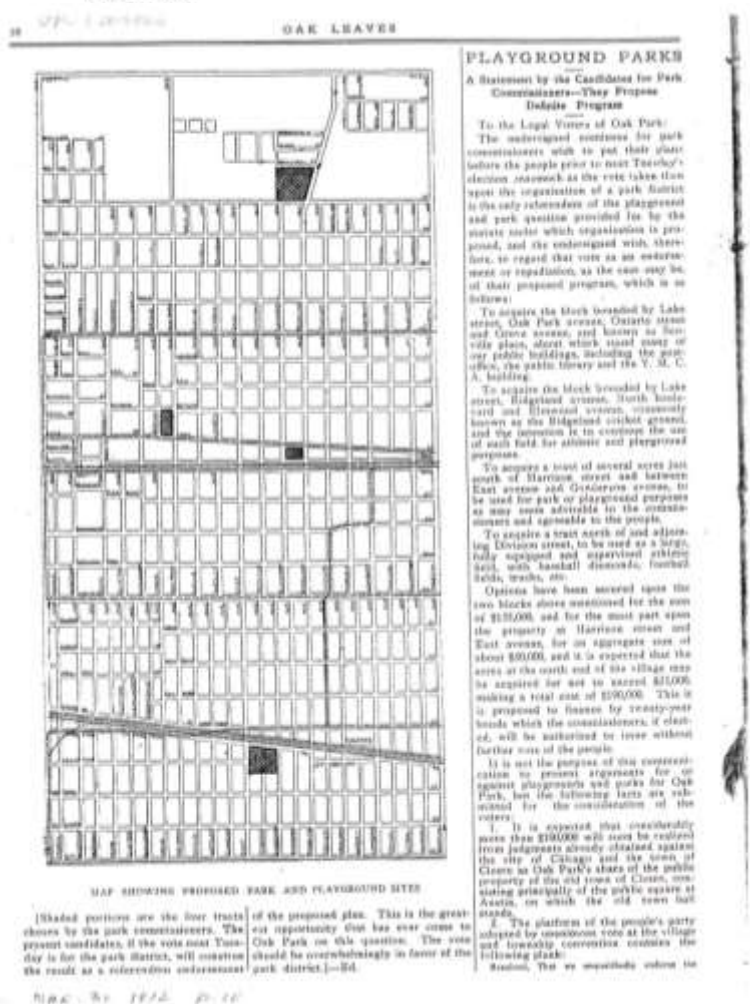
- 13 Master Plans and many built projects for the PDOP, the Village and D97
- Josephine, John, and James at Altamanu are all Oak Parkers



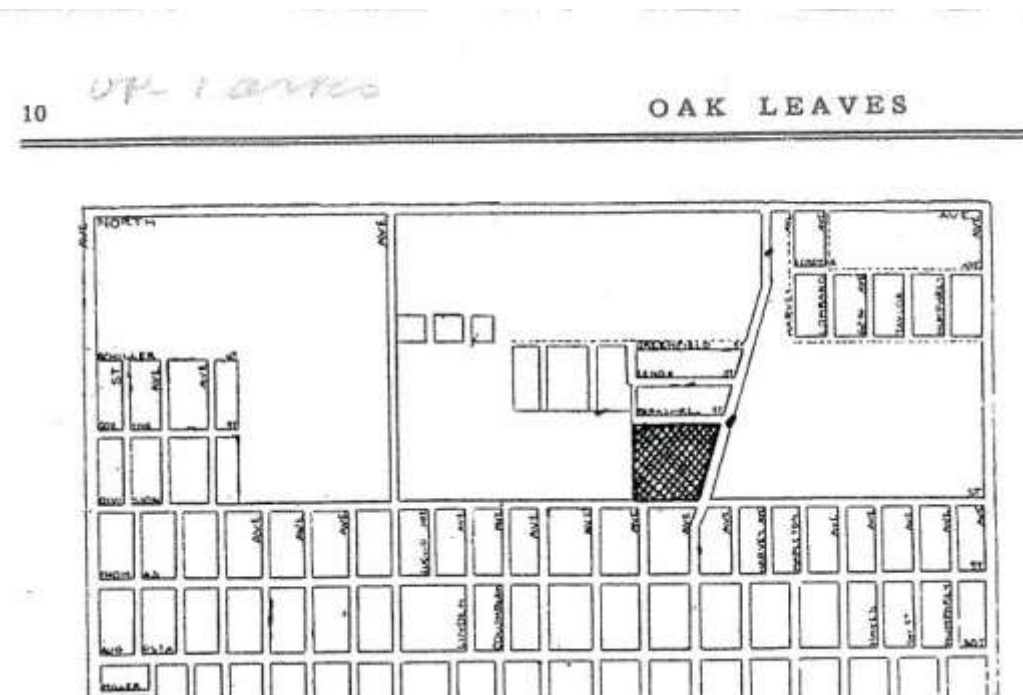
Taylor Park: Dominant Characteristics

- Historic Design
- Typography/Geology
- Use

Taylor Park History



- April 2nd 1912 Permanent Park District Est.
- 1913 A tax levy provided funds
- 1914 District purchased the 12.9 acres of farmland for \$24,416 to create North Park





Taylor Park History



- 1913, Grant Park construction begins, neo-classical style
- Oak Park the Prairie Style of architecture was developing
- Village retained Jens Jensen, “the renowned landscape artist” to design a series of parks “in his natural style”.
- Jensen was a pioneer in the use of native plants.



Taylor Park: FYI Main Issue of the Day



Horse Versus Auto

There was a tax on horses. Horse lobby (stable owners, feed suppliers, tackle and crop makers, haberdashers, blacksmiths, etc.) wanted cars taxed according to their Horse Power.



We Became Landscape Detectives

- We researched original plans at University of Wisconsin Madison
- Overlaid aerial photos over the Plan to determine what was Historic
- Examined his Planting Plan in Detail
- Analyzed the Park to find Original Planting
- Researched Newspapers and Historic Articles





We Became Landscape Detectives

Overlay of Original Jensen Plan Outline on today's Park



Note that park designed in expectation of Ridgeland on a Diagonal



Ridgeland alignment was changed

Taylor Park 2008



Jensen Plan for Taylor Park



The Park Design 1914



Clearing for Picnics

Path similar location

Dense planting on Hill to isolate park from Autos

Tennis Courts later expanded

Field House shown on Plan



Historic Design Investigation: Result

- Residents, Police and Park District appreciated the potential beauty of the shrub massing “but not suitable for today”
- Save what we could of the original
- Interpret Jensen’s style for today





Topography and Geology

And we did so in dealing with storm water





Taylor Park Used to be a Shoreline

It's on part of a Glacial Terminal Moraine, the Oak Park Spit! and the shoreline of ancient Lake Chicago

“a heterogeneous deposit of glacial dense “till” was apparently laid down by several successive ice sheets over Niagara Limestone.”

FWPA Historical Survey of Oak Park 193

This moraine continues through Scoville Park Mills Park and on to the SW





Typology and Geology: Why Such Poor Drainage?

Ground water is trapped between clay layers, flows down hill, resulting in part of the standing water in sections of the park



Recommended Solutions for the drainage problem 2008

Solutions since carried out in Phase 1 shown in yellow





Taylor Park a Refresher: Why the Wetland Photos 2007





Taylor Park a Refresher: Why the Wetland Construction 2012





Fall 2017



Taylor Park Site Master Plan November 2008

PDOP has spent more than \$1.28M on the park





Taylor Park Phase 1 Design & Construction 2011/12

New Path, Shelter
and Storage

New Expanded
Courts, Back Boards,
Seating and Pathways

Playground, Mounds
Retaining Wall & Planting

Restored Restroom
Building, Benches,
Planting, Retaining Wall



Wetland, Bridge,
Planting, Paths



And Taylor Park Master Plan & Phase 1 Design



Phase 1 Design and Construction included: Tennis Courts & lighting, playground, retaining walls, new paths, drainage, wetlands, wetlands bridge and planting



Do You Remember the Playground?



Playground was out of date, serious problems with erosion



Phase 1 Design and Construction included: Tennis Courts & lighting, playground, retaining walls, new paths, drainage, wetlands, wetlands bridge and planting



A Closer Look



Outdated equipment, serious grade and erosion issues



PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK





Taylor Park Since 2012

Lost Elms and Ash Trees





Taylor Park Since 2012

Picnic Grove

Some Residents asked the PDOP to improve sight lines into the park for the police.

2016 PDOP cleared overgrown shrubs & invasive plant material

PDOP also reduced the number of attendees that are allowed under the permit to reduce crowd size.



2012/13 PDOP replaced the irrigation system in the field

2015 planted some historic Oak.

2013/14 PDOP/VOP addressed drainage & ice issues along Ridgeland



Taylor Park Since 2012

And someone decided to drive thru the Wetland





Taylor Park Projects to be carried-out this Year

Storm water will be drained to Expanded Wetland

Drainage Improvements



Wetlands to
be Expanded



Recommendation from the Master Plan 2008

All Carried-Out

Keep the natural character of the park

Rehab the tennis courts and the lights

Add a shelter NE of tennis courts

Add storage for summer camps etc.

Add wetland the SE corner and expand along Ridgeland

Improve the playground and expand into the landscape

Replace the irrigation system in the field

Plant new canopy trees and understory of flowering trees

(ongoing planting historic oaks and native trees)

Improve the grading and drainage

(ongoing, in progress)

Add new pathways

(some carried out)



Taylor Park Today





Other Recommendation from the Master Plan

Redesign the Picnic Grove – interpretation of “Jensen” style
&

Move it further into the park

Realign path towards Berkshire

Add a “Discovery/Natural Area” on NE side

Redesign entryways

Add a small plaza to the Comfort Station

Regrade field, raise eastern end

Add 1 light on the NE corner for kids practice on the fields

Picnic Grove From Community Meeting 2008

Last Meeting We Agreed to Redesign the Picnic Grove



Picnic Grove From 2008

Last meeting you liked the idea of an interpretation of Jensen's Council Ring



Glenwood Children's Garden by Jensen

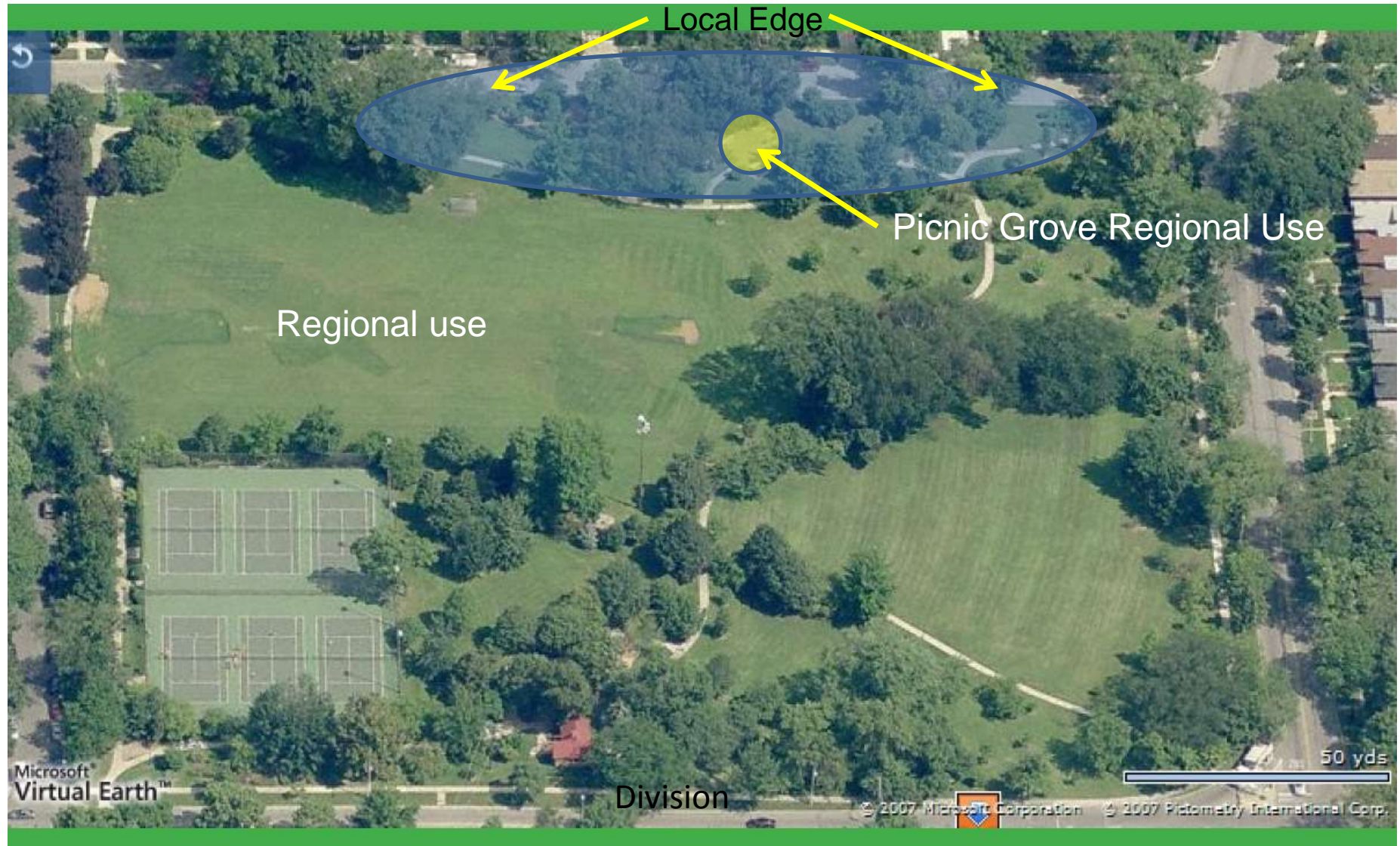


Council Ring

- But you had concerns with Safety and Use after Dark because of.....

“Nefarious Activities”

Part of Local Edge with Parking, Low Light Levels & Lots of Vegetative Cover



Space to change Path

Picnic Grove could move into the park and path could move towards the street



Path closer to street becomes more visible, unfortunately remove some shrubs



Path moved into the open green space and flowering trees added

Limb up the trees



Move Picnic Grove

Realign Path

Open up Views from Street

Add Flowering Tree dell

Replace woody shrubs with Flowering Trees



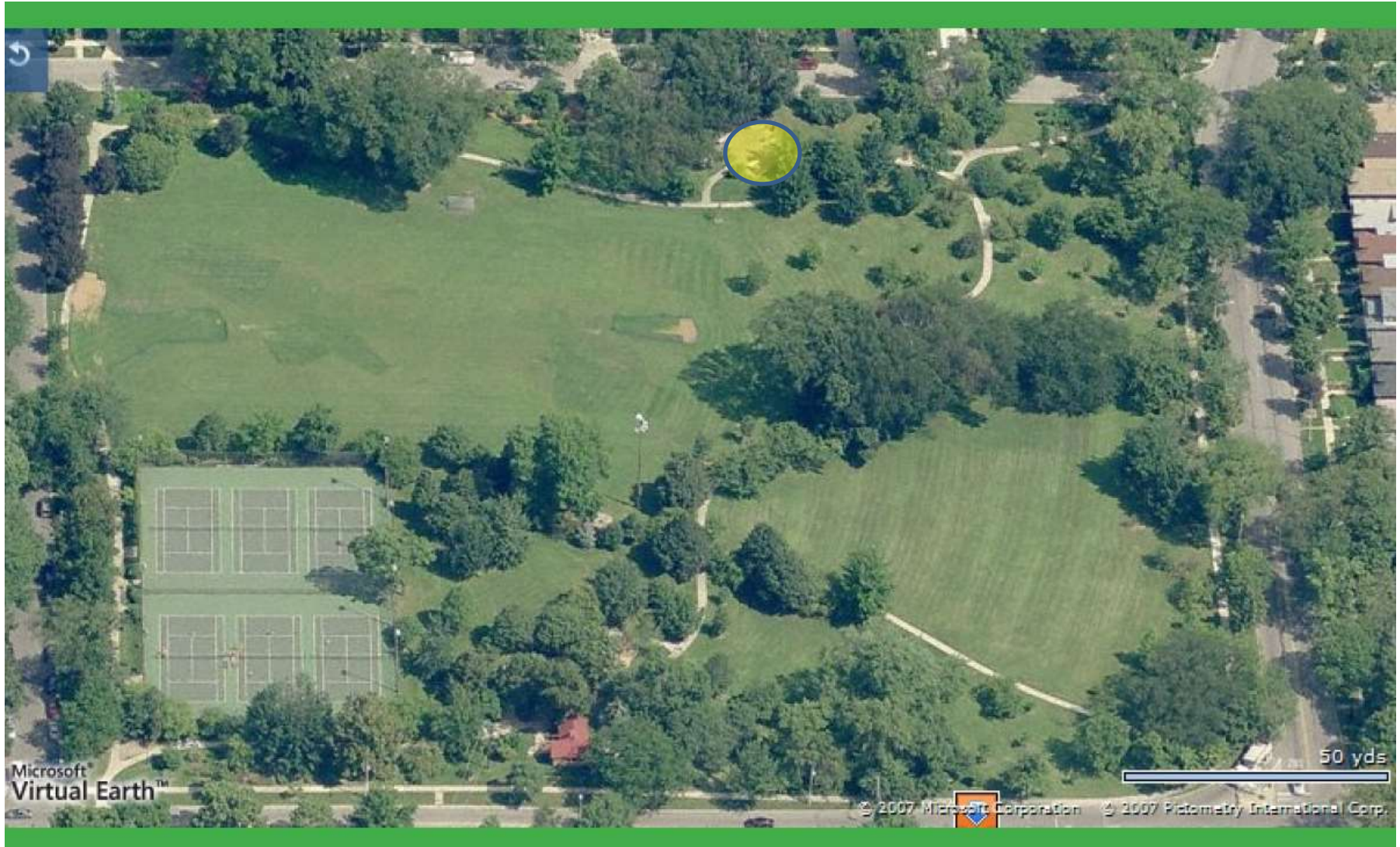
Its about safety

Path is closer to street and views into the park are opened up

Prune and limb up trees

Request more street lights on street

Existing Conditions



Picnic Grove rebuilt close to where it is today
but path moves closer to Berkshire





Taylor Park Site Master Plan November 2008

Picnic Grove New Location





Taylor Park Site Master Plan November 2008

Woodland/Natural Play/Discovery in NE Corner





Other Recommendation from the Master Plan

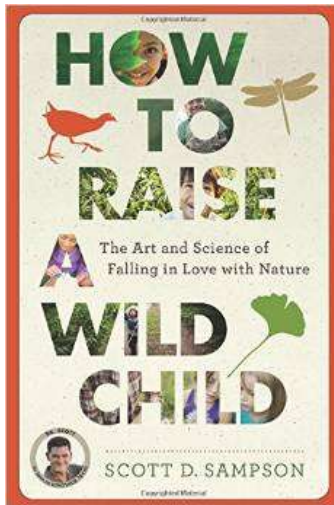
Add a natural “Discovery Area” on NE side

National Recreation and Park Association calls for the following for young people:

- Spontaneous outdoor play
- Connecting young people to the outdoors and nature
- “And to the community”



“For young children, it's mostly about unstructured play.”



Today Scott Sampson of Dinosaur Train and Curator at Denver Museum of Nature

“Research shows that free play is critical for brain growth, body growth, and emotional growth. The outdoors provides this multi-sensory smorgasbord of opportunities to engage, not just on a computer screen, but through sight, sound, touch, and smell.”



“But you have to let your kids get messy.”



Altamanu Inc.
landscape architecture + urban design + planning



Curving Paths, Mounds, Lots of Trees, Keep Fallen Trees, add Boulders

Discovery Area: What is it?



Coonley School



Mills Park

The Discovery Area will be a bright, welcoming area, sized for young children, where they can explore and interact with the world around them. It is comprised of natural materials: mounds, nooks, wooden steppers, seats/tables, boulders and logs to climb, and tree trunks that will slowly decompose introducing children to the transformational force of entropy.





Taylor Park Site Master Plan November 2008

Redesign Entryways: SE





Taylor Park Site Master Plan November 2008

Redesign Entryways: NE



From 2008

Add a small plaza to the Comfort Station





Other Recommendation from the Master Plan

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- ✓ Redesign entryways
- ✓ Add a small plaza to the Comfort Station

Regrade field, raise eastern end (New Irrigation Added)

Add 1 light on the NE corner for kids practice on the fields



Taylor Park Today: Discussion

