

LOKKER PARK

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #2

MEETING NOTES

I. Welcome

Mary Otten, General Manager of PVRPD opened the meeting. Paul Jordan of Jordan & Bain Landscape Architects, Inc., and Kathy Wiggins of Play & Park Structures were introduced, and both presented the concept designs/play equipment.

Also present are Mathew Parker, Parks Services Manager and Nick Marienthal, Park Supervisor of PVRPD

II. Key Takeaways from Community Workshop #1

1. Move fitness equipment to drought tolerant area
2. Replace or replant trees that are removed
3. Replace play equipment with more natural elements – rock structure, logs, plants, caves, hills, etc. – play structure is 20+ years old so there are safety concerns as well
4. Add companion swings to space
5. Keep a portion space for a sandbox
6. Separating children's play area and adult fitness area is important
7. More benches/seating near playground
8. NO PUBLIC RESTROOMS

Question was raised about the no public restroom bullet point? Parents who have kids under 3 in this neighborhood have to go home to use the bathroom...

Mary Otten responded – yes other parks do have restrooms, but most of those are community parks versus this neighborhood park and the community parks have pavilion rentals and people are staying longer at those type of parks. Projects for bathroom installation run about 1 million dollars and is not in the scope of this project.

III. Concept Designs/Play Equipment/Fitness Equipment

1. **The designs shown tonight are abstracts/concepts and are not the final plans for the project. The purpose of this community meeting is to gather information and get feedback from the homeowners regarding the concept designs that were presented in response to the first community meeting requests/comments.**

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2. The first priority for this project is to fix the concrete areas that are unsafe due to the tree roots lifting it up
 - Paul Jordan presented where new concrete is planned – between the basketball court and the play area and along the south side of the space. The areas around the trees are expanding so that the roots have room to spread.
 - A couple of Crape Myrtle trees will be removed because they are too close to the light poles, and the plan is to plant new trees somewhere in the park. Nick Marienthal assured homeowners that they will do everything they can to save the trees, but they won't know until the work begins.
3. The other priority of this project is to replace the outdated, non-compliant play structures and surfacing. Kathy Wiggins talked about the large and small play areas

Large Play Area Elements (5-12 year olds)

- Monkey bars, all-inclusive elements for children with mobility issues and/or autism, double bay swings, music elements that were designed by a composer and not those old clunky music elements of the past
- Slides that look like trees, turtles they can jump on, balance beam that are like logs with seating areas, interactive elements
- Some shade is incorporated in this phase of the design, but giant canopies are expensive

Small Play Area Elements (2-5 year olds)

- Small composite area, sand box, etc.
- State requires play areas to be broken up by age and each space cannot connect to each other
- Sand is no longer ADA compliant nor is it inclusive
- A sand box is an option but can't be accessed by children in a wheelchair

Play area surfacing options: 1) Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) with plastic barrier; 2) Pour in place surfacing. Per Kathy Wiggins, even though EWF is ADA compliant, it is difficult for wheelchairs as it is not compacted. It is not difficult to walk on, though.

4. Fitness Area (if within budgetary restraints) some elements for strength training, ADA compliant equipment, chest press, cardio walker, ab/back extension, balance board for squats, pushups, practice balancing, all for 13+ age group

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IV. Homeowner Concerns/Requests

1. Play Equipment Areas

- Likes the natural stuff – lean more towards natural elements, i.e., boulders, hillside, etc. 2-5 year olds cannot be on boulders, they can be on turtles, etc.
- Question on adding more elements – they like the monkey bars, trolleys, companion swings, etc. Because swings and slides require a the fall zone, there’s only so much they can fit in the space as the fall zones take up a lot of space. Swings require 12 feet front and back clearance and 6 feet on each side of end poles. Slides need 6 feet of fall zone clearance and fall zones cannot overlap. Per Kathy Wiggins, with the limited budget, surfacing will take up a lot of it.
- These concept play areas ARE NOT what the budget will allow (the project is over budget), these are examples of the wish list from homeowners gathered during the first meeting. Play & Park Structures has everything that homeowners could want, but budget will be a determining factor to what elements actually make it to the park
- Is adding a zipline an option?
 - a) Ziplines have a tendency to break down and takes up a lot of space and is a one child at a time kind of equipment
 - b) An alternative is a trolley system which allows for a gliding, swinging, and spinning experience, ideal for multi-sensory enrichment
- How about springy/bouncy animals, etc.? Per Kathy Wiggins these are being phased out because it’s a single activity and for able bodied children only
- Clarification on the music elements – these are not battery operated nor do they require power, they are simply “for banging around” equipment
- Slides on a hillside, would it take up less space? Still would require the recommended fall zone of 6 feet whether on a hillside, deck, etc.
- Can we get more shade in the play area especially with trees being removed? Yes, but big shade structures are expensive
- Swings are great! Balance beams are great! Do you offer actual log rounds, tree stumps or boulders? Per Kathy Wiggins, in a children’s play area, they are absolutely not allowed. GFRC pieces that resemble boulders, logs etc., is the alternative as they act and look realistic

2. Fitness Equipment:

- Can we keep the pull up bars that are still there?
- Homeowners present like the idea that the fitness area will NOT be within the playground areas

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- If fitness equipment is being spread throughout the bark/mulch area through DG path, can we simplify the equipment that goes in? They like the idea of the fitness stations being spaced out and they want said equipment to be more basic – bar to stretch on, etc.
 - The concept shows the equipment all clustered in one area. This is for equipment display purposes only and not indicative of where these components will end up. The PVRPD will determine the placement of fitness elements, whether during this project or phased out a later time
 - Per Kathy Wiggins, fitness equipment is the least expensive element discussed tonight. Some do not require a fall zone, which means they don't require safety surfacing
3. What's the timeline for this project? Per Mary Otten, next meeting will bring in the final design then if we can present to the Board by March/April and get approval, Jordan & Bain can proceed with designing Construction Document drawings so it can go out to bid (any project over \$25,000 has to go out to bid). Two months from the time it goes out to bid, brings us to April/May, we'll get it back June/July, project can possibly start July and possibly be completed by Fall 2024. That's the goal, but it depends on all of it coming together, i.e. design, budget, etc.
- V. Notes from PVRPD General Manager, Mary Otten
1. PVRPD has 28 parks and 15 need renovation; our focus are the parks with immediate concerns – age of equipment which results in safety issues and non-compliance to new requirements.
 2. This year's budget is \$9M for all 28 parks (Not as much as it sounds when you think about it) and we are focusing on playground renovations.
 3. This meeting, we are looking at the play areas at Lokker Park and Lokker Park's budget is \$500,000. We may end up phasing out the necessary work due to budget concerns.
 4. Items the community deems important – nature education, adult fitness be relocated to bark/mulch area, trolley system, updating play equipment so the children are safe.
- VI. Comment Cards
1. "Please consider engineered wood fiber as a natural surfacing that many area parents prefer over poured surfacing. Would love to see natural play elements like rocks, wood, and natural colors. Also, would love structures that encourage open-ended imaginative play like playhouses and large platforms."
 2. "Would love more shade over play areas; adult exercise equipment in mulch area; love all the swings; keep trolley/zipline."

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3. “For the 5-12 playground, consider eliminating smaller slide and bring in a hill with turf that children can slide down or boulders consider more things kids 7-12 would enjoy climbing on.”

VII. Design Boards

From Community Meeting #1 – the three boards showing examples of playground equipment, fitness equipment and some natural play elements.

New Concept Design Boards showing play equipment/fitness equipment possibilities and concrete removal and layout of small and large play areas.

VIII. Closing

Thank you to all who took the time to listen to the concept designs for a portion of Lokker Park. The next community meeting is on Tuesday, February 13th at 6:00pm in the PVRPD Senior Center.