

Community Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm by Lisa Evans

Present: Mayor Laurie Howland, Lisa Evans, Sandy Russell, Charles Evans, Tim Howland
Staff: Michael Doss, Lori Pegg

2018 Landscape Bid

The committee agreed that the flowers are landscaping throughout the City look great and we have had numerous compliments from residents. They would like Mr. Doss to check with the Mr. Minnear to see if we can extend the contract to three years or if it must be rebid. The 2017 bid included a one year contract option and a three year contract option at the discretion of the City. Mr. Doss will look into it and report findings to the committee

Riverside Park Shelter Options

Council as a whole asked the Community Development Committee to look at alternatives to the shelter and master plan presented for Riverside Park. Mayor Howland started the discussion with the following comments from several other Council Members and she would like to thank them for their time and commitment to making the park the best that it can be for our residents.

Riverside Park Plan Comments and Suggestions

Ted Haskins asked me to meet with him a few days after our last Council meeting where we discussed Riverside Park.

He shared with me his thoughts, ideas and questions regarding Riverside Park.

I, then, reached out to Sandy since she had questions about the “multi-use shelter” to share with her the discussion I had with Ted.

Last week, both Amy Brewer and Fred Albrecht also reached out to me to share their thoughts, concerns and ideas on Riverside Park.

I actually ended up meeting Fred down at the park to walk it with them.

I want to thank everyone one of them for looking into this issues, taking the time to visit the park numerous times, talking to people using the park and willingness to share with me their ideas.

I will begin with overall comments about the park:

*Everyone agreed that if we are going to do this park then we need to do it correctly and not choose items because they are cheap.

If we cannot do it correctly then we shouldn't do it. Our city deserves better than cheap.

*While we invest in Riverside, we cannot ignore the upkeep or improvements needed at other parks especially the Trailhead. Each of our parks is important. They all need to be improved or maintained within our budget. Everyone agrees that with the number of potential visitors that pass the trail head everyday especially on the weekends, it needs to 'polished' to encourage them to visit downtown.

*Our parks need some consistency regarding bench and picnic table and garbage can style.

*Need to know what the landscaping budget/expense will be going into creating the path and picnic shelter so we can budget for it and plan for the execution of the design.

*Parking lot and entry should be a priority.

Do we limit parking to 4 hours to prevent businesses from having employees parking there? We have such signs on some of our side streets.

*Do bike racks go closer to the restroom – but not on far side where you can't see them upon entering park?

There is a sign by the playground that needs to be moved. It is an awkward spot.

Additionally, there was some discussion regarding the black framing around the playground. Can it be redone to remove it? A lot of parks do not have it and use landscaping to simply have the playground mulch fade into the landscaping.

Currently, it is low on mulch and full of weeds. Goes back to needing to make sure we can take care of what we already have...

Attached is a design lay out with two options for the walking path around the concession building as well as some pictures for examples of the picnic shelter.

WALKING Path

*Everyone agreed that the workout stations and storybook stations just need to go away – Boy Scouts or no Boy Scouts. Ted even did some research on them and their benefits but at the end of the day everyone agrees they are unnecessary and a maintenance nightmare.

The bike trail has removed theirs for the same reason in the last two years.

*Everyone was in agreement that the path needs to be pushed out – on the side of the river – to allow for a bigger open space.

In visits to the park, they noticed kids playing soccer, throwing Frisbee and even a pick up game of baseball.

*In walking it with Fred, he said in the morning there are several people already walking on the far side of the fence.

It is actually a really nice place to walk – peaceful.

I could even see morning yoga classes there it is so pretty.

Moving the path on the outside of the fence, we will not need to landscape on that side.

Additionally, we could cut some of the ‘weeds’ to give it an ever better view of the trees etc.

Fred doesn’t think the fence needs to move since it helps create the setting that so many people already enjoy. (A few rails need to be taken down on the parking lot side.)

The question is how far we can take it down on that side of the fence – will need to clear through some brush.

I did check with staff to make sure we can put a path on that side of the fence.

We can.

*Connectivity – several members wanted the path to not just be a loop in the middle of the field but to better connect to different areas.

Connectivity was a hot topic in the Steering Committee.

If you follow the path on the riverside, it can connect to a nice path that already exists to the river as well as the sidewalk on Locust.

Ted said his son uses that path along the river.

We can use the sidewalk as part of the path.

Silly to have a path a few feet in from a sidewalk.

You could then walk from Main Street – down to the Riverwalk Park – take that to Cash Street and then hook on the walking path at Riverside – walk it around to the entrance by Memorial Park. Take Memorial Park up to Main Street creating a larger path and connectivity to two other points in the city.

I walked it and it is actually a nice route for those who don’t necessarily want to simply walk in the ‘field’.

*In pushing it, there was an agreement that if we could make it bigger to say .50 mile it would make it nicer for people who are walking down and trying to track miles. Walking around twice versus three or four times to reach a mile is more suitable.

*Dog bags and garbage cans will be needed on opposite ends of the path for all the dog walkers.

*How it loops around by the concession stand will depend on the distance to reach that half mile as well as cost.

*Everyone mentioned eliminating the little 'inner loop' connector as well as the walk away from the entrance to the field. If they are walking into an open field then there is no need to for the path to be there and then simply end.

PICNIC SHELTER

*The consensus is strong that we do not need a shelter that allows performance. Some feel very strongly about that.

Fred pointed out that the legion holds bands in their shelter and if the height is done correctly bands could be held there IF there was ever a need.

Also, no one liked the location out in the field – especially if the path changes.

Agreement was that if a band were to ever play there, then a portable stage should go at the long end – closer to where the back stop is currently located. This would be a better position and give more depth for crowd.

But as I mentioned everyone was in agreement that we did not need a multiuse shelter that allowed bands. We currently have no bands, plan to put bands on Main Street once a month during warmer weather, Speculation is that valley View is going to host some type outdoor bands/concerts so how many bands are we going to have in this city when right now we have none.

*What they did notice is that the current picnic shelter is inadequate on a daily basis.

*A larger picnic shelter closer to the playground is much needed.

*Lisa mentioned when discussing the gazebo for Garfield park that a larger shelter is needed closer to the playground. The same opinion is held for this park by everyone mentioned earlier.

*Agreement that it needs to fit in with the building already down there.

*No one wants to do a design simply because it is cheap.

*Since it does not need electricity ran to it nor a raised on 'stage' how much will we save to go towards building a nicer picnic shelter?

*Agreement that it is worth putting a bit more money into it to do it correctly.

Putting a bigger shelter where the current one is located was discussed but the agreement was that it would be squeezed into an already crowded space

It is being suggested that we put in front of the parking lot, which is a common place for shelters to be located.

It is still close enough to the playground, provides easy access from parking lot and allows it to be built as large as we determine.

This location would be a benefit for those using the playground, unloading from their cars as well as anyone desiring to host a larger gathering.

I suggest landscaping to separate it from the parking lot.

If the map is drawn to scale, it will fit nicely into that space.

Also, which location council decides on will determine the course of the walking path.

Attached are three different styles more fitting for what everyone felt needed to be down there.

Actual cost will determine size...as well as stone to tie into the restroom building.

Everyone mentioned that ideally they would like to have the estimate of cost for the walking path changes, a few different estimates for some picnic shelters based on size and style as well as landscaping for parking area and around the picnic shelter for budget to review.

Ms. Evans noted that we did have several public meetings to gather input on the master plan and those comments were included in this plan, so there was time to weigh in on the project last year. Ms. Russell felt that it was time and money well spent because Council is able to take that plan and adjust it to meet our needs. Everyone agreed that the park does look unfinished.

The committee asks that staff come to budget with cost of moving walking path to .5miles, extend to other side of fence, get rid of the cut outs for workout station and 3 design concepts for a shelter near the parking lot and landscape in that area.

There be no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Lori Pegg