

October 13, 2010

Park District of Oak Park (PDOP)
Wolff Landscape Architecture, Inc. (WLA)

Lindberg Park Site Master Plan
Community Meeting #2, October 13, 2010
Mann School, 7pm

Community Meeting #2 for the Lindberg Park Site Master Plan was held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 13, 2010, at Horace Mann Elementary School. Representatives from WLA, PDOP, the Park District Citizen's Committee (PDCC), the Greening Advisory Committee (GAC), and approximately 90 members of the public were in attendance.

Gary Balling, Executive Director, PDOP, introduced the project. PDOP has been developing master plans for all its properties, and the Lindberg Park Site Master Plan is the eighteenth master plan undertaken to date. The Site Master Plan is intended to provide direction for the site moving forward as funds become available. \$450,000 has been allocated in 2013 for improvements to Lindberg Park.

Two focus group meetings were held on September 14, 2010, with representatives from the following organizations: PDOP (building and grounds, safety and security, recreational and athletic programming, and other staff), GAC, PDCC, American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), Oak Park – River Forest Strikers Soccer Club (OPRF Strikers), Oak Park – River Forest Pony Baseball (OPRF Pony), and the Memorial Trust Committee. Minutes from the focus group meetings are available on the PDOP website (www.oakparkparks.com).

Community meeting #1 for the Lindberg Park Site Master Plan was held at 7:00pm on Wednesday, September 22, 2010, at Horace Mann Elementary school. Representatives from WLA, PDOP, the Park District Citizen's Committee (PDCC), the Greening Advisory Committee (GAC), and approximately 25 members of the public were in attendance.

An online questionnaire was posted on PDOP's website from September 23 to October 1 to seek additional public input. Input received at the focus groups, community meeting #1, and the responses to questionnaire were used in preparing the presentation for community meeting #2. All presentation materials from the Lindberg Park Site Master Plan process have been posted on the PDOP website.

Project Overview

WLA presented a brief history of Lindberg Park, Lindberg Park's mission statement, and a plan showing the existing conditions of Lindberg Park, including a breakdown of "active" and "passive" recreation areas, nomenclature used by the PDOP to characterize Lindberg Park.

Previous Steps: Focus Groups and Community Meeting #1

WLA reviewed the major discussion topics which arose in the focus groups and at community meeting #1

Presentation and discussion of individual issues, areas, and elements

WLA presented a number of topics including perceived problems and potential solutions, noting pros and cons for each. Community members discussed problems and solutions as each topic was presented. The following topics were discussed, and comments noted:

Parking / drop-off areas:

- Parking should be allowed on Marion Street
- Lay-bys may not discourage double parking
- Consider new driving lane running north-south along alley
- Consider drop-off areas on Marion Street
- Police must enforce traffic laws more rigorously
- Consider stoplights and other traffic-calming devices along LeMoyne Parkway and Greenfield Street
- Consider new driving lane running north-south down the middle of the park between the "active" and "passive" areas
- Existing drop-off location (along Greenfield Street at Belleforte Avenue) is adequate
- Alley should remain closed to through traffic
- Consider making LeMoyne Parkway and Greenfield Street one-way streets, either temporarily during times of peak demand or permanently
- Find out how many ADA parking spots are offered at other PDOP parks
- Consider designating ADA parking spots along Marion Street
- Sports drop-off in alley would cause traffic and safety problems (backing out of the alley is dangerous because of poor visibility)
- Parking should be left unchanged

Pedestrian entrances

- Shrubs along park perimeter prevent people from running into the street and provide visual screening
- Perimeter shrubs were added to provide visual cue to motorists approaching the park along Belleforte and Forest avenues
- Add no entrance at the northeast corner; some park users are happy to walk on turf without paths
- East path (near alley) will encroach on sports warm-up areas
- Path along edge of berm between soccer fields may be unsafe due to conflicts with sports activity

Athletic facilities

- Decrease the number of soccer fields
- Park may be over-programmed
- Increased street lighting must accompany increased nighttime park use
- Increased sports activity increases traffic around park; this should have been noted in the lists of cons
- Many community members object to synthetic turf at Lindberg Park
- Many community members object to sports lighting at Lindberg Park

- Many community members indicated that they did not receive adequate notice of the meeting
- Increased sports capacity may conflict with people walking their dogs
- Sports lighting and synthetic turf would greatly upset the existing balance of "active" and "passive" recreation
- Synthetic turf is environmentally irresponsible
- Money should go toward ongoing maintenance rather than park improvements
- WLA / PDOP recommended walking loop should be adopted to preserve and enhance "passive" recreation
- Synthetic turf may cause maintenance problems, especially regarding fallen leaves and dog waste
- Drainage in south field area is still inadequate
- Uneven grading must be fixed, but not with synthetic turf
- An "underground river" flows beneath the park, and is constantly shifting, and will always cause drainage problems
- "Joyriding" on synthetic turf may be a more serious problem than on natural turf
- Respect the quiet neighborhood setting
- Limited capacity for sports is a public health concern, contributing to obesity
- Organized athletics is not the only way to encourage children to get exercise
- Complete walking loop may encourage exercise
- Sports "capacity" problem should be reframed as primarily a "reliability" issue
- Sports lighting may take some pressure off of the fields during daytime
- We must accept the limits set by this patch of earth
- Open fields are not used solely for organized sports, but are also used for individual or small groups not under the umbrella of a sports organization
- Sports lighting would change the character of the neighborhood
- PDOP should look into renting other fields to relieve some pressure on Lindberg Park
- The terms "active recreation" and "passive recreation" are inaccurate and misleading; established nomenclature should be reconsidered
- Lights should be considered for tennis courts as well as athletic fields
- Weed control is being investigated
- Consider adding a backboard for solitary tennis practice
- Basketball court would be cramped
- Basketball should be considered at Mann School
- Basketball courts encourage foul language
- Noise from bouncing basketballs is bothersome
- Move tennis courts west to accommodate larger tot lot (see Mills park tot lot)
- Check with neighbors of basketball court on Ridgeland Avenue, which is managed in the manner proposed by PDOP for Lindberg Park
- Basketball offers another way for children to be active

Community Garden

- Soil quality is a concern for community gardens

Prairie Trial Garden

- Do not remove the wildflower gardens

Other

- Add trees to the north "plateau" area

Next Steps

WLA will present to the Board of Park Commissioners and the Park District Citizen Committee the same presentation as at Community Meeting #2. This is a public meeting, and the public is welcome to attend, however, comments from the public will not be entertained at this working session.

The second on-line questionnaire will be posted on October 14 and closed on October 27.

Community Meeting #3 will be held at 7:00 p.m. on November 3 at Horace Mann Elementary School. The purpose of this meeting will be to review a single schematic design based on comments from the previous meetings and questionnaires.

Community Meeting #4, if necessary, will be held at 7:00 p.m. on November 17th at Horace Mann Elementary School if there are outstanding unresolved issues from the previous schematic design review.

Attendees were encouraged to participate in the on-line questionnaires, to attend the future community meetings, and to invite their friends and neighbors.

Prepared by Paul Blanding and Ted Wolff of WLA. The foregoing represents the writers' understanding of the matters discussed and the comments and directions given. Please contact Paul Blanding (pblanding@wolflandscape.com) within three (3) calendar days from the date of the minutes with any corrections, additions, deletions, clarifications, or other changes.