

THOMPSON DYKE & ASSOCIATES

Land Planning
Landscape Architecture
Urban Planning



Rehm Park and Oak Park Conservatory
Community Meeting Notes

Meeting Held: Park District of Oak Park
Oak Park Conservatory
615 Garfield Street

Date: July 22, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Executive Director Gary Balling welcomed residents to public meeting, introduced TD&A team and explained project requirement, budget and project timeline. Every resident received questionnaire and inventory and analysis plans for both sites.

Bob Zolomij (TD&A) welcomed everybody. All attendees were asked to fill out the questionnaire. Bob reviewed existing conditions of Rehm Park and Conservatory and opened discussion.

Based on the questionnaire filled out by attendees, the following is a summary of comments:

REHM PARK

What residents like best about Rehm Park?

- Pool facility
- Playground – it is user friendly
- Small southwest open space – extra space for children to play
- Park works for everybody – dog walkers, kids, older people – all times of the day
- Visual interest – trees integrated well in design of playground and open space
- Pool well maintained
- Park feels spacious
- Well defined activities for park users
- Mature trees
- Playground train
- Tennis courts well used
- Open space not defined by any ball field; spacious; not crowded

What residents do not like about Rehm Park?

- Maintenance area behind fire house, garbage trucks
- Playground train feature is difficult to operate by children
- Fencing – not existing along the street
- Too much asphalt paving
- Not enough bike racks;
- Street traffic on East Ave; need to better control traffic; cross walks not well defined; not safe area

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- Poor visibility of playground from East Ave.
- South west alley too much exposed against open space – provide control and safety
- Pedestrian access is missing from east to the pool
- Location of firehouse
- Storage area behind fire house needs to be screened
- No winter pool
- No path linkage between East Ave and pool south of the fire house
- Noise from I-290
- Front of pool building not attractive
- Meadow and area around does not drain properly
- Smell of natural gas by shrubs of west asphalt access
- Access to the pool needs to be better defined – better solution for traffic, markings on the surface of traffic lanes to get to pool
- Fence around the firehouse
- Porta-potties behind fire house
- Park and surrounding area not well cleaned after bigger events
- Midnight noise of playing teenagers

What improvements should be made to existing facilities in Rehm Park?

- More attractive and defined pool entrance
- New pool building
- Firehouse relocation
- Fence around third tennis court
- Trimming and cleaning some of the planting against playground – better visibility
- Speed limits on East Ave
- New planting with native trees and shrubs
- Improve playground train to be easier to operate
- Access on north east corner to park and pool
- Labeling the trees
- Recycling bins
- Relocation of pool dumpster on east side
- More trash cans
- More bike racks
- Benches around the edge of meadow
- More drinking fountains – (by tennis courts)
- Close off East Ave

What new facilities should be considered in Rehm Park?

- Picnic area on east side of pool
- New entrance to park south of the fire house

- Awning on the south side of pool – accent, additional shade
- Volley ball courts
- Improve landscaping next to tennis courts
- Interpretive children garden – connection with Conservatory;
- Shade by baby swings
- Another drinking fountain
- Permeable paving
- Improve signage
- Permeable paving

OAK PARK CONSERVATORY

What residents like best about Conservatory?

- History of the building
- Signs and lighting
- New building architecture in relationship to neighborhood and greenhouses
- Variety of plantings in front of building

What residents don't like about Conservatory?

- Plantings in the front – need to improve
- Garfield Street too close to conservatory - traffic - not enough room on for pedestrians
- Not enough seating areas
- Wooden fence along west and south sides
- Alley and internal space
- Not enough outdoor work space
- Chain link fence

What improvements should be made to Conservatory site?

- Add sculpture(s) and water feature(s)
- Improve and reopen historic entrance
- Demonstration gardens – educational – labeling plans
- More defined - improved new main entrance to the building
- Move fencing in the rear garden area to the west adjacent to sidewalk
- Vacate alley or a portion of it
- Multi-use space for different events in the garden area
- Streetscape linkage between Conservatory and Rehm Park
- Improve east garden
- Turf between historic entrance and sidewalk – not recognized as real entrance
- Vacate the part of west side of alley only
- Remove evergreens at historic entrance

Open conservatory one night a week