

CapitalSpace Public Update, May 20, 2008
Martin Luther King Public Library
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Minutes from Q&A:

Rebecca Coder, Friends of Francis Field: Are artificial turf being considered for these parks and did CapitalSpace consider the environmental sustainability aspect of parks? Is DDOE involved with CapitalSpace?

Response: The recommendations for the CapitalSpace big ideas do not get to the level of detail such as materials for fields. DDOE is one of our partners and is in fact the most involved with the Sustainability planning component of CapitalSpace.

David Sobelsohn, ANC 6D Commissioner: Can all three concepts for Lansburgh Park be combined into one park?

Response: The concepts were not meant to be exclusive but rather are presented as thematic concepts and what elements fit that one theme. Since Lansburgh Park is a model project, the final plan will be dependent on each community's needs and resources.

Loretta Neumann, Committee of 100: It would be good if CapitalSpace can continue its planning efforts to include other Fort Circle Parks. She is pleased to see the Small Parks focus, since her neighborhood has one that has been maintained by the locals. She would like to see an inventory of all the small parks to determine ownership, point of contact, maintenance and management jurisdictions.

Milton Dorsey, Star Light Records: Is there a plan for an amphitheater in the park for outdoor musical concerts?

Jesse Rounds, DPR: DPR already accommodates public performances in the park through their permitting process.

Dennis Chestnut: What new uses do you have in mind for the 2 Fort Circle Parks? How can they be more accessible to the community?

Tammy Stidham:

Lindsley Williams: Are any of these recommendations going to be included in the existing Comprehensive Plan at the Federal and District level? The comprehensive plans are the authoritative documents that the governing bodies refer to.

Jeff Hinkle: The federal government's Comprehensive Plan will be updated and revised to reflect the recommendations in the CapitalSpace Initiative.

NOTES FROM THE LARGE COMMENT SHEET

“Great job getting all powers that be to communicate with one another... a tough job in itself!

I would hope that along with the planning efforts there is some energy directed toward developing a pot of seed money to entice nascent or not-even-conceived of community organizations to steward your plans forward.

Funding and technical support are likely the largest stumbling blocks that were not addressed in your plans... are these items part of your ‘next steps’ ?”
(comment not signed)

“I love what y’all are doing. I love nature and want a job as a environmentalist. I would help work with y’all to keep our parks clean and beautiful. Here is my e-mail cool_love_lonley@yahoo.com write ASAP. Thank you.” (Lamont C. Moore)

“Great ideas! Where will the personnel to ‘man’ these parks come from?” (comment not signed)

Responses from COMMENT FORM (authors initials in brackets)

Names of persons who provided written comments:

Kristie McComb [KM]

Heather Whitlow [HW]

Agnes Cherry [AC]

Anise Jenkins [AJ], member of Friends of DC Emancipation

FORT CIRCLE PARKS

1. How could interest and awareness of the Fort Circle Parks be increased?
2. How can some of these recommendations be applied to a fort in your neighborhood?

Increase feeling of safety on trails, improve signage & connections so that parks can be used for hiking/biking like Rock Creek, restore environment(al) integrity and assets, leverage volunteers for maintenance and patrolling. [HW]

Is already good! Yet we need sculpture here and there to capture the space. Exchange older oleanders and magnolias (the glossy lived bushes and trees) and the like b/c they produce secondary dirt (they become a process factory so to say) of air dust when older; arrange the trees (and plants) by symbiotic effects. [AC]

CENTER CITY PARKS

1. What are the main obstacles to more people using our parks in the Center City?

In parks like McPherson & Farragut Square, bench space is not sufficient at busy times, like 12- 2 p.m.on weekdays. Benches are configured in a way that only allows 1 – 3 people to sit together. A lack of shade in the heat of summer makes McPherson Square much less inviting than it used to be. Few sidewalk cafes or other people-watching uses front on the parks. There is not sufficient screening from the surrounding traffic in parks like Thomas Circle. [HW]

Safety and visual appeal of the park – it needs to draw you in and make you want to hang out whether it's just to sit in the sun or do something more active. [KM]

2. What are the best ways to celebrate our Center City parks as great assets?

Better design to draw people there – incorporate seating areas, splash parks, trees and shade, encourage surrounding uses that connect to parks. [HW]

Franklin Square Park – this was the site of the original DC Emancipation Day celebration in 1866 – during which former enslaved persons in DC held a huge celebration – it was their 4th of July! And it is now DC;s only legal local paid holiday – a plaque acknowledging this history should be in the park – with the 3,100-plus names of those freed, would be fantastic [AJ]

3. What aspect or element of our Center City parks do you like the most?

They are cool, green oases and gathering spaces for those of us who work downtown. [HW]

LANSBURGH PARK MODEL PROJECT

1. What uses or design elements might transfer best to parks across the Center City?

Community central space outdoor classroom, summer camp/after school programs, community garden, performance stage, farmers market [KM]

Like the idea of art + café seating. Great that you are incorporating reforestation and LID. [HW]

2. How can Center City Parks be designed to reflect current neighborhoods and future development?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Please feel free to use the additional space below if you need more space to answer the specific questions above, or to provide general comments or questions.

Regarding the lack of access to medium and large-sized parks mentioned in the presentation, have you looked at a partnership with DC's new bike sharing program, Smart Bike? Providing sharing stations in neighborhoods without access to parks with recreation opportunities and in the large parks nearby would help create more active options. Perhaps you could offer financial incentives, like discounted rates, too?
[anonymous]

Glad you added the environmental sustainability concept! [HW]

Lansburgh Park Concepts [KM]:

There are plans for 3 cafes to be built in (the) neighborhood (St. Matthew's, Westminster & at library) so we recommend keeping outdoor picnic area but add grills.

It looks like the bldg. to be redeveloped is Bowen Elem. But isn't that slated to become the police dept.? What do you propose instead cause the idea is great for an indoor community mtg. space adjacent to the park. Consider working with the SW Community Health Center.

I'd like to be part of any effort that looks at redesigning/revamping parks to promote healthy living.