

Watson Park – Neighborhood Meeting 2

10/12/23

Boston Parks & Recreation Dept. held a Zoom meeting for the second Community Design Meeting for Improvements to Watson Park. The design team shared three design concepts for the park, along with furnishings and plant types, and recorded the following feedback. Design Team: Copley Wolff Design Group - James Heroux, Michael MacNulty
Boston Parks and Recreation: B Chatfield, project manager

Charlie Watson

- Father was the “Sherriff of Taylor Street”.
- Taylor Street was once referred to as, “Taylor Alley”.
- Fence color discussion.

Laura Wilson

- There are a lot of other “gathering” spots in the South End and what is “special” about this park is that it feels like a “Secret Garden”.
 - Feels that concepts B and C fit this style the best.
- Discussed different types of gathering spaces in nearby parks, enjoys the smaller gathering scale of current Watson Park.
 - *Because of the scale of the park, she compared the existing park as “mimicking” a South End, “townhouse stoop”.*

Matthew Butnaru

- Agrees that a strength of the current park design is that it feels like a “Secret Garden” and would not want to lose that.
- Would like to see more planting (suggested viburnum and more shrubs in general).
 - Requests that the next presentation includes plant ideas.
- Plants currently in the park do not work.
- His building (247 Shawmut Ave) has flooding issues resulting from the park runoff and would like the design to resolve this.
 - *B responded saying that all runoff from the park will be retained in the confines of the park.*

Ava Pecora

- Agrees that flooding is an issue and would like to see it resolved.
- Expressed concern over construction affecting foot traffic in the area.
 - *B responded saying that while construction shouldn’t take more than 6 months, it will almost certainly affect foot traffic due to the small scale of the park.*

Colleen Fitzpatrick (Eight Streets Neighborhood Association President)

- Prefers Option A that is open to the street and connects the parks.
 - Complimented how Option A’s open concept fully integrates it into the greater fabric of Eight Streets

Meeting Chat Log:

- 00:53:54 - Colleen Fitzpatrick: Yes Jim, Eight Streets would love to host more gatherings with our community in Watson Park!
- 00:59:49 - Laura Wilson: Flowers would be so nice!
- 01:00:22 - B Chatfield: Jim's team sketched in the footprint of the existing paved path, which is a helpful way of giving you a sense of how this compares to what's out there now.
- 01:00:48 - Tara Heroux: Reacted to "Jim's team sketched ..." with 👍
- 01:01:04 - Colleen Fitzpatrick: Curious, will cars still be able to access Taylor St?
- 01:01:26 - B Chatfield: YES. We aren't the Streets department, so Parks can't close off streets...
- 01:01:40 - Colleen Fitzpatrick: Reacted to "YES. We aren't the S..." with 👍
- 01:17:53 - Colleen Fitzpatrick: Thanks Jim & Michael. Such great options to consider!
- 01:18:04 - Laura Wilson: Yes thank you!!!!
- 01:28:25 - Ava Pecora: Will there be changes to the landscape surrounding the park to reduce things like flooding?
- 01:30:06 - B Chatfield: RENTERS ARE PEOPLE TOO! 😊
- 01:31:13 - Laura Wilson: Hehe thank you
- 01:35:33 - B Chatfield: I think he was travelling- couldn't make it 😞
- 01:36:04 - Matthew Butnaru: Thank you 🙏
- 01:36:10 - Ava Pecora: One more quick question, how long do you think the construction will take and do you think it will disrupt normal foot traffic?
- 01:36:43 - Colleen Fitzpatrick: i can't unmute
- 01:42:20 - Michael MacNulty: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G6Y2JWD>
- 01:42:54 - Michael MacNulty: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/improvements-watson-park-i-and-ii>
- 01:43:42 - Laura Wilson: I must drop, but thank you all again! So beautiful! Go parks!
- 01:44:13 - Ava Pecora: Thank you!
- 01:45:16 - Colleen Fitzpatrick: Thanks everyone for your participation. Very excited to see the plan evolve
- 01:45:35 - B Chatfield: abigail.chatfield@boston.gov
- 01:45:41 - B Chatfield: 617-504-7709

*Note: Timestamps correlate to when in the presentation the chat message was posted.