

Clifford Playground Community Meeting #1 (Zoom & In-Person): What We Heard

Zoom: October 11, 2023

In-Person: October 21, 2023

Combines notes

Field Use

- **General Consensus**
 - Versatility is great – for example, lines could be drawn for multiple sports.
 - Amenities are strongly desired (e.g., water fountains and benches).
 - An area should be designated where storage structures can be implemented and used by the different teams.
- **Multi-Use Field**
 - Could be located in the central left region of the park, such that baseball/softball occupies the right region of the park.
 - Could be made from turf.
- **Baseball/Softball Fields**
 - The regulation baseball diamond doesn't get as much use.
 - Is one of very few regulation baseball diamonds in the region.
 - The softball fields get good use.
 - There is a need for intermediate field capabilities – the jump from little league to regulation baseball diamond is significant.
 - A formal dugout is not needed, but some kind of shaded player area by the fields is desired.
- **Surface**
 - All of the fields experience flooding in some way.
 - A combination of grass and safe turf could be a good way to balance the pros and cons of each, while also meeting the needs of the different sports.
 - The whole multi-use field should be leveled, since there are current changes in grade that are a bit hazardous.
 - Turf could be beneficial in some areas, especially for teams who would like to practice in the rain.
 - Turf, in previous iterations, has been associated with health concerns; the impact and fear of those associations/risks is still felt – people would want to have safe turf (if used) that is tested for PFAS and other hazardous chemicals.
 - Turf can get very hot – which is risky given than the area already experiences heat island effect
 - Would be great for general use, especially by seniors.
 - Could have demarcated distances (e.g., every 1/10th of a mile).
 - Could have exercise equipment.
 - Concerns with sewer in the middle of the field

- Amenities
 - People would appreciate improved benches, shade etc.
 - Clear need for improved lighting.
 - Clear need for more water fountains.
 - Clear need for space for sports equipment storage
 - Scoreboards would be a nice addition
- Other Field Sports Mentioned
 - Rugby
 - Lacrosse
 - Soccer
- Field use:
 - Wentworth
 - BPS

Court Use

- **General Consensus**
 - Versatility is needed – for example, lines could be drawn for multiple sports, and adjustable nets could also be implemented (e.g., tennis, volleyball, dodgeball).
- Basketball Court
 - It would be great to have 2 courts for tournaments, youth leagues, etc.
 - Perhaps place the basketball courts closer to the Mason School so that students can use them during recess.
 - Needs some kind of fence to prevent balls from going into the street
 - Games/activities could be drawn on court for times when basketball is not being played, or for when half-court games are being played.
 - E.g., Four Square and Hopscotch.
- Tennis Court
 - Not much tennis being played currently. Space could be used for multiple sports on the same court.
 - It would be great to have 2 courts for tournaments, youth leagues, etc.
 - Could the orientation of the tennis courts be flipped to fit more of them?
 - [Tenacity](#) requires at least 2 courts.
- Other Court Sports Mentioned
 - Soccer
 - Dodgeball
 - Volleyball
 - Field Hockey
 - Pickleball is not desired
 - Skate Park elements
 - Street hockey

Playground

- **General Consensus**
 - One playground is sufficient (rather than two), and, in fact, would be helpful for the Mason School and guardians – who take children of varying ages to the park and don't want to split them up.
 - The "Tot Lot" by Massachusetts Avenue could be converted to a Dog Park.

- o A Water Play/Splash area would be very welcome but should probably be separated from the playground with some kind of barrier, so that children use it with their guardians' and/or teachers' permission.
- o Design elements (e.g., color) can be decided in conjunction with Mason School students, surveys for students and youth, etc.
- o Amenities should consider those with accessibility needs (physical, sensory, developmental, emotional, etc).
- Mason School
 - o The playground is used for recess from 10:30am to 1pm.
 - The School would appreciate having formal signage so that the space is reserved for Mason School recess hours.
 - It can be challenging for Mason School staff to have to ask people to stay off the playground, especially when people provide pushback.
 - o Approximately 30-40 students use the playground at any given time.
 - o Staff comes out 30 min. early to check park before students come out
 - o Amenities should balance older and younger students' needs – e.g., 4th and 5th graders like the racetrack but there are concerns about them colliding with smaller children in the play area.
- Tartt's Daycare used to use the playground.
- No need for grass area within playground fence
- The "Tot Lot" (by Massachusetts Avenue) could be converted to a Dog Park, since it currently isn't being well used (likely because of its current location far away from the school).
- Accessibility
 - o Include equipment and amenities for students with disabilities, sensory differences; make it accessible for children with autism spectrum disorders.
- Play Structures and Design
 - o A bigger play structure would perhaps be better if it can accommodate more children.
 - o Mason School students and other young children should be included to help decide which kinds of structures and colors should be used.
 - o Space is wanted for things like chalk painting, frames, and Math Play.
- Playground could be expanded since there appears to be empty space nearby.

Dog Park

- **General Consensus**
 - o Should be located in the site of the current "Tot Lot".
 - o Would be great to have back-up bags for pet waste.

Water Play/Exercise Equipment

- **General Consensus**
 - o Water play of some kind would be great.
 - Mist and cooling features are preferred to intense water fountain features.
 - o The water play section should be separated from the playground, so that children are using it with their guardians' or teachers' permission.

- o There are concerns about people using the water play area for personal hygiene rather than cooling off/playing with their children/etc., so there will need to be some planning around encouraging appropriate uses.
 - A suggestion is to have a timer so that it can be used during certain hours and certain times of the year.

Site Furnishings and Amenities

- **General Consensus**
 - o Amenities are needed – such as benches, water fountains, and tables (which could double as play tables for games like chess, mahjong, and dominos, and also used by families for summer lunch pick up).
 - o More shade is needed.
 - o A dedicated space/enclosure for portable restrooms would be great.
 - o A dedicated space/enclosure for sports equipment storage would be great.
- **Other Mentioned Amenities**
 - o Bathrooms (space for portable restrooms and ability to lock)
 - o Picnic benches
 - o Regular benches
 - Not wood!
 - o Tables
 - That can double as play tables!
 - o Water fountains- more and spread out throughout different activity areas
 - o Fence
 - However, BPRD cannot support a locked fence.
 - Especially near the Basketball Court, since balls go into the street.
 - o Police Call Boxes
 - o Electronic bulletin board for notices, multi-media, etc.
 - o Scoreboard- kids currently bring their own but an official one would be a nice upgrade
 - o Better street crossings
 - Especially around the Mason School
 - Also at Langden and Norfolk
 - o Better traffic lighting
 - Especially around the Mason School
 - o More waste/refuse maintenance
 - o More tree maintenance (pruning, etc.)
 - o More security personnel
 - o Space for elevated stage for possible future festivals
 - o Dedicated space for food trucks/vendors (possibly).
 - o Not wanted
 - Needle collection boxes are not wanted, since they may incentivize inappropriate activities in the park.
 - Barbeque stations are not wanted, since they may lead to large groups, lots of noise and commotion and refuse, etc.

Other/Miscellaneous

- A plan for maintenance and safety is of top priority and concern.

- Weekend parties are a big concern, especially due to trash,
- Preservation of grass, trees, green space, etc. is preferred (including shade).
- Reservations around having weekend parties and BBQ stations – especially if groups were to abuse the amenities and the park.
- It would be great to have the amenities needed to host festivals (e.g., space for stage).
- There is no emergency vehicle access off Proctor, only off Shirley
- The community would like to see coffee hours here and the city to program events and activities at Clifford
- Could parking be brought back
- Could concession trucks be brought to Clifford

Example Parks

- Garvey Park
 - Walking Track
 - Street Hockey
 - Amenities for young children and older children
 - Multiple sports and activities can happen at the same time
- Moakley Park
 - Walking Track
- Hunt Almont Playground
 - Dedicated enclosure for portable restrooms.
- English School
 - Use of turf

Follow-Up Items

- Connect with Roxbury Prep (possible point of contact via The Base).
- Plan Design Charette/Outreach Sessions with Mason School.
- Design Survey for Students (Young and Middle/High school age).
- Future Event Flyers can go home with Mason School students in the future (advertising Community Event details/dates/etc.).
- Future Event Flyers can go in Victoria Restaurant, Casa Bonita, and Liquor Land.
- Future Event Posters can be posted around the Park.
- Connect to necessary City departments about making reservations to use the park.
- Connect to necessary City departments about vending possibilities.

