



Staff Report

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION ON DAVEY GLEN PARK AND CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION APPROVING LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT SERVICES

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

The 1992 Park and Open Space Master Plan identified the need for local parks within Central neighborhood. The neighborhood is currently underserved, with only one elementary school and two small mini-parks. The City of Belmont acquired a 1 acre parcel on Davey Glen Road during the housing development project of 1 Davey Glen Road. The 1 acre parcel was dedicated as a future park site.

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a special meeting on November 3, 2007 to receive feedback from the community on their desires and concerns on the development of the park site. The Commission collected the feedback and has discussed how to proceed with the project. The Commission is recommending to the City Council the approval of hiring a Landscape Architect to provide conceptual site development plans to assist in the continued community outreach process.

Background

In April 2006, the City Council ranked the Davey Glen Park development project as their highest priority. The current FY 2008 adopted budget identifies funding for design and construction of a neighborhood park.

The Parks and Recreation Commission, along with city staff, conducted a meeting at the future park site to receive feedback from the residents of the neighborhood. The meeting on November 3, 2007 was attended by approximately 35 residents who voiced their thoughts and concerns over the use of the property.

Resident's made suggestions towards the development which included:

- Remain undeveloped/ Open Space
- Passive Park , benches and picnic tables
- Wildlife in the area a concern
- Neighborhood Park with play structure

- Community garden
- Type of fencing
- Additional maintenance for city staff
- Potential fire hazards
- Develop interpretive trail or exhibits
- Labyrinth

There were concerns voiced from residents and Commissioners, if the entire neighborhood had representation at the meeting that reflected the desires of the entire neighborhood. The Commission recognized that this was just the first opportunity for residents to voice their thoughts and encouraged them to continue to be a part of the process. The Commission reached consensus that professional services of a Landscape Architect are necessary to develop conceptual drawings of potential site improvements and options.

Discussion

At the February 6, 2008 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, city staff requested that the Commission give direction to staff on the scope of the project. Should the park be developed as:

- Remain Open Space
- Passive Park
- Developed Neighborhood Park

The Commission recognized the fact that the site has several challenges. The one acre parcel is adjacent to at least three homes which border the city property and has remained undeveloped open space. In addition, other challenges to consider are the fact that it has very limited level ground, very large established trees, visibility and access concerns which all need to be considered in the site design and potential use. The Commission recognizes the challenges and is recommending the design and construction of a passive park.

City staff solicited proposals from three Landscape Architects for design and construction plans for the project. After reviewing the proposals and references, city staff recommends the services of Landscape Architect John Cahalan. John Cahalan has a great deal of experience working with municipalities in the past, including Belmont.

General Plan/Vision Statement

We choose to make our home among these beautiful hills, trees, parks, views, and open spaces. Our wooded residential areas are diverse, peaceful and well maintained. Our natural surroundings inspire us to play, create, and contemplate.

Fiscal Impact

Funding source is identified as Fund 341, Planned Park Fund, in adopted Fiscal Year 2008 budget. A total of \$450,000 is available for design and construction, from which \$100,000 was estimated for design in fiscal year 2008 and \$350,000 for construction in fiscal year 2009.

Public Contact

Public posting of agenda
Commission meeting of November 3, 2007
Notification of Neighborhood Association President
500 foot teleminder notice

Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Commission is recommending the services of a Landscape Architect to provide conceptual design options and construction detail drawings for the park project. City staff is recommending the services of John Cahalan; Landscape Architect. The Commission is also recommending that they continue to include the Central Neighborhood residents in developing plans for the construction of a park. City Council should direct staff on how to proceed. City staff has attached a resolution for the services of a qualified Landscape Architect.

Alternatives

1. Take no action
2. Refer to staff for more information
3. Make other recommendation

Attachments

- A. Resolution for Landscape Architect services agreement
- B. Minutes of November 3, 2007 Commission meeting

Respectfully submitted,

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Interim Co-Director Parks and Recreation Department

Jack R. Crist
City Manager

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RESOLUTION NO. _____

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELMONT
APPROVING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH JOHN CAHALAN;
FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT SERVICES FOR DAVEY GLEN PARK FOR AN
AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$60,000**

WHEREAS, the City of Belmont has budgeted \$100,000 in FY 07-08 for design and construction plans for Davey Glen Park; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Belmont has solicited proposals from qualified Landscape Architects to provide professional Landscape Architectural services; three consultants submitted proposals for consideration; and

WHEREAS, John Cahalan was selected based on qualifications and experience; and

WHEREAS, funding for the amount of \$60,000 will come from the Planned Park Fund 341; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Belmont directs the City Manager to execute a professional services agreement with John Cahalan; Landscape Architect for design and construction plans for Davey Glen Park.

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a regular meeting thereof held on March 11, 2008 by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

NOES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

CLERK of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

Annie Nichols Waterman and Bill Waterman – spoke in preference of open space and wondered if a park would affect property values.

Mary & Gene Lee (Mr. Lee was the resident that donated the land for the park) Mr. Lee stated his intent when he donated the property to the City was to keep it as open space not as a park. He expressed concerns with traffic, fire hazard and other potential liability issues.

At the request of C Gervais, Mr. Lee gave a history of his ownership of the property. Mr. Lee stated he purchased approximately 10 acres over 20 years for planned development. Originally he wanted to develop 144 units, and then he tried to develop 85 units but eventually was able to develop 32 units. He noted the property used to be owned by the Davey family of Davey Tree Company.

Mary Lee pointed out the need to delineate the private property border.

Trudi Bodel expressed concern with the speed of traffic on Davey Glen Road and that it would be dangerous to cross the street to go to the park. She was also concerned about disturbing the deer and other wildlife that are in the open space area.

ICDPR Ourtiague thanked everyone for attending today. He presented a display that outlines the park area and the protected scenic greenway on the parcel.

Mr. Lee noted that he had installed a fence on the property which outlined the property lines but the City had required him to remove it.

Sam Lee said he was concerned about the deer that live in the area and if park noise would affect the deer. He enjoys current state of park.

Stanley Wong said he liked the way the area is now and would like to keep it as it is.

Richard & Gloria Meriwether spoke in favor of keeping it as is. They expressed concern with youths not being visible in park area and expressed concern with fire hazard.

Pat Callagy stated he would like to keep it natural for the deer. He expressed concern with potential homeless people, drug use, and potential fire danger.

Hildegard Brown stated she is a 30-year resident on Davey Glen road. She would like to keep park it as it is. She also expressed concern with people dumping

garbage in the Davey Glen open space area. She suggested putting a No Parking sign on Davey Glen Road.

Mr. Lee explained he has an agreement with the City and he is not allowed to make any improvements or do anything to the property.

Sheila Durham stated she is a 30 year resident and would like the site kept natural. She concurred that there is a lot of furniture and garbage dumped in the area. She would not like to see a fence installed.

City Manager Jack Crist complimented the Park & Recreation Commission on holding this meeting to hear what the residents would like done at this site.

ICDPR Brunson thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Wesley Zang stated he was the person that objected to the fence that was installed because it interfered with the deer's pathway. He said he is indifferent to whether or not a fence is installed again. He wanted to find out who has jurisdiction of the area that is not included in the park because he has concerns with safety and preserving the open space area.

John Cahalan was present to listen to what was discussed at the meeting.

David Long, president of Neighborhood Association was present. He said he was there so that he could communicate with the neighborhood what occurs at this meeting.

Cynthia & Paul Soares said they would like to keep the trees and leave the park as it is.

George Kranen said this site would make a beautiful picnic area and he would like to see a children's play area there too. He suggested the landscaping be native so that it would not require much irrigation and also be deer resistant.

Christine Wozniak, Planning Commissioner and City Council candidate, stated she is a big advocate of open space and parks in Belmont. She was there to listen to what the residents wanted to be done with the park site.

Hilgard Boromand said he was a 20-year resident and was concerned that the trees remain. He also expressed concern with security.

Rick Frautschi said he envisioned that this area would be more passive use. He is

an advocate of community gardens and suggested this area be considered. He also liked the idea of incorporating a play structure. He recalled that the fence that was taken down was because Mr. Lee was not given permission to install it and neighbors complained about it.

There was discussion on if a fence would be a good idea in that location. One neighbor noted that some trees have been topped off in that area by other residents wanting to preserve their views.

David Braunstein, City Council Candidate, stated he was there to listen to the neighborhood residents. He noted he was involved in the library project which included an adjoining park.

Dave Warden, City Councilmember, stated he has been on the City Council for eight years and on the Planning Commission during the beginning of this development project. He noted one of the reasons the City wanted to get title of this property was so that the City would have control over what happens to the site. He said maybe it would be kept open space and it could be turned it to a park at another time. The city leaders, working with the neighborhood, can decide what they would like to do with the park. He agreed that initially it could be left as open space and noted most of the people that would use the park would be the residents that live near it. He commended the Park & Recreation Commission for having this meeting and hearing what the neighborhood wants.

Hongye Sun said she likes the present state of the park but agreed that it needs to be cleaned up.

Phil Mathewson, City Councilmember, stated he was involved in the process of obtaining the park. He envisioned something passive at the site to start with and maybe cleaning up the area and adding some picnic tables. He noted there may be some noise concerns from neighbors if a play structure were installed. He said for a starting point he saw the park the same but with a little more maintenance; although he noted there is concern about the city's ability to maintain one more park.

John Violet, City Treasurer, and nearby resident for 35 years agreed with keeping it a nice passive, open space area.

C Lyon excused himself from the meeting at 11:15 after expressing appreciation for the residents input at this meeting.

A resident asked if funding has been approved for this park. ICDPR Ourtiague

explained the City Council approved funds this fiscal year for the development of plans for the development of this park. The construction would be budgeted in the 2008-09 Fiscal Year.

C Gervais noted that the City is in the process of updating the Park & Open Space Master Plan and that that item will be on the Park & Recreation Commission's agenda for December 5. There will also be a Tree Lighting Ceremony at 6:30 in Twin Pines Park prior to the meeting. He noted this meeting would be a good opportunity for residents to give input.

C Cheechov encouraged residents to attend this meeting and give their input. C Shjeflo also encouraged those attending to attend the Park & Recreation Commission meeting because there may be some people that would like to see more development in the this park that may attend.

Norman Luttrell stated he was there to see what was going on at this meeting.

C King noted a resident of 300 Davey Glen suggested putting in a labyrinth in the park.

C Gervais noted he did not see any children present and asked if that was a reflection of the neighborhood. It was noted that the neighborhood children use the nearby school playground.

C Harris questioned if anyone currently uses the park space. It was noted that there may be some dog walkers but most people do not know it is a city park site.

C Gervais asked if there were any thoughts on developing trails in the park. There was some concern that trail users would venture onto private property.

George Kranen suggested the Commission hold another meeting and send notices to parents with children so that the children have a chance to voice their opinion.

C Bortoli recalled past concerns with neighbors on the installation of new play equipment in neighborhoods and that this would create a lot of traffic and safety concerns. After the projects were approved and installed none of the concerns became an issue. He stated that he thought this would be a good place for a couple picnic tables.

C Andrews stated he did not think a park would scare the deer away; C Harris agreed.

Mary Lee raised the question if a sign would be posted identifying the park.

Mr. Boromond stated that more than 200 of the people that live in the condominiums need a green and quiet space. C Gervais requested that Mr. Boromond ask the condominium association to give their input.

David Long noted it would be helpful if the property borders for the park were marked so it is easier for everyone to visualize the park site. He noted some barriers should be created to define the private property.

Mr. Long recalled that the project at College View Park created a neighborhood feud when neighbors did not agree on the improvements. He noted that this has been a very constructive meeting but that there may come a day when parents with children have different ideas for this site. He noted it is important that everyone consider this and folks should try to avoid creating a rift in their neighborhood.

C Shjeflo stated he attended these meetings and recalled there were a few neighbors that were very opposed to the playground improvements at College View Park. None of their concerns ever happened.

C Gervais noted that there may never be any requests for a play structure.

David Hoffman stated he was there to hear what the neighborhood wants there and noted that the park borders should be marked.

C Gervais asked if there were any thoughts on a community garden at the site. It was noted that it would require irrigation and a fence to keep the deer out. Rick Frautschi stated that people could check out the community garden at Barrett Community Center and noted that there is always a waiting list for a garden plot. David Hoffman added that his wife has a plot at the community garden and the waiting list is no longer that long due to the requirements on maintaining these plots.

C Gervais reminded everyone of the upcoming Park & Recreation Commission meeting on December 5 and that the Park & Open Space Master Plan Update would be on the agenda. He noted that this issue will be discussed again and there will be more opportunities for residents to give their thoughts and opinion.

Mr. Lee commented that there is major opposition to anything being done at this site and that the majority does not want anything done.

One of the residents stated that she thought the immediate neighbors to the site should get priority and their comments should be listened to carefully.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Grace Saggau, Secretary
November 3, 2007