

**Meeting Notes**

**Project:** Washington Park Diagonal

**Meeting Date:** August , 2011

**Re:** Public Meeting #1

**Location:** St. John's Lutheran Church-700 S Franklin St, In Basement Meeting Room

**Date Issued:** August 8, 2011

**Present:**

Denver Parks

Nicole Stahly, Mark Tabor, David Marquardt, Britta Herwig, Jill Coffman

Stream Design

Jesse Clark, Paul Thomas

Urban Play Studio

Kerry White

Public attendees

See sign in sheet

**Topics Discussed:**

1. Nicole Stahly introduced the design team and city staff and gave an overview of the project limits and scope including active areas, play and picnic areas, restrooms, road and trails. She also summarized the project schedule and design process including the public process.
2. Jesse Clark reviewed overall design principles to be used in the design process which are to:
  - optimize sustainability
  - maximize flexibility
  - improve connectivity
  - preserve heritage

Mr. Clark described some primary objectives for the Diagonal area that have been identified in the Washington Park Master Plan process which include:

- improving the multi use road as a park amenity
- improving bike and pedestrian circulation
- enhancing picnic facilities
- optimizing active recreation for the public's needs
- provision of regional scale play area.

Mr. Clark described that the intent of the meeting was to convey the intent of the project and to acquire input from neighbors and public stakeholders to determine the accuracy of understood issues and opportunities, and to openly communicate ideas and feedback. No design has gone underway at this point as the design team is intentionally engaged in listening first before exploring design ideas.

Once the presentation was completed the meeting was open to general comments and questions for 35 minutes, following general comments, "breakout sessions" were made available for more intimate dialogue about each of the specific objectives. One design team member was stationed at

a board specific to each objective where they discussed related issues and took notes to document the ideas.

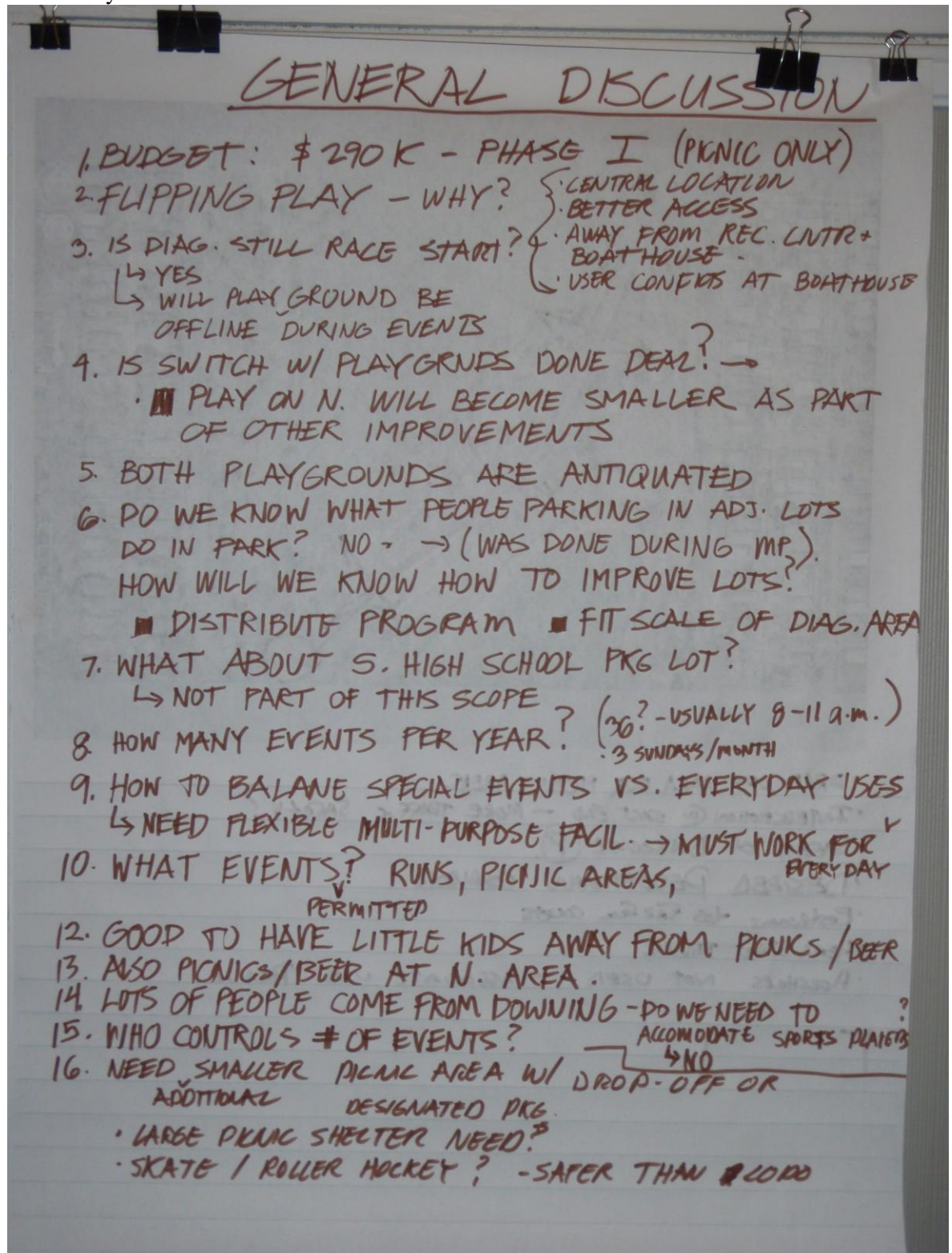
3. General Comments were as follows:

- "keep in mind that the diagonal road is used as part of a loop walk around Grasmere"
- "what is the budget and where is it coming from?" (answered by Nicole Stahly)- \$290,000 for phase 1 improvements. The remainder of improvements will be completed as funds are made available.
- "How did it come about in the Master Plan to move the larger play area to the Diagonal?" (answered by Nicole Stahly and Britta Herwig(was the PM for the Master Plan)- the existing large play area is nearing the end of its "life". The Master plan calls for strategies to disperse activities in order to reduce the burden on already highly used areas. The Diagonal was an area identified as a good location that could handle the higher use of the larger play area while moderating the activity level at the northern Boathouse location.
- "Will the race finish line remain on the Diagonal Road?" (answered by Nicole Stahly)- Yes, certified courses will likely continue to finish at the Diagonal area, however the Finish lines may move East or West depending on the final design of the area.
- Consideration should be made regarding "... access to a play area located near the finish line of a large event could be limited due to road closure and/or crowds from the event"
  - i. Some meeting participants were concerned about this access impacting usability of the playground, while others agreed that while vehicular access might be limited during events, visitors can still park elsewhere and walk to the play area. Also, someone pointed out that the major events typically happen on Sundays mornings only, which would limit the access impact to these times.
- "keep in mind that kids often go straight from the rec center to the play area"
- A meeting participant re-iterated his and the general public's extensive participation in the Master Plan process and meetings/discussions that led to the recommendation for the larger playground re-location.
- Comment from Jill Coffman that there has been a lot of pressure on maintenance operations to maintain safety of the current play areas especially the wood play structure.
- "What are the possibilities of incorporating water play?"
- "can information, notes, etc. be made available online or on the City's website?" (answered by Nicole Stahly)- notes and information from the meetings will be made available on the city's website.
- "Has there been a specific survey done to understand who is parking where and for what activity?" (answered by Nicole Stahly)- no not specific to activities. In general those who have been talked to on site, seem to disperse parking for all activities based on where there is availability.
- Limited capacity of the Diagonal Area for parking means that parking and access should be maximized for convenience, but respect the capacity and context of the area.
- South High School parking is not considered part of this project, but is an asset to visitors of this area and is being considered in the Southeast Gateway project.
- "How will special events and accommodations be balanced with everyday use?" (answered by design team)- priority should be balanced to accommodate everyday use by neighborhood and regional users and permitted special events which may require additional capacity and amenities.
- One participant commented that they have used the tennis courts for 15 years and like the idea of age separated play areas, but that consideration should be made regarding

picnic areas and alcohol use being adjacent to play areas. This participant did not feel additional parking was necessary as there is available parking along perimeter roads.

- "how much money do events generate?" (answered by Nicole Stahly)- only revenue is permit costs which vary based on location, event size, and other variables.
- "who controls the quantity of events allowed in the park?" one participant responded that events can be permitted all year long, but are limited to 3 Sundays per month unless an event has been "grand-fathered" for a certain date. Denver Parks staff will confirm.
- One participant suggested that more and smaller picnic spaces would be nice and helpful to alleviate times when the larger picnic area is permitted. He suggested that either dedicated permit parking (associated with a picnic area permit) or a picnic drop off only area could help to fulfill parking requirements without additional parking spaces.
- The suggestion was made to include a larger picnic pavilion to host larger event activities etc.
- One participant suggested that the design team consider skate activities like a roller hockey rink, and/or a skate park or skate-able plaza area

A summary notes board of General Comments follows:



4. Breakout sessions for each specific objective resulted in the following Boards with Comments:  
**Play**

Washington Park Diagonal

- like idea of scattered picnic areas for sm. & lg., informal & fenced
- Visibility is important (great @ south, poor @ north)
- Sand play should be maintained, encour. cooperative play, great younger age activity
- need more benches/seating but configured in a way to encourage hands on parenting
- shade is great
- ball courts need to be impr. (surface & slope)

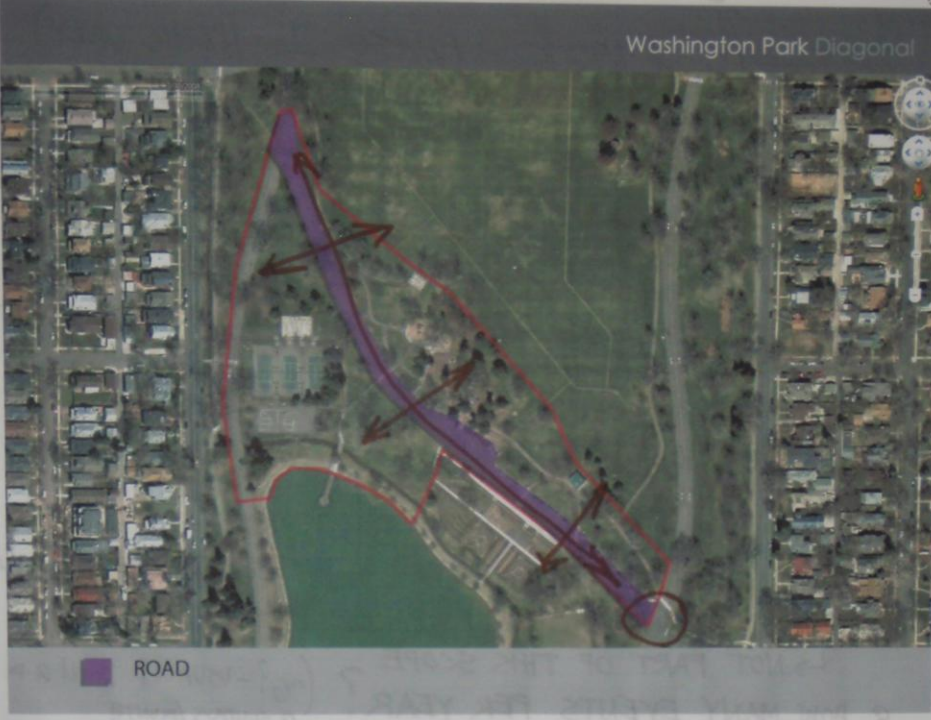
PLAY dog training happens @ HS as its fenced w/ gates

- horseshoe seldom used & doesn't need to be lighted, ball courts do
- like existing age separation of playgrounds (look @ Park Evans & Clayton?) need to have age appropriate elements
- sometimes older kids @ north e.g. because parents are @ rec. center
- like new sand play @ Denver Zoo (see article)
- like new PBS children's play - nature-base, "mud puddle", moveable parts, manipulative
- can play be designated for playground only? for those with lots of "stuff" and small kids
- design road to ensure proper parking; ex accessible play seems to function well @ roundabout
- don't see road as that much of a barrier
- better restrooms & better centrally located Light Basketball
- have a play focused input meeting (provide daycare)
- water play splash pad
- inventory area playgrounds & play spaces to determine needed age & elements to design for - unique
- prefer to serve the minimum capacity as opposed to max. - though need to plan for upcoming "baby boom" (future needs)

# Road

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Washington Park Diagonal




ROAD

- DROP-OFF AREA FOR PICNIC AREAS.
- INTERSECTION @ EAST END - MORE TRAFFIC SAFETY?
- SAFETY OF DIAGONAL (P)
- DESIRED PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR
- Pedestrians to East End Courts
- HEAD STREET TRAVEL.
- ALCOHOLS NOT USED. - ASSOCIATE USE PICNIC

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# Picnic



Washington Park Diagonal

PICNIC Picnic

need better proximity to restroom

existing site is "fucky"

need better security (lighting, visible spaces)

large covered shelter needed. make site larger  
consider more tables

preserve historic features: flagpole, fireplace, etc.

Covers would fit historic character

# Active Recreation



- MORE / FEWER COURTS?
- ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES? = SKATE PARK! FOR YOUNGER KIDS?
- BEST LOCATIONS FOR USES?
- PEOPLE ENT
- "CHARLIE MANSON CUT-OFF"
- LOTS OF ROLLER BLADES ON DIAG.
- AREA WORKS WELL - RAMP, ETC.
- LOTS
- NEED MORE BASKETBALL - SEEMS MORE PEOPLE
- ATHLETIC ACTN. MORE ON N. END.
- CURRENT SPORTS ARE MALE-ORIENTED
  - ↳ HOW CAN WE ACCOM. WOMEN/GIRLS (TENNIS)
- PUTT PUTT GOLF
- WORRIED ABOUT SAFETY OF SKATE PARK - PUT IN VISIBLE AREA - W. OF LOOP ROAD?

## Bike and Pedestrian Circulation



- \*BIKES vs. CARS ON DIAGONAL CAN BE TRICKY FOR BIKERS; DEG. HIERARCHY.
- \* PROPER BATHROOM FACILITIES + DRINKING FOUNTAINS
- \* CURRENT DIAGONAL PROVIDES ROUTE FOR BIKE TO ABIDE BY "BIKE DIRECTION" RULES
- \* SEPERATE BIKE ROUTE?!!

*Please refer to the presentation slides for more information regarding the topics presented and associated imagery and diagrams.*

*Stream Design believes this report accurately reflects what transpired at the meeting. Please provide comment to the project manager if you have a different understanding of what occurred or would like to add specifics or additional information. Notification should be made within 5 working days of issuing this report, after which, it is assumed that all parties agree that this report is accurate.*

*CC: Nicole Stahly, Paul Thomas, Kerry White,*