

CLARENDON TOT LOT
PUBLIC MEETING #3
Meeting Summary Notes

DATE: May 6th, 2021 @ 6:00 to 7:30pm

LOCATION: ZOOM

PRESENTERS: Nathan Frazee (NF) | Boston Parks & Recreation Department (BPRD)
Cheri Ruane (CR) | Weston & Sampson
Cassie Bethoney (CB) | Weston & Sampson

PRESENTATION:

- NF opened the meeting with informing the public that this will be recorded and will be available on the city website in the following week.
- NF introduced Christine (BPRD Outreach Coordinator) and Weston & Sampson team members. He discussed general schedule and capital funding for the project (\$1,530,000).
- NF briefly ran through the elements of play and the park's history.
- CR shared everything heard to date on planting, park aesthetics, desired amenities, play value, and open play. Everything has been taken into consideration when designing the preferred concept plan.
- CB ran through the overall considerations for the preferred concept.
- CB provided an overview of the preferred plan, including basic circulation patterns, surfacing materials, and the proposed range of seating options. She then walked through a series of plan enlargements to describe specific elements of the preferred plan design and shared rendered views that convey the intended look and feel of the proposed improvements to the playground.
- CB presented various play equipment options for public input. Polls were conducted for the 2-5 year old and 5-12 year old play structures. For both options, the Richter structures were preferred.
- NF opened the meeting for comments and questions.

General Comments:

- A resident of 109 commented that he would prefer the Open Play area moved away from its current location adjacent to 109 Commonwealth Avenue because kids tend to kick and throw balls against the façade. There have also been instances of broken windows. Any new installation against the wall will likely not prevent kids from continuing their ball throwing activities.
- 109 Comm Ave representation is needed within the Working Group sessions. It is

important that their voices are heard as well.

- NF & CB completely agree that it will be helpful and important moving forward.
- Preference for the center 'mound' with the pear tree planting to remain as is, given the sensitive nature of the tree plantings.
- If the play wall in front of 109 Comm Ave is flat on top, there is concern that kids will climb on top and walk along it. Varied height to the top may deter this from happening.

Park Use and Operations:

- There was some debate over the proposed location of the emergency gate. Some preferred it while others did not. Many folks observe that space blocked by parked cars.
 - NF: We will study the design of the gate and a potential relocation as to not protrude into the adjacent property.
- What would the wood decking in the middle look like; could you crawl underneath it?
 - CB: We imagine it as mounted on a foundation allowing it to be flush with the surrounding surfacing. While it is not yet detailed, we envision the decking and surfacing to be flush, and the surrounding low fencing would protect the grove of trees and proposed low groundcover planting.
- The existing storage shed will remain, but it will be relocated to make space for a relocated emergency gate.
- Please include a hose bib within the storage shed.

Play Elements:

- Many attendees expressed their appreciation of the different types of play provided throughout the playground.
- Are the number of swings proposed comparable to the amount existing?
 - CB: Including the basket swing, we are proposing one additional swing to what exists today.
- How do children hold on to the spinners and how many can use it at one time?
 - CB: The play manufacturer guidelines recommend 4 to 6 children can fit at a time. Rounded edges allow kids to hold on.
 - CR: The surface material of the spinner itself is rubberized, which creates high friction and prevents sliding.
- The open play area is extremely very valuable. Since the park is not that large, every inch matters. If the proposed hedge and play wall cannot guarantee deterring kids from kicking balls against the 109 Comm Ave facade, then the space they take up should be given back to open play.
- Attendees appreciated keeping the existing granite block wall intact and incorporating the proposed design around it.

Trees and Vegetation:

- There was concern over the height of the play wall at 109 Comm Ave and the vegetation behind it; kids could kick the balls and lose them in those shrub areas. We do not want

them climbing through those shrub areas trying to find their balls.

End of Notes. SK