



## **Dorchester Park Community Meeting #1 Meeting Notes**

Date: October 15, 2022  
Time: 10:00am – 11:30 am  
Location: Dorchester Park

### Attendees

Community Members

Cathy Baker-Eclipse - Chief Engineer, Boston Parks and Recreation Department [BPRD]

Ray Dunetz - Principal, Ray Dunetz Landscape Architecture [RDLA]

The following summarizes conversations at this meeting grouped by topic. The initial presentation was facilitated at the circular plaza near the western Dorchester Avenue Entrance, followed by a site walk.

### **1. General**

- a. Cathy stated that Parks has \$1.5M allocated for this project;
- b. This first meeting is to present the site assessment and collect input from the Community. At the second meeting, date to be determined, RDLA will present design concepts based on today's input;
- c. RDLA reviewed the history of the park with attendees;
- d. Cathy mentioned that this is a historical park with a "small h" and will not require Landmarks permitting;
- e. RDLA has engaged a surveyor to provide an existing conditions plan for the design work. An accurate survey is critical for determining which sections of path are not accessible;
- f. Friends of Dorchester Park [FoDP] provided BPRD and RDLA provide copies of their "wish list", attached;
- g. FoDP mentioned that they wish to dedicate a plaque to long-time friend and champion of the park, Mr. William O'Connell near Richview Ave.;
- h. A fence dog park was requested;
- i. BPRD will post the meeting minutes on the project website along with all future updates'

### **2. Circulation/Access**

- a. One attendee asked what the ramps will look like. RDLA stated the ramps will be designed to be well integrated into an Olmsted landscape;
- b. BPRD mentioned the possibility of a variance in regards to ADA compliant pathways;
- c. Prior to the meeting, BPRD requested that RDLA provide one ADA compliant access along each major entrance at the site including Dorchester Avenue, Hutchinson Street, Richview Street and Ashmont Street;
- d. RDLA mentioned that there may be conflicts with grading in close proximity to existing mature trees to achieve ADA compliance;
- e. Providing accessibility to the playground, ballfields, tennis courts, site furnishings and drinking fountain are imperative;
- f. Attendees stated that the condition of the asphalt walks are poor. They mentioned that snow plows damage the edges even after maintenance staff erects vertical sticks along the path. RDLA stated that asphalt paving will be core tested to determine thickness at various locations. Also, we observed heaved patches of paving, due to tree roots;
- g. Ramps will be required at the steep entrances at Richview Street and Hutchinson Street.
- h. Ramp at Dorchester Ave. is currently not ADA compliant, as the upper portion of the ramp exceeds 9%. RDLA to further study after the topographical survey is completed;
- i. A gentleman stated that the Hutchinson Street entrance is too narrow to allow Fire Trucks due to the addition of metal bollards;

- j. Navigating down the hill to the stairs at Softball field is inaccessible and challenging. Some folks had concerns about the impact on the historic stone wall from a new ramp. The stone wall also exceeds 30" which may require a guardrail according to the building code;
  - k. Cathy mentioned that Lauren can investigate some MAAB variances to accommodate some of the non-ADA compliant paths and stairs;
  - l. Snow plows damage the edge of paving along the lower path. The upper path is not plowed and in better condition;
  - m. There is a wear path near the playground. The attendees requested that this path be formalized as a new paved path.
- 3. Grading/Drainage/Erosion**
- a. There is a sink hole near the old clubhouse close to the tennis courts that is dangerous and needs to be repaired.
  - b. Cobblestone gutters are no longer located at the edge of paving at the lower path. Relocating the gutters to the edge of paving could help reducing overland runoff and erosion;
  - c. Erosion is most significant along the lower path;
  - d. Rivulets are forming on the slope facing Dorchester Avenue and should be addressed;
  - e. There are drainage concerns at the bottom of Richview Stairs.
- 4. Trees/Vegetation**
- a. Scope includes pruning along pathways to remove dead branches and pruning for future tree health;
  - b. Attendee was concerned about hazardous limbs, fallen trees and invasives. BPRD stated that the Mayor has just established an Urban Forestry Department within Parks and that can be utilized for future work to make the forest healthy;
  - c. Many areas are denuded of ground cover, which contribute to runoff and erosion; RDLA to study those areas.
- 5. Utilities**
- a. A bottle filler at Hutchinson Street is desired;
  - b. There is a water box with a hose bibb located off the path near the tennis courts.
  - c. Water access is requested for tree watering;
  - d. Replacement of the drinking fountain at little league field and providing one at the playground is requested;
  - e. Some drains are set below finish paving grade and require adjustment to prevent a tripping hazard;
  - f. Drainage grates should be replaced to ADA compliant grades.
  - g. Drains to be cleaned during this project.
- 6. Play Equipment**
- a. Residents requested that Parks replace a swing that was once located near the tennis court.
- 7. Site Furnishings**
- a. New site furnishings were not discussed, but are included in the project scope as well as the Community's wish list request.
- 8. Fencing/Gates**
- a. The Community prefers not to spend money on a new maintenance gate at Adams Street;
  - b. The St. John Paul II Catholic Academy uses the gate to access the playground;
  - c. Car show access at Adams Street was discussed;
  - d. Bollards at Hutchinson Street should be studied;
  - e. Some people use the Carney Hospital Parking Lot and access the park through a gate in the Chain Link Fence;
  - f. Carney Hospital snow plows push debris into the park fence. Currently, the fence is retaining debris;
  - g. The fence at the MBTA yard is in poor condition and has been breached by homeless and drug users;
  - h. End entrances of the tennis court fence could be closed down to force pedestrians to the central path;
  - i. The metal picket fencing at the Ridgeview Street entrance is in poor condition. RDLA to discuss with BPRD if this is part of the scope or not.
- 9. Signage**
- a. Park Identification signs are part of the scope and will be incorporated at all entrances to the park.
  - b. A new information board/kiosk will be added to the project and the ones at Dorchester Ave and Adams Street replaced.
- 10. Maintenance**

- a. One attendee mentioned that BPRD is not maintaining the park as well as they could and that they should put the money towards better maintenance;

**11. Safety**

- a. One attendee stated that there are people living in the woods and there are many needles near the MBTA yard. Cathy requested that the community can call 311 to report.

**12. Adjourn**

The author assumes this to be an accurate transcription of this meeting unless notified otherwise in writing from those present within five business days.

Prepared By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Dunetz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ray Dunetz, PLA, ASLA  
Principal

Attachments: Sign in sheet, Friend's list of improvements

Cc: Attendees, File