

DATE March 11, 2026  
 PROJECT St. James Street Park  
 TO Kenya Thompson, Project Manager, BPRD  
 FROM James Pfeiffer, Project Manager, G2 Collaborative  
 CC  
 TOPIC Community Meeting #1  
 IN ATTENDANCE Lisa Giersbach, Jonathan Kuhr, James Pfeiffer, G2 Collaborative  
 Kenya Thompson, My'Kel McMillen, Boston Parks + Recreation Department

## Meeting Minutes - Community Meeting #1 - March 9, 2026

Item	New Items	Responsibility
0.0	<p><b>General:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting began with members of the Boston Police Department updating the residents about crime in the neighborhood.</li> <li>After the Police Department discussion, Kenya Thompson introduced the project team members and began the presentation. She noted that the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project to the public, share the results of the design team's analysis, and to solicit feedback to inform the design. The project timeline was shared as well as BPRD's commitment to implementing inclusive play.</li> </ul>	
1.0	<p><b>Park Usage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community members noted that the park is quiet, gets a good amount of sun, and that the trees surrounding the park help to block the wind. They also noted that it is an intergenerational park and that the passive play space is an asset in this part of the city. Several people noted that they appreciate the open lawn for sports and games.</li> <li>Neighbors appreciate the mature trees that provide shade and habitat for the birds. They also noted that young children love to play on the rock outcropping.</li> <li>Several neighbors with children commented that the existing play structures are old and not exciting, noting that they quickly get bored with the equipment. Older children seem to find the equipment hard to use. Some noted that they walk to the nearby Lambert Avenue Playground (Doris Tillman Playground) because the equipment there serves a wider range of children. They also noted that the Nathan Hale School has a traditional playground, as well as the Gertrude Howe's Playground.</li> <li>Roxbury Roots Montessori School at the end of St. James Street does not have a play yard so they frequent the park often. Many in the neighborhood also use the park for social gatherings, and for walking their dogs.</li> <li>Many in the neighborhood expressed concerns that St. James Street can be a busy street and there are not sufficient crosswalks to allow people to safely access the park. This is not necessarily an issue for Boston Parks, but is still relevant.</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One neighbor expressed concern that the existing safety surfacing may be toxic. Others shared that some of the chain link fence at the back of the park is damaged leading to safety concerns, especially due to the steep slopes outside the park. Kenya offered to submit a 311 call to have this addressed.</li> </ul>	
2.0	<p><b>Park Inspiration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several neighbors expressed interest in water play elements, but realize it may not be a good fit in this small park.</li> <li>We should include equipment that is inclusive for children of all ages and abilities.</li> <li>The new equipment should serve a variety of ages. Play equipment that looks different might be nice as opposed to most of the equipment in all the other parks that is starting to look the same. Most importantly, the equipment needs to be durable to last a long time.</li> <li>Some of the children in the neighborhood specifically asked for swings, a spinner/carousel, and monkey bars, though others had safety concerns about the monkey bars. There can be future discussions about the safety of this equipment vs. the play and social value that it offers. Some neighbors noted that they do not like the talk tubes at other parks because they never seem to work.</li> <li>Many people would like to keep the open lawns and passive play areas, especially for things like family gatherings or small events. People like the idea of activating the space with social events such as music or movie nights. These events could be enhanced with a small covered seating area, and seating areas for general use.</li> <li>Some neighbors suggested a small fenced dog park so that dogs can be off leash but not be running through the park.</li> <li>One neighbor shared that they have organized block parties and that the park offers a great place to gather. My'Kel suggested that those folks reach out to his office for support on this type of programming.</li> </ul>	
3.0	<p><b>Future Community Engagement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was discussion about future meetings. Several neighbors shared that future meetings should be virtual to meet the needs of all those interested, and for those who cannot get to the site.</li> <li>The team suggested that pop-up style meetings could happen to engage people in the park as well.</li> </ul>	
4.0	<p><b>Funding and Next Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The question was raised about whether the funding allotted for this park will be sufficient to meet the needs of the community and the park renovations. BPRD noted that they are diligent about allotting budgets but in some cases they have looked to writing additional grants or considered phasing work to deliver projects to fully support community needs.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>End of Memorandum</b></p> <p>Please refer to the attached addendum for a transcript of the meeting's Zoom chat.</p> <p>These constitute our understanding of the Meeting. Please respond immediately with corrections or additions.</p>	

**Addendum 1**

**St. James Street Park**

Community Meeting #1 March 9, 2026

Transcript of the Zoom meeting chat

2026-03-09 18:06:49 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Thanks for joining us, B-2!

2026-03-09 18:07:20 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Yes, residents are here

2026-03-09 18:07:44 From Indus Johnson to Everyone:

Evening Indus Johnson, from Councilor At Large Henry Santana's Team! Please reach out if I can be of any assistance at [indus.johnson@boston.gov](mailto:indus.johnson@boston.gov). To connect with Councilor Santana join our Newsletter! <https://www.henrysantana.com/links>

[henry.santana@boston.gov](mailto:henry.santana@boston.gov) | (617) 635-4205

2026-03-09 18:11:08 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/boston-311>

2026-03-09 18:12:42 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Officer Coleman, thank you for joining us. We don't meet frequently and have not received any of the monthly updates. Can you let us know how to get those distributed? Also, wasn't there a homicide on Akron Street several weeks ago? Thank you.

2026-03-09 18:13:03 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

Project manager: [kenya.thompson2@boston.gov](mailto:kenya.thompson2@boston.gov)

2026-03-09 18:13:06 From AYMBRÉ PAIGE to Everyone:

Can you share some insight on what goes on from the law enforcement side once these theft reports are made? Has patrolling of the area been increased? Saige on Fountain has been targeted several times over the last few months and homeowners are concerned.

2026-03-09 18:13:55 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Welcome to your first Tommy's Rock/St James St meeting, Councilor.

2026-03-09 18:14:38 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

thank you for joining

2026-03-09 18:14:49 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

Project Page: [boston.gov/st-james-street](https://boston.gov/st-james-street)

2026-03-09 18:15:57 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

To the BPD - can you provide a report for the crime activities within the Tommy's Rock Area

2026-03-09 18:18:38 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

We appreciate BPD participating in this meeting

2026-03-09 18:20:09 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

Circuit, Regent, Fountain, St James, Akron, Herman

2026-03-09 18:20:24 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

St James to Circuit st

2026-03-09 18:22:28 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

You keep saying hopefully. Can you affirm a time frame.

2026-03-09 18:22:30 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

@Indus Johnson - thank you for being here

2026-03-09 18:24:23 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Thanks for joining us

2026-03-09 18:26:16 From Renee Jolley to Everyone:

can we have a water play installation in the park added. No Talk tubes, they never work. Swings would be nice. A fenced in Dog park, then keep the dog out.

2026-03-09 18:29:05 From MARC COLEMAN to Everyone:

Hello everyone, Marc Coleman can be reached @ marc.coleman@pd.boston.

2026-03-09 18:30:32 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Who has access to the equipment locker? Had no idea that was there

2026-03-09 18:30:44 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Oh I see. Thanks for answering

2026-03-09 18:32:08 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Big fan of the passive play area ❤️

Lisa Giersbach: 👍

2026-03-09 18:33:31 From Renee Jolley to Everyone:

Roxbury Roots Montessori, near by school, we use the park often. Please consider the materials used, the current play flooring is toxic.

2026-03-09 18:34:46 From Lisa Giersbach to Everyone:

Replying to "Roxbury Roots Montessori, near by school, we use t...":  
are you referring to the play flooring at St James St Park?

2026-03-09 18:35:38 From Lisa Giersbach to Everyone:

Replying to "Roxbury Roots Montessori, near by school, we use t...":  
Thank you, we will also look at Roxbury Roots Montessori!

2026-03-09 18:36:25 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Replying to "Roxbury Roots Montessori, near by school, we use t...":  
Roxbury Roots is at the bottom of St James Street on Washington. They don't have their own park or playground. They walk up the street most days to use this park.

2026-03-09 18:36:54 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

Can the images be enlarged.

2026-03-09 18:36:58 From Lisa Giersbach to Everyone:

Replying to "Roxbury Roots Montessori, near by school, we use t...":  
Thank you!

2026-03-09 18:38:54 From Renee Jolley to Everyone:

It is also quiet, and blocks the wind on cold windy days. it is often warmer in the park then out side the park. It get great sun. Please keep the trees it attracts local birds and

we love to watch the through the seasons. I agree about the rock, the students love to play on the rocks.

2026-03-09 18:39:32 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Before we start, can you let us know more about the history? When was it last worked on?

2026-03-09 18:39:38 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

Rocks that I see people sitting on present safety issue

2026-03-09 18:40:16 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

I like the seating table/chair idea

2026-03-09 18:40:25 From Angela Allen to Everyone:

I like the water play

2026-03-09 18:41:42 From Renee Jolley to Everyone:

The structure should be for multi ages, bigger children find it hard to play. They love to climb and often climb up on top, are unsafe.

2026-03-09 18:42:10 From Kris Aubuchon to Everyone:

it would be nice to have a small covered seating area, at other parks these are great for birthdays and neighborhood gatherings - the Gertrude Howes playground has a nice one

Shane Dunn: ❤️

2026-03-09 18:42:28 From kathryn williams to Everyone:

The fences are needed for security especially at the back. The fence has been broken at the back. What can you do about the fence so it can be secure?

2026-03-09 18:42:42 From Emily Sesno to Everyone:

Echoing the calls for more playground equipment for a variety of ages, more seating (especially seating with shade --- the playground gets HOT). A splash pad would be amazing. And PLEASE use the most durable equipment that's built to last; we can't rely on the city to help us maintain the park after this project is done.

Shane Dunn: ❤️

2026-03-09 18:42:51 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

The community uses the park for social gatherings.

2026-03-09 18:44:37 From Elizabeth Bernardi to Everyone:

Eleanor, age 6 (St James St) would like swings and loves monkey bars so anything she could hang and swing from

Emily Sesno: 👍

2026-03-09 18:45:56 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

In terms of meeting in person and virtual should be implemented to meet the needs of all interested.

2026-03-09 18:46:08 From Elizabeth Bernardi to Everyone:

Agree — our family uses the passive play as a lawn for playing catch or soccer

2026-03-09 18:47:13 From kathryn williams to Everyone:

The trees are important. Lots of people use the park for walking their dogs and be with their dogs in nature. A small off leash fenced dog park should be considered.

2026-03-09 18:47:30 From Angela Allen to Everyone:

Thanks Shane

2026-03-09 18:47:53 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

The trees are wonderful - such an asset.

2026-03-09 18:49:03 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

Will you address the needs for fence repair immediately in light that it is a serious safety issue.

2026-03-09 18:49:06 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Thank you!

2026-03-09 18:49:49 From kathryn williams to Everyone:

What about playground equipment for all abilities?

2026-03-09 18:51:09 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

corey.mcmillen@boston.gov - My'Kel McMillen

2026-03-09 18:51:35 From Kris Aubuchon to Everyone:

my kids are 6 and 10 and are no longer interested in the play area, which does seem meant for younger children — we often walk to the Lambert ave playground now instead because it has equipment for a larger age range...

Renee Jolley, Emily Sesno: 👍

2026-03-09 18:52:24 From Deb Aubuchon to Everyone:

Arlo (age 6) on Saint James would like to request a merry go round and monkey bars.

Shane Dunn: ❤️

2026-03-09 18:52:25 From Emily Sesno to Everyone:

My 4 year old is already pretty bored by it! There's just not a lot to do, no matter the age.

Shane Dunn: ❤️

2026-03-09 18:52:41 From kathryn williams to Everyone:

There many inclusive equipment that all children enjoy,

2026-03-09 18:52:50 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

Zoom meetings may work best for most people

2026-03-09 18:54:06 From brynn dizack to Everyone:

Don't want to ruin everyone's day... but I've been the director of an afterschool program for 20y. Monkey bars are absolutely the most dangerous piece of equipment for kids— so please make sure if they are included in the plan they are close enough to the ground !

2026-03-09 18:54:34 From Indus Johnson to Everyone:

Replying to "@Indus Johnson - thank you for being here":

Your welcome!

2026-03-09 18:56:17 From brynn dizack to Everyone:

So fair Shane!

2026-03-09 18:56:42 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

thanks Shane

2026-03-09 18:56:43 From brynn dizack to Everyone:

Just sharing what I've seen (lots of broken arms)

2026-03-09 18:57:14 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Makes sense! Love the idea of figuring out the optimal height.

2026-03-09 18:57:29 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

What I like most about the park is the view.

Shane Dunn: ❤️

2026-03-09 18:57:41 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

G

2026-03-09 18:58:05 From Renee Jolley to Everyone:

Thank you, I look forward to hearing more, and the project progresses.

2026-03-09 18:58:42 From kathryn williams to Everyone:

One of the problems is access to the park. St James is a extremely busy street with no crosswalks nearby. This is not something Parks is responsible for but it needs to be addresses.

2026-03-09 18:58:42 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

Project Page: [boston.gov/st-james-street](https://boston.gov/st-james-street)

2026-03-09 18:59:47 From Indus Johnson to Everyone:

Replying to "@Indus Johnson - thank you for being here":

Thank you for encouraging the 311 reports and forwarding to your team! So important!

2026-03-09 19:00:39 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

Project manager: kenya.thompson2@boston.gov

2026-03-09 19:00:46 From Angela Allen to Everyone:

Thank you everyone....

2026-03-09 19:02:15 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

Plus check survey -

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZq6oWVkupQgMUZgbKO9CxoegAPFQWLMVsIYb84GLQLN9X8g/viewform>

2026-03-09 19:02:32 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

At one point the community was assured the crosswalk. That is very important. Are there immediate funds for the crosswalk. It is a safety benefit.

2026-03-09 19:03:01 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

corey.mcmillen@boston.gov - My'Kel McMillen

2026-03-09 19:04:34 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

We will keep asking about this

2026-03-09 19:04:54 From Renee Jolley to Everyone:

The time line again, when does the park close for the construction phase?

2026-03-09 19:05:09 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

We have plenty of paper trail on this request and promises from the city for the crosswalk. persistence.

2026-03-09 19:05:56 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

Thank you

2026-03-09 19:07:07 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Quick question on budget. When we received the \$1 million in the city budget, that money went farther than it does now. Should we identify other money if we need to to get the playground we want?

2026-03-09 19:07:17 From Indus Johnson to Everyone:

Thank you everyone and my direct email is [indus.johnson@boston.gov](mailto:indus.johnson@boston.gov)

2026-03-09 19:07:18 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

Last year, we had a community walk through with various city representatives and the speed bump and cross walk was definitely raised. So, I guess we need to go back to the various representatives who meet with us.

2026-03-09 19:08:55 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

We shall immediately contact Couse lCulpepper.

2026-03-09 19:09:24 From Boston Parks to Everyone:

<https://content.boston.gov/departments/city-council/who-my-boston-city-councilor>

Indus Johnson: ❤️

2026-03-09 19:09:32 From brynn dizack to Everyone:

Thanks for holding the public forum!

2026-03-09 19:09:33 From Indus Johnson to Everyone:

Please feel free to email your at Large as well!

2026-03-09 19:09:54 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

Theresa, lets forward the meeting notes from the prior walk through and commitments made

2026-03-09 19:10:12 From Shane Dunn to Everyone:

Thanks for convening us. This is exciting

2026-03-09 19:10:54 From Theresa Rochelle to Everyone:

We appreciate you ladies and gents getting the project going.

2026-03-09 19:11:02 From Ruthie Burton to Everyone:

Thanks everyone

2026-03-09 19:11:10 From D Morson to Everyone:

Have a good eving all