



Meeting Minutes

Project: James Park Playground Renovations

Meeting Date: May 21, 2025, 6 pm

Meeting Location: Levy Senior Center

Meeting Purpose: Neighborhood kickoff meeting to discuss playground and surrounding conditions for future renovation possibilities.

Attendees: Matt Rodgers, 8th Ward Councilmember
Lara Biggs, Public Works Bureau Chief – Capital Planning
Audrey Thompson, Director of Parks & Recreation
Michael Callahan, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation
Stefanie Levine, Senior Project Manager
Kenon Boehm, Landscape Designer II
Parks and Recreation Board Members
Community Members

PRESENTATION:

Public Engagement meeting #1 was held at the Levy Senior Center.

Staff went through the planned presentation, detailing project timelines, anticipated scope, and existing conditions.

Following this presentation, Staff opened the conversation to allow for discussion and general questions/answers. Attendees discussed how they currently utilize the park and how they visualize the future design of the space. Attendees brought up a multitude of items from the drainage issues at paths to playground issues/uses to the sledding hill. Common items discussed are below:

- Statements regarding successful pathway implementation between baseball diamonds. Extra base and proper slope cited as most likely reason for success
- Bathrooms are constantly locked and not able to be utilized by the public
- Multi-use path and desire to have both asphalt and gravel
- Interest in bringing sledding/skiing/snowboarding back to the steeper hill
- General discussion around variable playground items: nature play, sensory elements, and ziplines
- General statements around utilizing both the 2-5 and 5-12 playgrounds
- Additional garbage cans and lighting within proximity of playgrounds are ideal

The meeting then moved into breakout activities where residents could provide additional feedback. Attendees were given post it notes and stickers to be utilized on



Meeting Minutes

(4) boards. These boards asked questions regarding site use, general demographics, and provoking topics to help the attendees fine tune their wants into their top four use categories. Each of the categories allowed for the opportunity to provide additional information around their wants. Additional information during this time included the following:

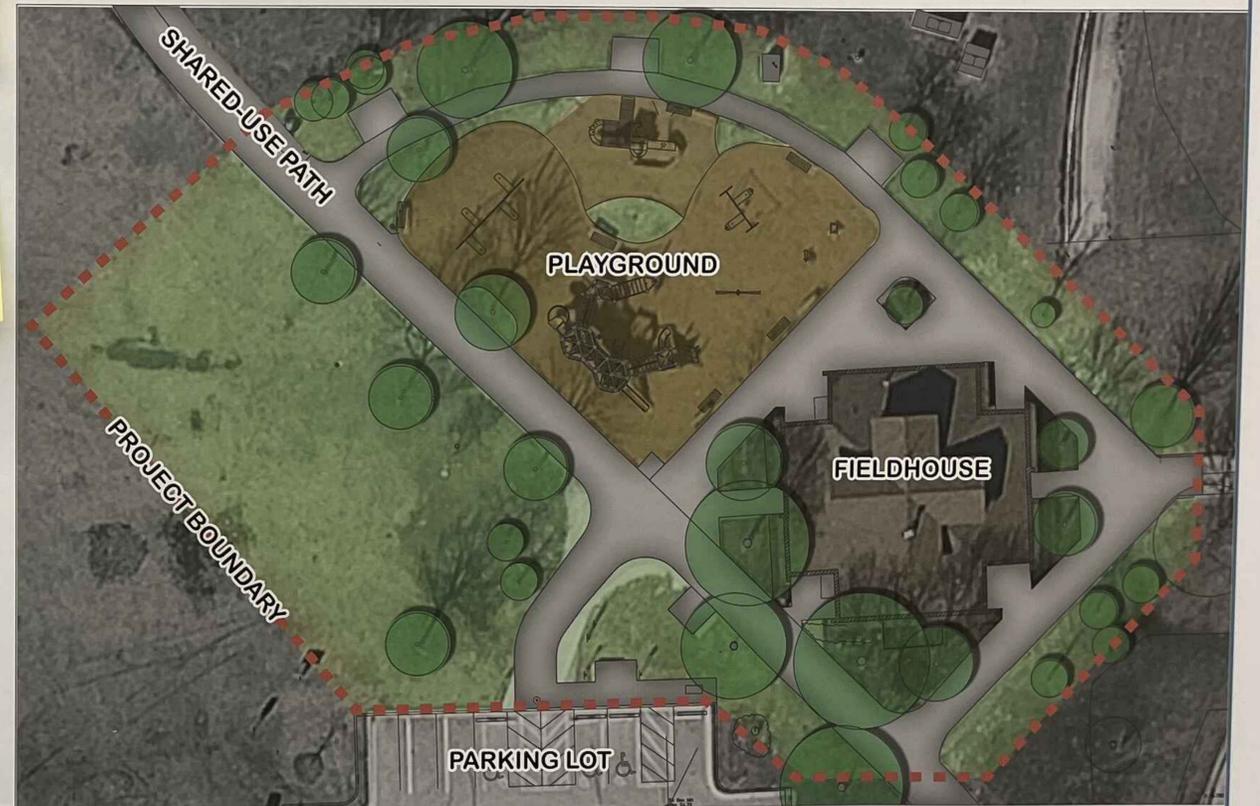
- Lighting additions as well as bathroom availability and bathroom cleanliness were major concerns with visiting the park more often
- Multi-use path to have more amenities such as benches, trash cans, shade trees and lighting where possible
- Playground comments revolved around potentially considering nature play, sunshades, and the addition of a zipline. The connection between 2-5yr. and 5-12yr. old groups is very strong
- While out of project scope, the hill was a highly talked item including general clearing, rehabilitation, and activating for better ski/sledding/snowboarding

The meeting concluded with staff indicating that the next meeting would hopefully be held in July and all attendees were encouraged to attend future meetings to provide additional public input. Public meeting #2 will have multiple concepts for review and input.

WHAT'S GREAT or NOT SO GREAT?

MY FAVORITE PART ABOUT JAMES PARK PLAYGROUND IS _____ BECAUSE _____
 I'D VISIT JAMES PARK PLAYGROUND MORE IF IT HAD _____ BECAUSE _____

<p>Lil' kids + Big kid parks near each other is good</p>	<p>Playground upgrade better walking paths designated picnic area maybe close walk between playground and fieldhouse</p>		<p>Security LIGHTING WALKING PATH BENCHES Old Bathrooms</p>	<p>Bathroom Cleanliness and availability is poor</p>
<p>More Trees More Light Love Huge Space Hill is Great</p>	<p>Spinning Chair because it's always fun for all ages</p>		<p>Bathroom Cleanliness Availability of it being open</p>	<p>Bench on Path Lighting Improvement to Walking Path Playground Upgrade</p>
			<p>I'd visit more if we could snowboard ski and sled in a safe environment</p>	



WHAT CAN IT BE?

TELL US YOUR PRIORITIES

REVIEW THE IMAGES BELOW TO PRIORITIZE YOUR FAVORITE THINGS

Provide interaction with nature

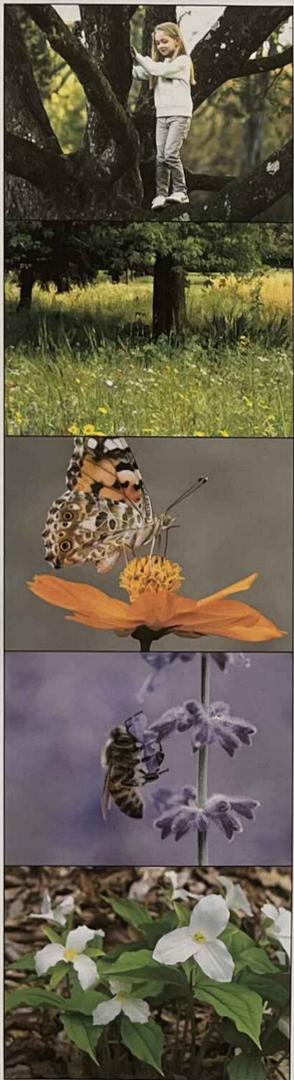
Native plants, Pollinators, Hillside clearing, etc.

Color-coded circles: Blue, Green, Purple, Blue, Black, Green, Purple

Grid of 21 empty circles for prioritization.

(out of scope for this project) But... Mt. Trashmore needs some work on ecology. Native plants + trees and less scrub

Move trees along paths



Provide ways to play

Playground, Nature, Free space, Net Climbers, Theme, Height, etc.

Color-coded circles: Blue, Green, Purple, Green, Green, Blue, Blue

Grid of 21 empty circles for prioritization.

Walking/running PATH

More open play for kids

*ZIP LINE
SUN SHADE*

*Sledding
Snowboarding
Skiing*

Native Play

Repair the hill



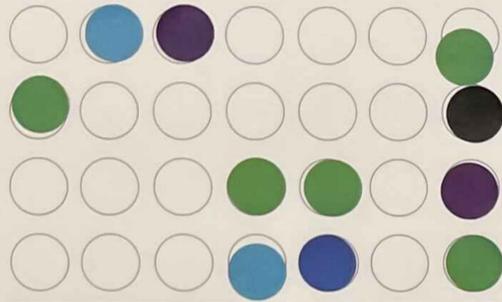
WHAT CAN IT BE?

TELL US YOUR PRIORITIES

REVIEW THE IMAGES BELOW TO PRIORITIZE YOUR FAVORITE THINGS

Provide gathering areas

Patio, Picnic Tables, Grills, etc.



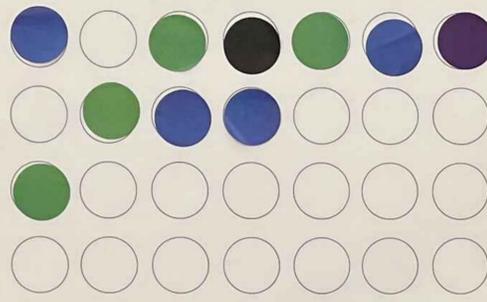
Explore community
district to have
benches or picnic
tables (like Lakefront)

more trash cans
along walking trail
(in dog walking, etc)

Lights
MAYBE
CASH
food for sale
in summer

Provide relaxation spaces

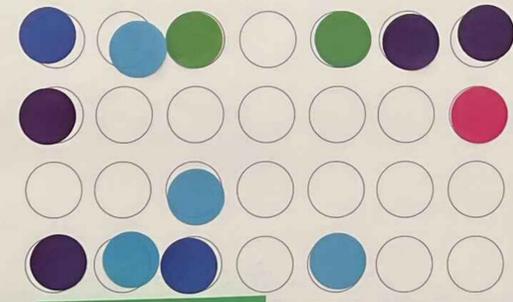
Benches, Shade, etc.



Nice to have
a few more
benches along
walking trail
(in appropriate area, rest
to deter sleeping)

Provide enhanced safety

Lighting, Pavement Striping, Fencing, Bollards, etc.



PLAYGROUND
LIGHTING

Consider research
to quantify current
utilization prior to
investments in lighting
etc

More Trash
Cans
More Light

More lighting

About yourself

TELL US MORE

FILL OUT THE APPROPRIATE ITEMS BELOW

HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT?

DAILY WEEKLY MONTHLY

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WHO VISITS WITH YOU?

SOLO PARTNER FAMILY

<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
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WHAT TIME OF DAY?

MORNING AFTERNOON ALL DAY

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HOW LONG DO YOU STAY?

30 MIN. 1-3 HOURS 3+ HOURS

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HOW DO YOU UTILIZE THE PARK?

PLAY SOCIALIZE RELAXATION PASSING THROUGH EXERCISE EVENTS CLASSES

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TELL US MORE! ADD POST-IT NOTES TO SQUARES!!

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JAMES PARK PLAYGROUND | RESPONSE #4

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING #1 | 05-21-2025