

Metropolitan Park Phase 6 Site Plan

Public Open Space Planning Process

Almost 200 people shared their preferences on what kind of activities they would like to do and see in the new open space at Metropolitan Park! Staff used survey input and comments received at the open house held on April 6 to develop a preliminary concept for the Metropolitan Park Development's last piece of Central Park. You can view the preliminary concepts beginning on page 29 of the Applicant's presentation to the Site Plan Review Committee [here](#) or visit the [Metropolitan Park Phase 6](#) webpage to learn more.

Comments from Open House (April 6) and Online Interest Survey (April 7 – 22)

Public Meeting Comments (unedited)

Metropolitan Park Development with Open Space Highlighted for Phase 6 Poster

Note 1: *'consider eliminating S. Elm St.'*

Note 2: *'Eliminate drive, make more green area'*

Passive Concept Poster

Note 1: *'Add some color and texture. Met Park is too flat, straight, and 2-dimensional'*

Note 2: *'Let's do a demographic to see age groups to determine green space... probably few children.'*

Note 3: *'This needs a giant American elm tree'*

Note 4: *'We need to coordinate all park space in the area, not just Vornado'*

Note 5: *'Yay... Curves!'*

Note 6: *'Let's eliminate the drive area around the Met 6, more green instead'*

Note 7: *'What is the senior population? Design open space for current and expected residents'*

Note 8: *'Why take up open space with parking?'*

Passive Precedent Images - 4 dots on wave bench

Note 1: *'A passive garden can be a place for active learning.'*

Note 2: *'More native planting'*

Note 3: *'Yes! Combine form and function; art and seating.'*

Semi-Passive Concept

Note 1: *'Water element, sculpture for play.'*

Note 2: *'Moveable tables and chairs.'*

Note 3: *'make creative play spaces, combine art and climbing.'*

Note 4: *'Consider play spaces that are accessible to all, not just tot lots.'*

Note 5: *'Play spaces, great idea, have benches for those watching kids.'*

Semi-Passive Precedent Images – **1 dot** on vegetable garden with raised planters, **1 dot** on vegetable garden with trellis, **1 dot** on jungle gym and **1 dot** on adult/child swing

Note 1: *'need community garden'*

Note 2: *'worth a try'*

Notes 3: *'shade sail'*

Notes 4: *'big trees, tall species'*

Active Concept

Note 1: *'for dogs''*

Note 2: *'one of those dog toilets, ½ or less fitness, ½ or more volleyball'*

Note 3: *'Dog Park that spans park and ½ of middle section.'*

Note 4: *'Possibly change configuration, instead of 1/3s create large spaces and fewer pedestrian paths.'*

Note 5: *'Big Dog Park.'*

Note 6: *'Maintain as open flexible space, dogs ok but pee at toilets.'*

Note 7: *'Like berm idea, good for play.'*

Note 8: *'Tot lot: sculpture that can be used as tot lot.'*

Note 9: *'Second the 'Big Dog Park' vote.'*

Note 10: *'one of two dog toilets, ½ or less. Run in big sheltered space.'*

Note 11: *'redo cross sidewalks as hardscape with tables and night lighting'*

Note 12: *'desperately need big enclosed dog park.'*

Note 13: *'need to consider large number of dogs and dog waste. Accommodate dog in early morning and late night. Need to get public access easement in green space in front of building where turnaround was. Better to place green space more holistically, unfortunate to have it all chipped up.'*

Active Precedent Images – **1 dot** on dog agility course, **2 dots** on dog park with varied terrain, **6 dots** on dog park with grass and **1 dot** on outdoor fitness equipment

COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA NOTE OR E-MAIL

- *Make the pedestrian boulevard of pervious pavers. More than enough concrete exists on this park*
 - *Have movable chairs. which encourages socializing and allows people to move in or out of shade*
 - *Add some color to the linear park and some sense of "naturalness." The existing plan and plantings are very sculpted.*
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- Turn "pedestrian alle" in existing parks into fenced dog park. It is already the allowed dog area and is much bigger than the available space in the linear park. It is not used as a pedestrian alle.
 - Do not build out S. Elm Street without the drop off. There is no need for vehicular passage on this street. Why encourage more car traffic in the small area? Turn it into a pedestrian boulevard. That will serve the purpose, along with Fair Street of breaking up the super block.
 - Add a central feature in the middle of the pedestrian boulevard that will combine a water feature with a play feature for kids.
 - Use the linear park space for something that will soften the stark formality of the existing park - sweeping flower gardens for example.
 - Have opportunities for learning (eg. Butterfly garden). Curve the paths,
 - I am concerned about the way, from the diagrams, it looks as though the park uses are segregated. Couldn't we instead think about mixing uses. So, put in benches that kids can climb on, better yet, add a water feature that could provide soothing back noise but that kids could cool themselves off in in the hot summer months.
 - I also really think that movable chairs — adirondack, stacking, (take a leaf out of the nearby Pentagon Row) so people can relax, talk, drink their coffee.

Online Survey Questions (written comments)

2. When considering the passive use precedent images above, select your preferred options (Passive Garden, Shade Structure, Branch Benches Outdoor Seating, Wooden Wave Bench Outdoor Seating

Other (please specify)

- Water fountains (to facilitate relaxing and meditating)
 - There are NO dog parks in Arlington Cty [County} South of 395.
 - Trees
 - As low-key as possible. No noise
 - moveable and more seating
 - Water Fountain
 - prefer other options
 - fountains, with neat design
 - grass diamond for youth baseball/softball
 - I will not use the space if I believe that dogs have gone pee on the equipment. The thought is disgusting, especially since I have small children.
 - Prefer natural wooded park area
 - Accessible seating for handicapped and elderly
 - Outside bar
 - Aren't there enough passive spaces in this area already?
 - Regular benches
 - Garden with shade provided
 - Water features
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- *Tall large canopy evergreen trees*

3. When considering semi-active precedent images above, select your preferred options (Community Garden with Raised Planters, Community Garden with Trellises, Tot Lot Jungle Gym, Tot Lot Adult & Child Swing

Other (please specify)

(Comments inserted as written by participant)

- *Other amenities encouraging activity instead of today's increasingly sedentary lifestyles*
- *Dog Park*
- *It is too shady for any kind of gardening; tot lot would be best*
- *multi-purpose play structure (combine with water feature, public art, etc.)*
- *very limited size in passive area*
- *Natural features (rocks/benches) and art that can double as play spaces/climbing for children*
- *baseball/softball fields*
- *Why can't there be varied terrain for the tot lot? Also, I would love a space for kids to play where I don't have to worry if dogs have gone pee all over it.*
- *Prefer natural wooded park area.*
- *Tot Lot: Baby and child swings*
- *Water Feature with interactions (i.e. Water Street G-Town)*
- *It depends on the availability of other Tot Lots in the area.*

4. When considering active use precedent images above, select your preferred options (Dog Park: Varied Terrain, Bocce Court, Outdoor Fitness Equipment for Adults, Outdoor Fitness Course for Adults

Other (please specify)

Comments inserted as written by participant:

- *Basketball or multipurpose court*
 - *Tennis courts (first preference) or courts easily convertible between tennis and pickleball*
 - *soccer field*
 - *A fenced-in dog park.*
 - *way too small for dog park; put dog park along east side of central square*
 - *very limited passive part of park*
 - *Don't care*
 - *Dog Park: Obstacle Course. Where is this option?*
 - *grass diamond field*
 - *No dogs, please*
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- *Prefer natural wooded park area*
 - *croquet court, short climbing wall*
 - *neighborhood really needs a dog park! please devote a significant and sufficient space in this area for one.*
 - *Jungle gym*
 - *Fitness equipment/stations intermixed with other features - not focus of entire park*

5. What else would you want us to know?

(Comments inserted as written by participant)

- *Dog Park is a must! All the existing buildings are very dog friendly, it is a natural choice.*
 - *Dog park in much needed in area code 22202*
 - *Dog park is much needed in 22202- glad it's being considered!*
 - *This neighborhood is full of children and dogs and both need places to play. I prefer greener space to more paved space.*
 - *The County should prioritize "active" uses of Phase 6 in order to balance previously completed phases having been dedicated to "passive" uses. Please consider two alternatives (in order of this commenter's preference). First, include tennis courts. Arlington County has not built any new tennis courts in decades. The County needs more tennis courts. Thus far the POPS surveys demonstrate a healthy demand for tennis courts. Arlington County would not need a system for reserving tennis courts if we had adequate capacity. Nationally, tennis playing is increasing. Both locally and nationally, the United States Tennis Association (USTA) has initiated programs to encourage youth and young adults to learn how to play tennis and continue playing the sport. Tennis exercises the entire body while providing the opportunity to interact with at least one other human being (three others if playing doubles). Alternatively, as a second choice, investigate installing in Phase 6 courts that easily can be converted between tennis and pickleball. Personally I do not know whether such technology exists. However, it would prove worth researching and probably would not take much time or effort to identify any existing technologies.*
 - *FREED does not seem appropriate it implies that the community was passive*
 - *Given the shorter trees in the current Metro Park, taller shade trees would be in order, especially to screen the resident's view of active parts of the park, such as a dog park.*
 - *Not sure how well an outdoor fitness section would work here. Planners need to think about what type of equipment would really be used and how this has worked elsewhere.*
 - *It would be terrific to have an amphitheater for shows/performances/passive reading.*
 - *Glad to see planning is continuing to incorporate mixed planning into new areas- it will definitely improve community for the residences.*
 - *Water features, ponds, fountains*
 - *We need a playground for kids*
 - *Security is a must, A very big must*
 - *Fountains/ponds or water features would be nice.*
 - *Kids playground is very important for me!*
 - *No dog park*
 - *We have a lot of kids in the area and no playground! Please give us one*
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- *We are in a desperate need of a playground for kids, existing green areas are occupied by dogs and aren't safe for kids*
 - *It would be great to have a playground for all the kids who live in this area*
 - *We have a lot of dog owners walking their dogs in the areas of the park which are labeled as pet free. As a result there is nowhere for kids to play. It would be great to have a dedicated play ground area for children!*
 - *We have a lot of kids living in the area and lack a proper playground. The closest one is by Aurora Hills Library. It would be great to allocate space for it in the new park!*
 - *More greenery like trees and native plants should be incorporated into whatever is decided.*
 - *It is important for there to be a fenced-in dog park. Many residents have dogs and currently use the central grassy area of central park to exercise their dogs. This is unfair for the other residents. A fenced-in dog park would allow the residents with dogs to exercise their dogs in a secure environment while allowing other people to use the rest of the grassy areas.*
 - *Hope for new fitness center in Long Bridge Park*
 - *An outdoor gym would get a lot of use as there isn't one in the area whereas we have the other amenities*
 - *It would be GREAT to have a Dog Park here!! The nearest dog park is in Shirlington, which requires a 10 min drive*
 - *Any future plan for the park should consider how the park is actually used by residents and address any current or potential issues. My observation has been: 1. A lot of dog owners walk and/or exercise their dogs in the park. 2. Many do not respect the "Pet Free Zone" sign. (e.g., The large lawn area in front of the Gramercy and the Millennium is a de facto unfenced dog park.) 3. The lot adjacent to the phase 6 lot often has dog waste on the ground, despite the dog stations on site. And I say all this as a dog owner myself. I believe 1. A fenced-in dog park where dogs can run as well as relieve themselves is essential, whether on the phase 6 lot or any other part of the park; it will most likely discourage misuse of the lawn area, which poses health and safety risks to all park users. 2. Any new structure on the park should be something whose quality won't be compromised by dogs or it should be fenced in. (e.g., If you put a vegetable garden on the ground without fencing it in, dogs will get to it.) 3. In general, there needs to be a measure to encourage dog owners to use the park in a more respectful manner toward non-dog owners. (Fines seldom work, and pet owners are already paying extra rent. I wonder, however, if Gates Hudson or Kettler are contributing any money to help maintain the park--for example, to hire a service that will help clean the pet waste.)*
 - *The area NEEDS a dog park!*
 - *a few sharable bbq grills and outdoor picnic space would be nice since our building doesn't have that.*
 - *As quiet as possible*
 - *PLEASE work to integrate the open space with the existing central square to create a more unified, more vibrant space. Now it is quite dull, with everything including hedges and trees and pathways all in rows.*
 - *I do not want anything i have written to be considered as indirectly "oking" any extra density. Thank you.*
 - *Maybe a few outdoor eating tables.*
 - *Passive areas are needed in this area, but need to be well-maintained and patrolled.*
 - *Want pleasant environment without noise (e.g. Dogs).*
 - *Having the availability of refreshments would be nice ... coffee stand or something like that to bring people into the space.*
 - *As traffic continues to increase in the area, a secure space for the numerous dogs in this community to play is vital.*
 - *I think the dog park option is the best. There are already many dogs in the Millennium, Gramercy, and Acadia and having a place for them to play would be great.*
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- *This area of the neighborhood has an existing and growing need for a dog park/dog run. This area should definitely be considered, but with caveats: the space must actually be large enough to meet the expected demand and large enough that dogs can actually run. The 3 divided segments shown in the "opportunities area plan" would be too small unless they could be combined. It would be nice to integrate the open/geometric design of the Kettler portion of the park, but that should not be the priority. I like the design, but the fact is that people want to use Met Park differently than it is designed. The "art" blocks in front of the buildings are rarely used, even for sitting. The central lawn is the defacto area dog park. Please (!) consider bringing Kettler to the table to discuss if their side of the park could be redesigned so that it actually invites people into each area and provides sufficient space for the needs that exist (social spaces, dog spaces, play spaces, art spaces, passive spaces).*
 - *Where is Whole Foods and when will they open?*
 - *kids area, playground will be great*
 - *Some gardens and equipment will look crappy after a few years as outdoor equipment/amenities are not likely to be maintained properly/vigilantly. This is true especially of outside gardens and certain fitness equipment.*
 - *A farmers market on Saturday mornings in some passive space!!!*
 - *No more dog parks, please. Plenty in Arlington as is.*
 - *is there any way to limit DC and MD drivers from going to this Costco? Don't they have their own?*
 - *Tot lot is most important feature*
 - *Can there be a space where dogs are not allowed, so that I can let my kids play without worrying about them getting bothered by a dog or playing on equipment where a dog has gone pee?*
 - *Arlington should remove the proposed South Elm Street from the plans and instead turn that proposed street into a pedestrian walkway and put a multipurpose water feature in the middle--a combo art piece/water feature/play structure. This would increase the park area, and make it more usable for residents; rather than include an unnecessary additional duplicative roadway in the middle of an high density walkable area. As proposed, the roadway serves no purpose since the driveway it was created to connect has been deleted from the Met Park 6 plans. Building this road would be contrary to Arlington's policy reducing reliance on cars and instead creating walk friendly neighborhoods close to metro stations. Additionally, the entire Met Park open space area should be reevaluated such that it will be a cohesive park; not several small separate spaces. The entire area should be turned into an open park similar to Meridian Hill Park in DC.*
 - *I really like there is a "no pets" area. I like dogs, but it's nice to not be around where dogs pee and poop. Some neighbors are afraid of and/or allergic to dogs. The rest of the neighborhood - e.g., Virginia Highlands Park, Grace Hopper Park - has plenty of space for leashed and unleashed dogs. PLEASE keep a "no pets" area in this park! Thank you.*
 - *Great initiatives to plan and seeking residents' preference! We need to know how to keep homeless people from using the park to sleep and occupy the equipment and seating areas, as there are homeless people having been sleeping under Route 1 highway bridge of Crystal City.*
 - *Pentagon City is being overbuilt. We need natural wooded areas ie next to the soccer field.*
 - *Please use grass for dog parks rather than gravel or mulch. The dogs don't like these surfaces. Need more shade at dog parks, trees and other covered areas. A water feature nice, but doesn't have to be fancy like Clarendon.*
 - *Too little attention is paid to the needs of handicapped and elderly. Please include some seats with arms for people with balance issues.*
 - *We need a high density park similar to the northern part of Union Square which accommodates a large children's park, passive area and dog park.*
 - *We need a fenced dog run or park! -Gramercy resident*
 - *water fountain adirondack chairs butterfly garden*
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- *Stop spending so much money on parks. Especially dog parks, dirty and a lot of us do not want to pay for other peoples' dogs. This area is already like living in a kennel! If they want more park space or country, take a short drive. We're in Virginia, plenty of open space outside the neighborhood of Crystal City.*
 - *The whole interior space needs to be brightened up and made less formal and boring. There should be room for a variety of activities and users overall, not just in the new part of it.*
 - *there is no dog park in this part of Arlington*
 - *No dog park*
 - *Tons of kids in the area! Tot lot is definitely the way to go! With shade!!!!*
 - *Trees and natural areas for general enjoyment*
 - *Metropolitan Park is heavily used by dog owners, implicating safety and sanitation issues. A fenced dog area would provide a safe space for dogs to roam, and at the same time, should have the effect of keeping dogs out of the other areas for people.*
 - *Plant tall large canopy evergreen trees!*
 - *Large dog park is needed for both the residents of these dog friendly buildings and the public. 10k Sq ft or larger.*
 - *the planning should be more holistic, including the open space at MetPark 2 etc; there is too much of a 'grass museum' within the block!!*
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