

ALCOVA HEIGHTS PARK RENOVATIONS

COMMUNITY MEETING #2 MINUTES

To: Susan Kalish, Kasey Spriggs, Steve Kelly (MRA), David Peterson (Bowman), Bernadette Grullón, Juan Du, Adam Lipera, Greg Anselene, Sarah Archer, and Lisa Grandle.

From: Joshua Serck

Date: February 21, 2019

On February 21, 2019, the Department of Parks and Receptions (DPR) conducted Community Meeting #2 to present the conceptual approach for Phase I. The **goal** of the meeting was to gather community feedback from the materials presented through Q & A, comments and general feedback. This feedback will be used to further enhance the Phase I conceptual approach and is tentatively scheduled to be presented at an open house at Arlington Palooza, April 13, 2019. This open house will conclude the project's community engagement process.

Community Meeting #2 was advertised to County residents via project page, project list serve, and on-site sandwich board. An additional feedback opportunity will be available on the project's web page.

Below is a summary of the meeting:

Phase I - Scope of Work

- Picnic Area
- Large Picnic Shelter
- Sand Volleyball Court
- Restrooms
- Basketball Court & Lighting

Introduction of DPR Staff

- Joshua Serck, Project Manager & Landscape Architect
- Juan Du, Landscape Architect
- Kasey Spriggs, Park Area Service Manager

- Susan Kalish, Public Relations Director
- Steve Kelly, Mahan Rykiel and Associates
- David Peterson, Bowman Consulting

Project presentation by Steve Kelly and Joshua Serck

Presentation Highlights:

- **What we've heard** from our on-line survey, kick-off meetings, emails and telephone calls:
 - Is the Fire Pit staying?
 - New Signage? Interpretive Signage?
 - Timer for BBALL Court lights?
 - Adult Fitness/Exercise Area?
 - Drainage & Erosion Issues
 - Invasive Removals
 - Better Connectivity
 - Better Accessibility
 - Appearance & Visibility of Restroom
 - Can the water fountain be connected to Restroom?
 - Safety & Visibility – 8th Street South
 - And above all.....

...Alcova Heights Park is heavily vegetated and has a lot full canopy trees providing significant shade throughout the site which gives the park its charm and character. **Our goal is to enhance and further define this character; while at the same time renovating existing project scope features.** The presentation emphasized the use of the following potential materials:

- Granite
- Natural Stone
- Concrete
- Flag Stone
- Brick or Stone Veneer
- Boulders
- Asphalt
- Native Plantings
- Wood
- Reclaimed items such as stone

- **Restrooms**

- 3 unisex bathrooms
- Orientation towards playground/stream
- Drinking fountain
- Single Metal Roof Slope
- Pre-fabricated wood trusses
- Clerestory windows
- Wood cladding
- Masonry or stone veneer
- Most Exterior walls to remain with modifications where we have new doors.
- The existing gable roof would be removed and a new roof line is to be created.
- Would use prefabricated wood trusses to reconfigure the roof.
The majority of the interior walls will be removed and reconfigured to support the proposed layout

Question/Comment #1: What is the RPA?

Response: The Resource Protection Area, or RPA, includes streams, rivers, and other water bodies and the environmentally sensitive lands within 100 feet of these water resources. These areas are known as stream or wetland buffers, and help protect water quality by:

- Filtering out pollutants from stormwater runoff,
- Reducing the volume of stormwater runoff,
- Minimizing erosion, and
- Providing wildlife habitat.

A fully vegetated stream buffer can help protect private property by preventing erosion along a water body. Steep slopes (25 percent or greater) that are adjacent to buffers are also part of the RPA because of the potential for erosion in these areas.

In RPAs, existing trees and other vegetation are protected and building projects are regulated to protect water quality.

Source: Arlington County's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.

Question/Comment #2: Will the trail on the east side of Doctors Run be addressed during Phase I?

Response: The trail on the east side of Doctors Run is not in the scope of work for Phase I. DPR has noted the comment.

Question/ Comment #3: What is Phase II? What about the trail on the east side of Doctors Run?

Response: Phase II includes the replacement of the Playground and Diamond Field. The trail on the east side of Doctors Run is not in the scope of work. DPR has noted the comment.

Response: PNR may add mulch to the trail.

Question / Comment #4: There were trees down along the trail east of Doctors Run. These trees are still there.

Response: PNR will investigate the issue.

Question / Comment #5: Are there any trees being removed during Phase I and II?

Response: The intent of the project is to have little impact on the existing trees. Dead and dying trees may be removed. Newly planted trees may be re-located.

Question/Comment #6: Will anything be done for enhancing the views through the park?

Response: Invasive plant removal and selective removal of dead or dying plant material will be considered.

Question/Comment #7: Picnic shelters are popular in the park. Is the plan going to increase capacity?

Response: The conceptual approach shown at Community Meeting #2 keeps the existing capacity (50 people) of the renovated picnic shelter. DPR is going to consider increasing the capacity of this shelter. The capacity of the two (2) existing picnic shelters will remain the same.

Question/Comment #8: Will the issue of people using cars to light up the basketball court after hours be addressed in the project?

Response: There will be bollards at the trail entrance to prevent un-permitted drive-in.

Question/Comment #9: There is erosion on both sides of the stream. What steps are taken to address the issue?

Response: This is not part of Phase I scope of work. PNR may add mulch to certain areas of the park to address the issue.

Question/Comment #10: There is a large amount of run-off water coming over the basketball court draining run events; which flow into the Doctors Run. Can this run-off be treated?

Response: The project will investigate this run-off as part of the stormwater management approach for Phase I.

Question/Comment #11: Like the drop-off/enlarged sidewalk. Need to make sure buses aren't allowed to park on 8th Street South.

Question/Comment #12: Complained about shuttle bus (contractor to the State Dept.) along 8th St. Should there be a sign for no shuttle parking or restricted parking for park use?

Response (#11 & 12): DPR and DES are aware of this situation. At present, it is not known what can or will be done as part of Phase I.

Question/Comment #13: Is the west street crossing on 8th Street South elevated?

Response: No.

Question/Comment #14: Can we have a flashing/lighted pedestrian crossing on 8th St? The street crossing close to George Mason Dr. is heavily used.

Response: DPR will investigate this idea.

Question/Comment #15: Need to have changing table in the bathrooms. And need to have a 'step up stool' for young children.

Response: There will be changing tables in each of the three (3) unisex toilet lavatories. Also, a folding toddler seat will be investigated.

Response: DPR is going to consider installing a 'step up stool' in one (1) of the lavatories.

Question/Comment #16: What is the bathroom cleaning schedule?

Response: Once a day.

Question/Comment #17: Are the bathrooms open year-round?

Response: No.

Question/Comment #18: Will the basketball court lighting be orientated as to not allow light spill outside of the court or park?

Response: Yes. There will also be a timer for the lights.

Question/Comment #19: What's the color of the basketball court lighting?

Response: Will meet County standards and be appropriate for basketball use.

Question/Comment #20: What is the adult activity area?

Response: The intent is to have 1-2 minimal stretching type of the fitness stations next to the basketball court area.

Question/Comment #21: Will there be any improvement for the overgrown area south of the basketball court?

Response: There was invasive cleanup a couple of years ago and will be studied as part of Phase I. Native plant species may be planted in the area.

Question/Comment #22: What kind of trees will be planted, e.g. oaks?

Response: PNR will oversee the tree species selection. The selection will be tailored for the site, including large canopy and understory tree species.

Question/Comment #23: Part of the project budget went to another project and Alcova Heights Park was divided in two phases. There was a comment by some of the meeting participants to renovate the trail east of Doctors Run and include it during Phase II. One participant suggested to remove a scope item from Phase II and replace it with this trail renovation.

Response: The only Board-approved approved funding for Alcova Heights is the \$2.395 from Fiscal Year 2018 for the Phase I project. Phase II includes the playground and diamond field.

Question/Comment #24: The ball field does not function well and has drainage issues. The size is more than enough for T-ball use. Can we re-purpose the budget to renovate the trail east of Doctors Run?

Response: Phase II includes the playground and diamond field.

Question/Comment #25: The cobble edging that would surround the new trails is nice.

Question/Comment #26: Fire pit is nice. Need design to prevent accidental fall. Does the County provide fire wood? Is the fire pit permit only? How is it maintained? A sign would be a good idea.

Response: The fire pit will have necessary safety restraints. Fire wood is not provided by the county. The fire pit is permit only. PNR staff maintain the fire pit. A sign will be considered.

Question/Comment #27: What is the April meeting for?

Response: The April meeting, or open house, is to present the final design of the park and ask for any additional feedback.

Question/Comment #28: The restroom concept is nice.

Project Overview

- **Full Project Scope for Phase I:** Design and construction for replacement or renovation of basketball court and lights, large picnic shelter, sand volleyball court, restroom, site circulation, site furnishings, signage, minimal fencing, drainage, stormwater management improvements, ADA accessibility improvements, and landscaping.

Community Engagement

- The Alcova Heights Renovations Project's level of engagement is **Consult**. This level of engagement means that staff will share with the community the project process, listen to community views and ideas, share how the community input will influence the project and provide updates as they occur. Public engagement will include community walking tours and field visits, listening sessions and online feedback. There will be between three to five engagement opportunities over the course of the design period.

Continued...

- To date, there have been the following community engagement opportunities:
 - 1st Online Feedback Opportunity
 - Face to Face Canvassing at Alcova Heights Park
 - Community Kick-off Meeting at Arlington Mill Senior & Community Center, September 18, 2018
 - Community Kick-off Meeting at Alcova Heights Park, September 29, 2018
 - Community Meeting #2, February 21, 2019
 - 2nd Online Feedback Opportunity (to be available soon)
- Community residents have also emailed and called DPR staff.
- The last community engagement opportunity is tentatively being scheduled for:
 - April 13, 2019 at the Arlington Palooza at Alcova Heights Park.

Project Schedule

- See 'Status' on project web page for project schedule.