

## Genesee Valley Park West Master Plan

City of Rochester, Project #20042, NYSDOS #C006965

# Advisory Meeting #4 - Minutes

**Date:** April 2, 2014, 2:00-5:00 PM

**Location:** Genesee Waterways Center, 149 Elmwood Ave, Rochester NY 14611

### A. ATTENDANCE

Name	Representing	Contact / Email
Caitlin Meives	Landmark Society WNY	cmeives@landmarksociety.org
Matt Maloney	Landmark Society of WNY	Mmalon47@frontiernet.net
Cindy Stachowski	Genesee Waterways Center	cstachowski@geneseewaterways.org
Jeff Mroczek	City of Rochester, DES	mroczekj@cityofrochester.gov
John Picone	City of Rochester, DRYs	piconej@cityofrochester.gov
Joanne DeMarle	19 <sup>th</sup> Ward Neighborhood	jddemarle@frontiernet.net
Peter Siegrist	City of Rochester, City Planning	peter.siegrist@cityofrochester.gov
John DeMott	Sector 4 CDC / 19 <sup>th</sup> Ward Neigh.	jnj_demott@juno.com
Mark Bayer	Bayer Landscape Architecture	mhb@bayerla.com
Zakery Steele	Bayer Landscape Architecture	zds@bayerla.com

### B. MEETING CONTENTS

1. **Project Update:** Jeff Mroczek and Zak Steele gave a brief status update on the project.
  - a. Inventory & Analysis complete, available on City's website
  - b. Advisory / City review and selection of preferred Park Character concepts complete, also available on City's website
  - c. City has reviewed schematic alternative plans, based on Committee-preferred Park Character Concepts A and C
  - d. Park Character Concept B (retrofit existing structures) was discarded based on Committee and City comments
  - e. Advisory Committee to review Schematic Alternatives at this meeting and provide comments
  - f. Revision of preferred a Schematic Alternative to take place, development of illustrative plans & renderings
  - g. Upcoming public meeting to be scheduled once comments are integrated into schematic alternative plans
  - h. Development of final master plan after public meeting
2. **Advisory Committee Review & Discuss (2) Schematic Alternatives**
  - a. Zak Steele walked the Committee through two alternative schematic plans.
  - b. Schematic #1 was presented. It is based on previously preferred Park Character Concept A (Structures North of Elmwood Avenue).
  - c. Schematic #2 was presented. It is based on previously preferred Park Character Concept C (Structures into the Neighborhood fabric)
  - d. Discussion was held regarding possibility of placing ice rink under or near the I-390 overpass. Access may be an issue.
  - e. General concern was expressed for encroachment of non-park activities on the parkland (police/fire training facility, etc.). It was noted that the City's National Park Service agreement restricts this from happening in the future, but the plan should address existing conflicts and recommend long-term removal from the parkland. Both discussed alternatives recommend the future removal of all non-park facilities from the parkland.

- f. Discussion on need for a YMCA-like facility and that such facilities exist at U of R. Based on the analysis, there is a need for a more health & wellness, lifestyle/fitness-based public facility to be run by DRYs for City residents. UR facilities are private and neighborhood/city deserves similar level of experience. It was also noted that except for the fitness center, the proposed facilities on the alternative plans only replace equivalent facilities already in the park with more appropriately compatible and higher quality facilities, along with general park improvements to trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, etc.
- g. John P (DRYS) noted that he was not necessarily in favor of an indoor pool. It was suggested that the pool facility at least have an outdoor option or an outdoor pool replace the proposed indoor option.
- h. It was suggested that the ice rink be moved out of the park. It was noted that the facility is heavily used and it is the only municipal ice rink.
- i. John P noted that relatively few pedestrians currently walk to the ice rink. A facility more integrated into the neighborhood that has fitness and other options would better serve those who don't drive and make it more accessible to the neighborhood.
- j. While the master plan cannot directly address Elmwood Avenue right of way design, it was suggested and agreed that the plan should make recommendations for traffic calming measures to be implemented along Elmwood Ave park frontage. It was noted that Elmwood and Genesee St extension are the only meaningful connection to actual neighborhoods – the rest of GVPW is surrounded by institutions, industrial, airport, other large acreages of parkland, water barriers, etc. Making the park accessible to the neighborhood should be a priority.
- k. John D noted the neighborhood dynamic is changing, with more renters / students filling properties along Elmwood and Genesee St and the "Genesee St "wedge" area.
- l. Peter S asked if there was anything eliminated from the program. Items determined not compatible included a motorized boat launch. Based on the committee's guideline principles, a program approach of "less quantity, but higher quality" facilities was generally maintained. Discussion of park existing in a unique landscape, rolling hills, topography – should be the guiding factor in new facilities. The park is not a flat regional-scale recreation park similar to what is seen on many 100's of acres in Brighton or Victor.
- m. John D noted that people use the field house and would like to see it remain or inclusion of another space that provides the same function – an indoor lodge. It was discussed that the existing field house has inadequate access which needs to be address in some ways. Outdoor rentable picnic shelters are also proposed throughout the park.
- n. Question regarding need for wellness center in the park. It was noted that the project research shows that the future of recreation is directly tied to public health and wellness and the programming had been developed by the Advisory committee at prior meetings. Zak S noted that funding for wellness-centered recreation programs will be the bulk of public/grant money available for facilities and program opportunities. GVPW has always been the active recreation portion of the park, but demands and needs for active recreation amenities change over time.
- o. John P noted that DRYs is already beginning to accommodate this new demand and recreation model (the focus on health and wellness) in general programming at other facilities. Recreation demand is there for these types of recreational opportunities. Places with individualized recreation opportunities (trails, fitness centers, etc) are in high demand due to inability for families to keep up with incompatible schedule / lifestyle requirements of team sports. This is especially true for two-working parent or single parent households.
- p. John D asked that additional meetings be held to review these plans. Jeff M will work with John to set something up.
- q. Discussion of rowing facilities / boathouse in the park. The existing boathouse was never designed as a boathouse. It was a prk maintenance facility. Demand is there for both rowing and general water-based recreation, which a boathouse provides. Cindy S noted that the Genesee Waterways Center does more than rowing, including public kayak/canoe rentals for the City, facilitating sports tourism events, reaching out to the neighborhood and collaborating with DRYs on water-based recreation programs, which also require DRYs-led swimming skills to be developed. Swimming skills are essential skill and it's especially important in the neighborhoods surrounding the river and the park.
- r. Discussion was held on the increased demand for boathouse facilities over the last 20 years. More than 5 boathouses have appeared along the Genesee River in the Rochester area. Discussion of master plan with regard to directing future boathouse development away from the historic Olmsted view areas that the plan attempts to reclaim.
- s. Boathouse locations were discussed. Advantages of moving the boathouse to the south location were discussed, including visibility, ease of access, etc.
- t. Generally the committee favors Schematic Alternative #1 (facilities north of Elmwood Avenue)

### 3. Boathouse Architectural Components

- a. A handout from previous Advisory meeting regarding architectural styles was reviewed.
- b. Zak S handed out a magazine article about the new ice rink in Prospect Park (also an Olmsted park)

- c. LaBella Associates will be preparing boathouse architectural concepts. Cindy S asked that the 2 schematic plans and boathouse locations be reviewed at next GWC board meeting. She will pass along GWC comments after meeting on April 11.
- d. Discussion held regarding two architectural concepts. Generally preferred to have two concepts of 1 location as opposed to 1 concept of each location. This to be reviewed with City, GWC and upcoming neighborhood meetings.

**4. Other Items:**

- a. GROC (Genesee Regional Off-Road Cyclists) desire for off-road bike skills area was discussed. All agreed it would possibly be a good fit for the I390 overpass area as that part of the park needs some "ownership" associated with it. It also provides a nearby service for the neighborhood, teaching kids how to ride bikes safely and effectively, as well as in wooded or off-road environments where there is much less experience.

**5. Outside Interest in the Park's Master Plan**

- a. Zak S noted that the NY Statewide Preservation conference is being held in the end of April and he will be conducting a field session about the master plan project @ GWC (April 26). Zak noted that the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy has been very successful in acquiring funding for park improvements based on the Buffalo Olmsted park historic significance – they are ahead of us in terms of organizing over the years, but our system is equivalent as 1 of only 4 complete park systems designed by Olmsted in the US.
- b. Zak S said that the Upstate Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects was holding its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in early May. It includes a two-day symposium a recent PBS documentary on Olmsted and several education sessions about the historic designed landscapes of New York. GVPW will be featured in one of the sessions. A bike and kayak tour is also being led through the park. The event is open to the public (May 1 & 2)

END of MINUTES - Please notify Bayer Landscape Architecture of any errors or omissions in these meeting minutes.

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