



Exchange Street Playground Improvements

Public Informational Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2022

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Carlson Commons, 70 Coretta Scott Crossing, Rochester, NY 14608

PURPOSE & PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the meeting was to share with community members planned improvements for Exchange Street Playground Park including accessibility, functionality of the space, and the sense of safety. Proposed improvements may include trail rehabilitation and realignment, drainage improvements, vegetation management, fence removals, general park cleanup, user amenities, and landscape enhancements.

The meeting began with a brief presentation followed by an open house to review preliminary project findings and concept drawings. All presented meeting materials can be found on the City’s project website: <https://cityofrochester.gov/exchangestreetplayground/>.

ATTENDEES

Dorian Hall – PLEX	Barbara Ashford (virtual)
Tyler Burke – City of Rochester	Dorothy Hall (virtual)
Ted Liddell – Bergmann	Kevin Lester (virtual)
Zak Steele – Sue Steele Landscape Architecture	Regina Geames (virtual)
Sarah Spano	Gwendolyn Kelly (virtual)
Alex Parsons	Donna Hodgins (virtual)
Beatriz LeBron – Common Ground Health	

PUBLIC PRESENTATION

Tyler Burke (City of Rochester) opened the meeting with introductions, and Ted Liddell (Bergmann) presented the proposed improvements with a PowerPoint presentation. An open question period followed, which is summarized below.

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

The anticipated project schedule was communicated as:

Final design plans	Spring 2023
Project Out to Bid	Summer 2023
Construction completion	Summer 2024

PROJECT CONTACTS

It was communicated that a project webpage exists on the City's website and that the Presentation, Agenda and Meeting Minutes will be available. The project webpage will be regularly updated to keep the residents informed of the project details and schedule.

Tyler encouraged attendees to contact him either by office phone or email with any questions and concerns.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

The meeting was opened for questions, comments, and/or concerns. The questions and answers below are paraphrased from the in-person and virtual attendees.

Q1: Is the stormwater outflow that enters the site from Nordon contaminated?

A: The stormwater discharge that enters the site appears to be clear of contaminants. Further information on groundwater and soil contaminants will be provided in the Phase 2 Environmental Assessment Report. Field work for this report has been conducted, and a report is expected in January of 2023. The report will be uploaded to the project website when it has been finalized.

Q2: The PLEX neighborhood group is concerned about parking and would like parking amenities as discussed at the 8/16/22 design meeting.

A: While on-site parking was not included in the 2015 Master Plan, the City will add this to the list of improvements for future phases. Budget constraints will not support a parking lot during this phase, which was estimated at approximately \$195,000 for 8 spaces and an access drive.

Q3: Can you build a swimming pool?

A: No, unfortunately not. Space and cost constraints would prohibit this.

Q4: Could the park be activated with garden space, grills, picnic tables, etc.?

A: Yes, the city will explore options for low-cost amenities that will increase public use of the park during this phase of construction. Grill and picnic table locations will be added to the design plans.

Q5: PLEX or the City should consider community partnerships to activate the space.

A: Agreed, community garden, art contests or other events could draw residents to the park. These would need to be community led initiatives through the City's Community Garden Program or for events in the park through a Facility Use Permit. Information on the community garden program can be found here:

<https://cityofrochester.gov/communitygardens/>. Information on the Facility Use Permit can be found here: <https://www.cityofrochester.gov/eventpermit/>.

Q6: Consider an interpretive area near the old telephone pole and retaining wall.

A: The City will provide interpretive areas and historical signage where practicable and as the budget allows.

Q7: What is the current plan for the trees? Does the City plan to remove all of the trees?
A: Most of the trees will remain. There are invasive trees towards the south side of the park (near the concrete retaining wall), some of which will be removed. All the large healthy trees north of the midpoint of the park will be retained and limbed-up. Some of the overgrown scrub trees along the western boundary of the park will be removed. Tree removals and trimming (limbed-up) will be done to open sightlines into and out of the park for safety.

COMMENTS

The following comments were provided via comment cards at the meeting.

1. Don't include parking. It will take away valuable open and play spaces. Make people walk from the neighborhoods. Street parking is close by on Exchange. Don't design for the car, design for the people.
2. If you have to create parking, then minimize it. Create space along Plymouth or perhaps a linear drive / parallel parking area south of Plymouth.
3. I like the idea of moving the south entry into the park closer to Doran Street to enable a sledding hill.
4. I like the idea of a water feature for the increasingly hot summers (climate change) but it is expensive.

CONCLUSION

Tyler Burke, at Tyler.Burke@cityofrochester.gov or 585-428-7571, reminded meeting participants to reach out to him if they had any further questions, concerns or comments and that project documents and details will be added to the City's project website as they are produced. Additional public meetings will be held as the design progresses.

There were no further questions, comments or concerns, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

All statements are known to be accurate. Any significant deviations to these meeting minutes should be provided to Tyler Burke for editing and redistribution.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Burke
Senior Engineer/Development Division

Encl: PowerPoint Presentation

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