



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING DATE: 11 February, 2013

RE: Kemp Mill Urban Park Renovation

MEETING LOCATION: Parkside Headquarters, 9500 Brunett Avenue, Silver Spring, MD (Executive Conference Room)

ATTENDEES:

NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
Misa Chen	WRT	215-430-5037	mchen@wrtdesign.com
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Ariel Winter	Kemp mill	301-593-7469	ariel.winter@gmail.com

GOAL OF MEETING: Generate ideas and reactions from key community stakeholders regarding the design of the playground at Kemp Mill Urban Park.

MEETING NOTES:

- 1) Following introductions of all meeting attendees, Aaron Feldman gave a brief overview of the site, the project and the goals for the meeting.
- 2) Lanshing Hwang gave a brief presentation about the purpose of play and various types of playscapes.
- 3) The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing the merits of different types of play elements and what would be most appropriate at Kemp Mill Urban Park.
 - General Observations
 - Separating the children by age group makes the play experience safer for everyone.
 - The current plan has too many individual components that only hold one child at a time.
 - Use composite play structures to link together as many play experiences as possible. Selena Snow suggested a preference for “one massive thing for lots of kids,” similar to the old play structure at Wheaton Regional Park.
 - The playground at Bauer Park Drive is very popular.
 - A lot of the non-traditional play equipment has turned out to be duds. Instead of being used for their intended purpose, “funky” elements just turn into places for older kids to sit.
 - Climbing and sliding are two important types of movement.

- Promote imaginary play by creating settings for pretend scenarios. A playhouse is a good example of a setting for imaginary play.
- Places for rest should be incorporated into active play structures instead of carved out specifically for sitting or lying down.
- More risk and more physical challenge will engage older kids.
- Space limitations at Kemp Mill Urban Park prevent the playground from expanding to meet the needs of all age groups. Instead, we should think about installing taller structures to meet those needs (build up, not out).
- Public art should be integrated with the play experience.
- Placing climbable, interactive public art components throughout the park will desegregate the user populations by bringing play components to more passive parts of the park. This may be perceived as more of a risk, as parents of multiple children may have a difficult time watching them in more than one place.
- There are adult exercise components at Sligo Creek Park that are rarely used. Incorporating them into this plan may not be a worthwhile use of funds.
- A common theme could be used to tie together site elements, play equipment, landform, etc. The team could draw from local history or context, or begin with a specific piece of equipment to create a unique theme.
- Specific Play Components
 - Add more **swings** than what currently exists (there are often lines of people waiting to use the swings on the weekend).
 - The **net climbers** at Wheaton Regional Park (similar to what is shown on the facility plan) are very popular.
 - **Rock climbing walls** are good for older kids as they encourage a wider range of movement than simple ladders.
 - Ariel Winter's children suggested including **two towers connected by a tube or zipline**.
 - A **carousel** at Kemp Mill Estates Local Park was popular before it was removed. A **stand-up spinner** could be an equally popular alternative.
 - Simpler is better when it comes to **monkey bars**.
 - **Activity walls** should be incorporated into composite structures. They are not used when they are freestanding.
 - Consider creating a **track** around the perimeter of the playground. Keep it separate from the play components and incorporate enough sharp turns and undulation to make it difficult for bicycles and skateboards.
 - Kemp Mill Estates Local Park had a **tire swing** that was popular for several kids to use at once.
- Additional Features
 - Poured-in-place recycled rubber safety surface is preferred over engineered wood fiber mulch.
 - Provide at 10' wide path for maintenance vehicles to access the playground from Arcola Avenue.
 - Incorporate more seating into the playground. This can be done through benches or through seat walls that enclose the playground.

- Provide shaded areas for caregivers to sit and watch on hot days.
 - Move the water fountain closer to the playground.
 - Add a trash can to the playground area.
- 4) Some suggestions were presented for communicating the design process with the community.
- Post an updated project schedule on the website.
 - The public meeting should be held in early June, before schools let out for the summer.
- 5) Next Steps
- Aaron Feldman will reach out to the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council to begin the public art selection process.
 - Aaron Feldman will contact parks maintenance staff and David Ostrich will coordinate with the pond sub-consultant to set up a meeting to discuss the maintenance concerns related to the pond design.