

LESLIE N. SHAW PARK



Discussion of Leslie Shaw Park Potential Upgrades

Meeting at Jefferson Park Branch Library

November 15, 2012

(Next meeting: January 10, 2013).

Meeting Organizer: Sandra Pruitt (UNNC Board Member).

Attendees (in no particular order): Jewel Pruitt, Eula Jackson, Rev. Marzette, Gus Harris, Jr., Lyn Gillson, Marilyn Romero, Vicenta Romero, Manuel Romero, George “Howard” McPhatter, Laverne Smith, Steve Rowe, Estela Mendoza, Bonita Long, Denise Burgher, Georgianna Streeter.

Dolores Spears (UNNC Board member), Wesley Todd (UNNC Treasurer, Jefferson Park Representative), Norman Gilmore (UNNC Secretary, Jefferson Park Representative), Stevie Stern (UNNC President).

City of Los Angeles: Mike Shull (Superintendent, Dept. of Rec and Parks), Dana Valdez (Community Program Director, Dept. of Rec and Parks), Albert Lord (Field Deputy, Herb Wesson, CD10), Senior Lead Officer Pierre Olega.

Minutes taken by Norman Gilmore. **The following minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.** These minutes are just intended to provide a general sense of the ideas and discussion that occurred.

Mike Shull: Park upgrades are largely funded by grants and donations. No annual budget for capital improvements.

Norman: Wants to advocate for young men and space for pick-up games, like soccer and basketball hoops. Wants to make sure we have good outreach to existing park users.

Gus: A problem with a basketball court is the noise that would affect nearby homes. There is a need for fitness equipment.

The park has been used for festivals and gospel concerts in the past, so keeping it appropriate for community performances is important.

Norman: Good point about basketball noise affecting nearby houses – suggestion withdrawn.

Marilyn: Saw some fitness centers provided by Greenfield. They seem popular. Are those an option?

Rev. Marzette: A walking path around the perimeter would be nice.

Georgianna: An exercise course with stations.

Laverne Smith: Could be more family oriented. Nice to have exercise and walking path.

Jewel: The existing jungle gym is boring.

Gus: It would be nice to have a softer walking path.

Rev. Marzette: The park is poorly lit at night.

Sandra: Change the sand, provide shade, new equipment.

Grills, benches?

Norman: How do people feel about cameras?

Estela: It would be good to put in some lighting in the back of the park.

Marilyn: How about a gazebo?

Vicenta: It would be great if the park could appeal to many ages. Exercise stations are good for people who can't afford gym memberships.

Jewel: The park could look more friendly, maybe some flowers or roses to soften the edges.

Mike Shull: LA leads the nation in exercise stations.

The exercise stations are very popular and they are robust.

Basketball is too noisy for the nearby houses.

There is a game that is like a giant "Simon" game, where you physically have to keep up with the lights. Mike said we could be the first park to have this game, because the manufacturer is looking for a test case. It is solar powered and can keep stats on usage and calories burned. It is a fast one player game, but kids can use the wireless to have virtual competitions and keep track of their score.

Sandra: There are several schools in the neighborhood and the kids need a safer place to be after school.

Mike Shull: No one has said anything about the access to the street. Perhaps a short fence so that parents can have some more peace of mind about smaller kids not running into the street.

Q-Star is a flash camera that uses motion sensors. The Park department has used these before. There is a 35 millimeter camera and it takes pictures after the park closes.

If someone stays in the park, a voice starts telling people that the park has closed. If the motion sensor continues detecting motion, then it starts flashing and takes a picture.

The Parks Department is very focused on reducing maintenance costs. They are opening lots of new parks. But they've changed the designs to require less maintenance.

For example, getting rid of the sand and replacing it with rubber surfacing significantly reduces maintenance costs. Sand has to be raked daily to make sure no unsafe items are in sand.

Parks cannot maintain afford to maintain flower beds. They would consider allowing a flower bed to be managed by the community.

Dolores: What would next steps be, and how long would it take?

Mike Shull: We would go develop some concepts and bring them back to the community. Then they would have to go look for funds. The city doesn't have any capital budget for new parks. Proposition K and Proposition 40 are sources for example. They also seek a lot of donations.

The Los Angeles Parks Foundation also is a resource.

If they decided to replace the playground, it would take 3 months from start to finish, once funding in place.

There is a lot of hardscape in the current park, probably too much concrete. Right now there isn't good ADA accessibility. That would need to be fixed.

Dolores Spears was concerned about what kind of City Council process this has to go through.

Albert Lord said that Council President helps facilitate coordination with LAPD, LAFD, and further has a track record as a major park advocate. Councilman Wesson helps compete for scarce resources.

Dolores Spears knows that Councilman Wesson is very supportive of local initiatives.

Mike Shull said that Councilman Wesson is a big advocate for Parks & Rec citywide.

He reiterated that the capital funds won't come through city council.

Mike Shull said that the coordination with City Council is not really an issue, as they are part of the city and they are used to working together.

The next Proposition K money is in two years, and you do need the Councilman's support for Prop K funds.

Albert: If you drive down Adams and turn on Clyde, you can see Westside Park, an initiative of Councilman Wesson's. It is part of a water reclamation project.

Mike Shull: They designed that park in cooperation with Shane's Inspiration.

Albert: If you go down Adams near Buckingham, there is a small pocket park being developed.

These things are doable.

Mike Shull: BBQ Grills are possible. Shade can be integrated into the playground. But they are challenging because of the HPOZ. You'd think it would be simple, but they are very hard to get approved through building and safety.

He thinks the shade structure would ideally be integrated with the play structure.

The walking path is challenging because it requires removing existing hardscape.

The existing Leslie Shaw playground is high on the list for needing replacement.

The National Recreation Parks Association had their annual convention in Anaheim.

They actually purchase playgrounds at the convention because the manufactures don't want to send their demo playgrounds back across the country. So they have an existing playground structure and that could be installed in Leslie Shaw park earlier rather than later.

Mike Shull passed around images of some sample playground designs. The new standards for fall areas have increased, so when playgrounds are upgraded, they get larger because the fall area increases.

To have the pit done and the playground installed, Mike needs to find \$170,000.

The next step is to do some design.

Lyn: How would the plan help shade.

Mike Shull: They probably would be able to present some ideas to us in January.

We are scheduling the next meeting on January 10th.

End of meeting. Rev. 1/7/2012



Attached are some pictures of innovative and environmentally sensitive playgrounds. It would be great to have something like that in the Leslie Shaw Park.
Raul Guzman