



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Heidi Sussmann, M-NCPPC
FROM: Dave Norden, LSG
703-821-2045 x112
DATE: Revised March 8, 2011
PROJECT: Seneca Crossing Facility Plan
LSG JOB NO. 28041.02
RE: Meeting Minutes, Community Meeting #2, February 9, 2011

Present from the design team and M-NCPPC:

Heidi Sussmann, M-NCPPC

Tricia McManus, M-NCPPC

Wendy Hanley, M-NCPPC

Art Nelligan, M-NCPPC

Kim Paniati, M-NCPPC

Clare Runkles, M-NCPPC

Mitra Pedoeem, M-NCPPC

Mark Gionet, LSG

Dave Norden, LSG

Mel Willis, Burgess and Niple

Also see attached sign-in sheets.

1. The meeting convened at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Upcounty Government Center. Over seventy community members attended.
2. Heidi Sussman opened the meeting by greeting all attendees, introducing the design team and Parks staff, and giving a brief description of the site and the project context.
3. Mark Gionet led a presentation which outlined the Facility Plan process, defined the Seneca Crossing park type in the context of other amenities in the Montgomery Parks system, and described the site in detail. He then described the features and arrangement of four alternative concepts in detail. Some questions were asked and are noted below.
4. Mark Gionet discussed typical considerations which shape a facility plan. He described a "three-legged stool" of fundamental questions for the plan: What will the site support? What does the community want? And what are the planning goals for the area? He summarized possible program elements for the park and presented four illustrative concepts showing possible arrangements of facilities typical for a local park. He also explained that, as a local park, Seneca Crossing would be for day use only and would not be lighted.
5. Mel Willis responded to questions regarding SWM issues for this project and gave possible solutions. He stated that the park project would not alter drainage patterns on the site or downstream. He assured attendees that the project would not result in new or additional runoff into their back yards. There was a question from the audience concerning flooding from the drainage swale behind the 3rd house east of the stormwater pond. Mr. Willis stated that drainage will improve, since stormwater will be designed to infiltrate into the ground via bio-retention swales instead of flowing overland towards houses.
6. Mel Willis responded to questions regarding transportation and access issues. He described roadway improvements completed a few years ago, including additional lanes and median

improvements on Brink Road and sidewalk improvements along Brink Road. Brink Road currently has two existing median cuts, whose location will determine the placement of vehicular entrances to the park. There is also an existing curb cut from Seneca Crossing Drive into the west parcel of the park which will be maintained for access for any possible parking facilities serving that area of the park. The location of the existing curb cut doesn't have proper sight distance, so the currently proposed location is shifted further away from the intersection than the existing curb cut.

7. Members of the audience provided the following comments during the presentation.

- Reduce surface runoff and minimize water going into the swale near the residential yards.
- One neighbor requested information about a stormwater structure removed in the park behind his house.
- One neighbor does not want the park developed stating it's a waste of tax dollars and that fields are available at nearby Ridge Road Park.
- Many neighboring residents do not want the walking connection to the neighborhood shown in Scheme 3.
- Several neighbors voiced concern about non-residents using their neighborhood open space.
- Concerns were expressed about public currently parking on Seneca Crossing Drive and this continuing following park development, and requested that no parking signs be posted.
- Several residents requested adding more tennis or volleyball courts to the area that shows two proposed courts. It was noted that M-NCPPC currently has one tennis court at Ridge Road.
- Several residents suggested that the recommendation for fields is based on the desire of M-NCPPC to generate income through permit fees. The park manager indicated that the permit fees are \$5/hr. for the field, which covers a small part of administrative costs but not operating and maintenance costs for the fields.
- There were questions about how the usage of fields is allocated. Permit holders have first preference, and unpermitted fields are available for use by anyone. Some questioned if tennis and volleyball courts would also be subject to permitting.
- There were questions regarding how much parking is needed. The parking for fields is typically allocated at 60-75 spaces per field, and all schemes included 145-165 spaces.
- There was a suggestion that the buffer planting be implemented first, since the park development is likely to occur in the long term.
- One resident asked about the appearance of the surface swale through the wooded buffer. The center of the swale would need to be periodically mowed to keep the drainage way clear, but trees can be planted along both sides of the swale.
- There were questions about how the project is funded and what projects would compete for funding with this one. Staff indicated that there is no guarantee of funding and that since this is a new park it is likely to be funded near the end of the six-year cycle. It could be 7-10 years before the park is built.
- There were requests to coordinate with DOT to address cut-through traffic in the community and speeding.
- One neighbor inquired if the parking lots would have area lighting.
- Neighbors asked where and by how many lanes vehicles would enter and leave the park to and from Brinks Road.

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8. The attendees were then encouraged to visit four stations showing illustrative plan and perspective views of each alternative concept and record all comments onto the note pads provided. Project team members were stationed throughout to answer questions.
9. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Attachments:
Breakout Group Results
Sign-in Sheets

COMMENTS FROM SCHEME 1 STATION	
Number of People Making Comment	Comment
1	Provide volley-ball (3), 2 nd tennis with hitting wall in or out of court together on east side
1	Ensure flat areas around volley-ball - extend to contain balls
1	Provide 2 parking in/egress points
1	Likes option 4 open oval 2 nd loop walk
1	Pathway walking on Seneca Crossing
1	Like skate park
1	Keep entry feature at Seneca Crossing
1	Use loop trail for bikes
1	Swim/pool
1	1 - pkg. too close to buffer
1	Don't build this park - use the funding for other hard usages, schools, police

COMMENTS FROM SCHEME 2 STATION	
Number of People Making Comment	Comment
1	Skate park - much larger, not tiny layout as shown
1	Skate park - there's definitely room for a large one
1	I like the community garden idea!
1	I like the volley ball
1	I live on Seneca Crossing and am concerned about traffic and stormwater. I will send the history to Heidi. There is a long history
1	Parking is not as attractive as the other options
1	Concern about maintenance of community gardens - prefer tennis court and volley-ball
1	Parking for east field is unacceptable. People will park on Seneca Forest Circle and cut through
1	One entrance for 72 cars per field per game = disaster
1	Needed: Additional barrier/fence between park and houses on Seneca Forest - especially since trees won't be planted/grown large enough for barrier for many years after park is built.
1	Like the ample parking, but switch closer to Brink and move skate park back
1	Like smaller fields, hopefully less usage because of smaller size
1	Would like large/tall fencing in addition to trees to buffer houses
1	Don't build the park and use funding for other things, schools, police, fire, etc.
1	House 11525 - tried to plant - poor soil and slope - all trees died
1	Buffer is important; swale and slope - want trees on hill top (not just slope)
1	Don't make slope steeper - more runoff, harder to grow trees
1	Are OK with park, but want good buffer
1	Like open space/community garden concept best in Scheme #2

COMMENTS FROM SCHEME 4 STATION	
Number of People Making Comment	Comment
1	Likes Scheme 1 and 4
5	Likes Scheme 4 (no car crossings of internal pathway)
5	Likes loop path on Scheme 4, because it does not conflict with parking or road
3	Likes expansive separation and vegetated buffer between houses and parking lot on Scheme 4 with location of parking lot close to Brink Road.
1	Resident who backs up to the park indicated that the community tried to plant a number of trees on the slope for Arbor Day, and residents followed up with watering but had no success. They indicated that special measures may need to be taken to grow trees on the slope. (Park manager confirmed that soils are very bad and need amendments, which could be the reason for past planting failures.)
2	Likes skate park as an activity in the park
2	Skateboarding could be a problem in the park (noisy), but would accept it, provided it's located close to the road and away from homes
1	May not need a playground, since there are others nearby. Demographics probably would support more activities for older kids.
1	Consider multiple play areas in the park, near the ball fields as well as near activities in the small separated area of the park
2	Likes community garden in the small separated area
2	Likes volleyball and tennis in the small separated area at the west side of the park
2	Likes tennis in the small separated area
2	One volleyball net would not be enough. Need multiple nets with surrounding flat areas so that ball does not get away. The small separated area at the west side of the park is good, because it is self-contained. One resident proposed 6 lighted courts, and indicated that they could be located elsewhere, possibly at Ridge Road.
1	Provide a path to connect the entire park (across Seneca Crossing Drive)
1	Provide drinking fountain
1	Consider security for parking lot after dark (lighting)
1	In Schemes 1, 2, and 3, move the parking lot further from homes and more towards Brink Road, more like Scheme 4
1	For all schemes, include tall fencing to buffer houses in addition to trees Provide infant swings in playground;