

# **1&7 East Del Ray Avenue Pocket Park Design**

City of Alexandria Parks  
and Recreation

Commission Public Hearing

November 20, 2008

# Acquisition of Pocket Park

- **City of Alexandria Acquires Second Property for Pocket Park Program**
- The purchase, approved by Council in January 2007, was also approved by the City's Planning Commission, as required by the City Code.
- The 16,021 square foot property, which is currently vacant, contains two parcels at the corner of East Del Ray and Commonwealth Avenues. The property is ideally suited for public open space and was listed as one of the highest priority sites for a potential pocket park.
- Acquisition of this property enhances the City's ability to meet the goals of its Open Space Plan.
- Due to the size restrictions of pocket parks, this site will not meet the requirements for a dog park, but is ideally suited for passive neighborhood use that will be further defined through the park planning process.
- The public participates in the design process with review from the Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission.

## June 26, 2008 Public Meeting

- RP&CA staff held a meeting with the community to discuss the pocket park, site parameters, potential design options and the overall design process.
- Staff provided a site plan and a palette of city standard design options.
- The community provided input regarding what they hoped to see at/in the park.

# June 26, 2008 Public Meeting

Community members present had different ideas for the park, including:

- Tot lot with play equipment for 2-5 year olds;
- Natural area with trees only including rain gardens and eco-sensitive design;
- Passive, open area with walking paths, seating and landscaping;
- More formal seating/plaza area at the corner with hardscape features;
- Water fountain, trash cans, and benches;
- Use of public art;
- Public gardens; and
- A dog exercise area.

Staff was requested to come back to the group with different design options that would show how the park could share mixed uses and attempt to meet the needs expressed by the community.

# Public Comments

## June – September 2008

RP&CA staff continued to receive comments regarding the pocket park after the first community meeting. Comments included:

- Need for a tot lot in this area;
- Request for no defined tot lot or play area on this site and a passive park only;
- Suggestions for design elements, especially related to landscaping and eco-sensitive components;
- Concerns about unleashed dogs in the park; and
- Questions about current and future maintenance of the park.

## September 23, 2008 Public Meeting

The public was invited to the second park planning meeting where five draft design schemes (A-E) were shown for discussion:

- Each of the five schemes showed a small, enclosed tot lot (1,200-1,800 s.f.) in the southeast corner of the site.
- Five different planting schemes, pathway connections and corner plaza area designs were shown.

# September 23, 2008 Public Meeting

Meeting attendees were asked to discuss the different options and then use colored dots to reflect which parts of the plan they liked and didn't like. Comments included:

- Staff must provide a sixth option with NO tot lot;
- Provide more shade trees;
- Provide natural paths/connections;
- Provide seating internal to the park;
- Provide irrigation;
- Provide for more natural habitat;
- Desire for less formal plaza area; and
- Provide buffers to neighbors and street.

Based on review of the colored dots, overall, Schemes A and E were most favorable to the group, though many components of others were also favorable and some components clearly undesirable.

## September 23, 2008 Public Meeting

- Staff guaranteed to provide a sixth scheme on line that showed no tot lot.
- There was general agreement that, instead of a traditional “tot lot”, if a play area was provided, it should be small in scale and use more natural components (not larger, bright colored play equipment).

# Public Comments

## September – November 2008

After the second community meeting, RP&CA staff posted the sixth design option (Scheme F) online and continued to receive comments regarding the pocket park and reflecting the respondent's preferred design scheme.

- The most favorable schemes were still A and E, though F (no tot lot) was also noted by some respondents.
- The Del Ray Citizens Association also posted the design schemes on the DRCA site in coordination with their own on-line voting mechanism (note this was not a city-sponsored forum). The most often preferred option out of 38 DRCA voters was for Scheme F, but many respondents also like a tot lot option.

## **November 12, 2008 Public Meeting**

The public was invited to the third park planning meeting where a draft design scheme was presented for discussion. The plan presented addressed many of the issues and incorporated the previous comments received from the community.

# DRAFT SITE PLAN



Not to scale

## 1 & 7 E. DEL RAY AVENUE POCKET PARK

# November 12, 2008 Public Meeting

Comments on the draft plan received and agreed upon by the attendees include:

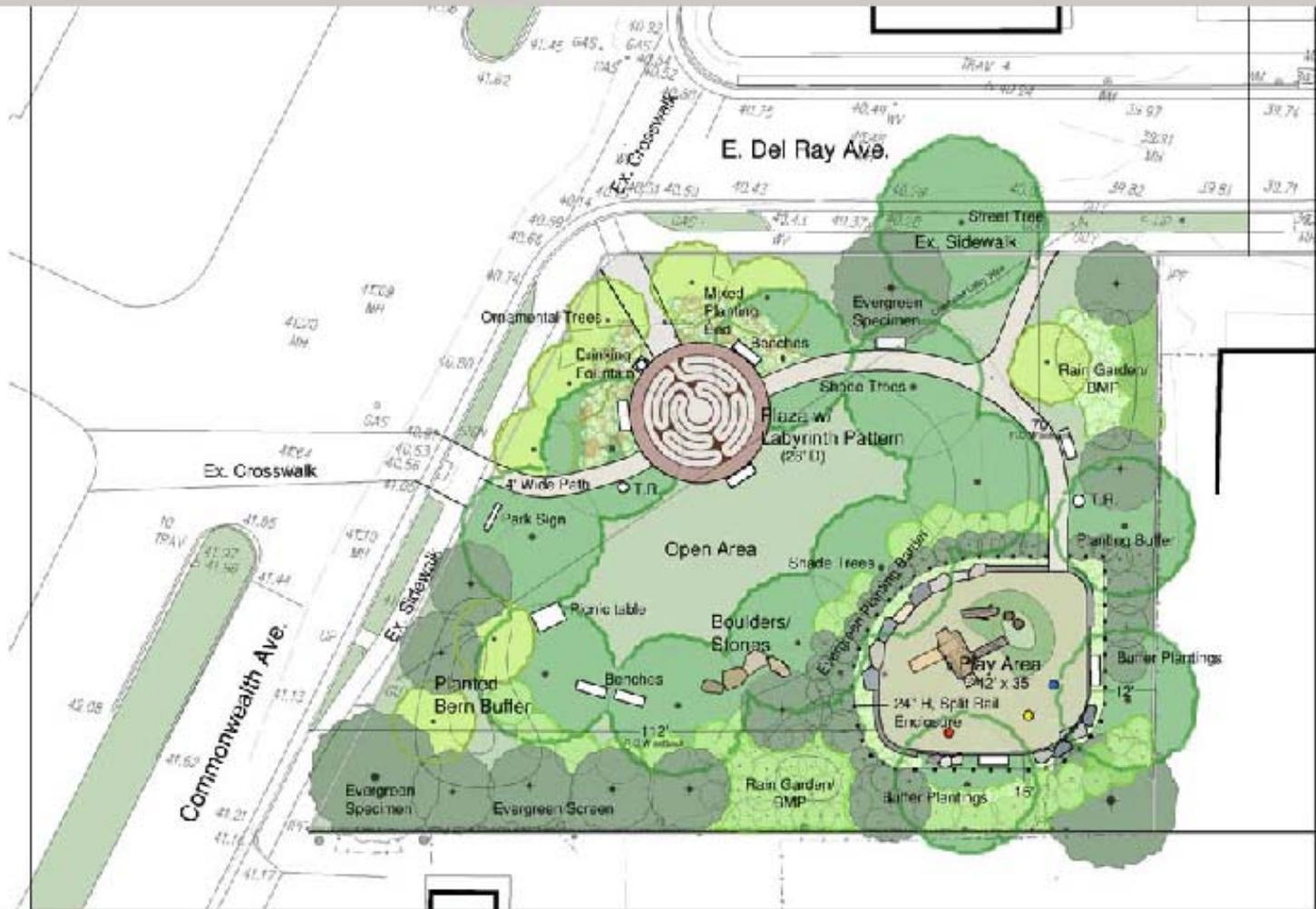
- Need for more play equipment with natural appearance;
- Realign trees along central path; and
- Add labyrinth to corner plaza area;

The above items have been addressed in the plan before you tonight.

Other comments made, include:

- Desire for larger play area;
- Need for fence/ increased security around the play area;
- Continued interest in realignment of the crosswalk on Commonwealth Avenue (T&ES issue).

# DRAFT SITE PLAN-11/20/08

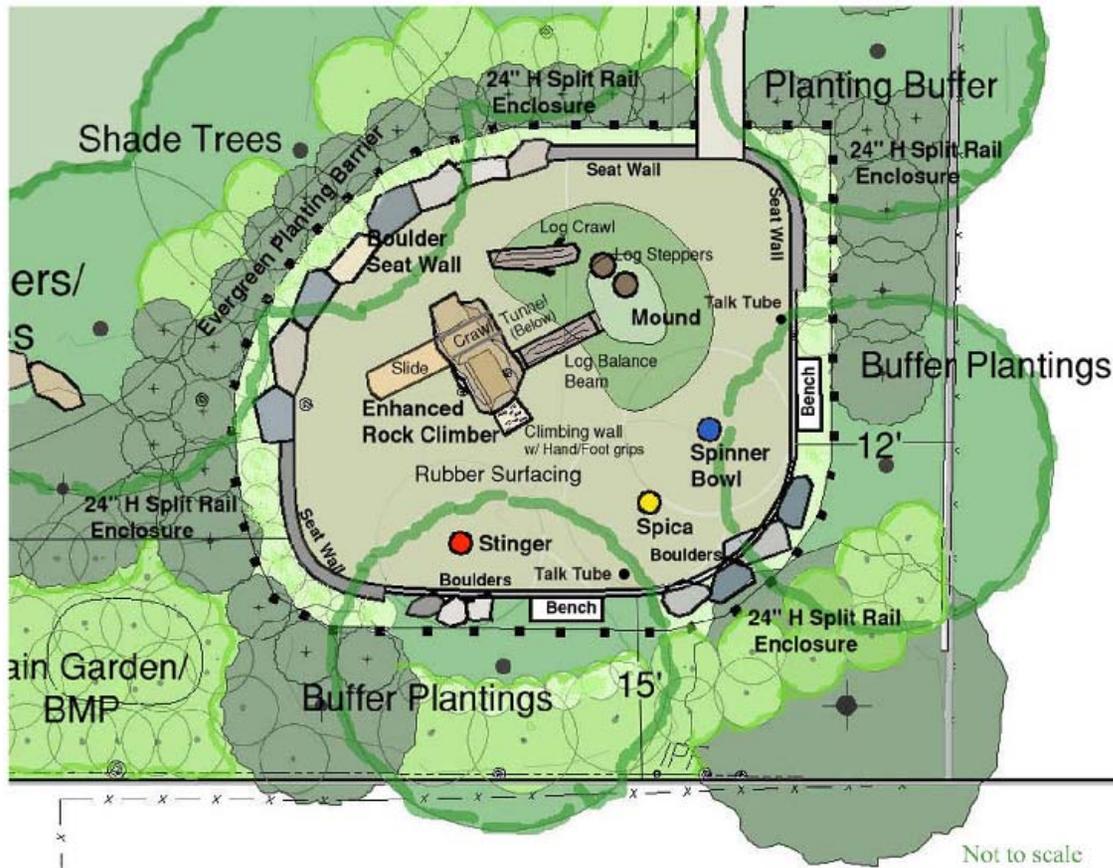


Not to scale

## 1 & 7 E. DEL RAY AVENUE POCKET PARK

# PLAY AREA- 11/20/08

## Proposed Play Area 42' x 35'



## Enhanced Play Area Security



24" Height Split Rail Enclosure



Juniper Planting Barrier

1 & 7 E. DEL RAY AVENUE POCKET PARK

# Play Equipment 11/20/08



"STINGER"

## Enhanced Rock Climber w/ add on's (Not Shown)

- Slide
- Tunnel
- Climbing Wall w/ hand/footgrips



"JUNIOR SPICA"



Rock Climber Profile Dimensions: 10'L x 4'W 3.5'H



"SPINNER BOWL"

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Log Stepper



TALK TUBE



Rock Climber Elevation



Log Balance Beam

## Examples of Enhanced Rock Climbers/Add On's



Log Crawl



Example of Climber with Slide



Example of Tunnel



Example of Wall with hand/foot grips

1 & 7 E. DEL RAY AVENUE POCKET PARK