Wilkes Street Park Redesign

Park and Recreation Commission

January 21, 2021
Site Background

• Wilkes Street Park located in the southwest quadrant of the City.

• To the west of the site is South Columbus Street, to the east is South Patrick Street.

• The property is split into two parcels by South Alfred Street.

• Park is a 0.7 acres linear park with a multiuse path through the middle (part of the bike trail system in the City).

• The surrounding area has a lot of children and older adults.

The area where the park is located was previously known as “The Bottoms.”
Site Location
Project Background

**South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy**

- The South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy states that the Wilkes Street Open Space “will be implemented by adjacent property owners through redevelopment with all applicable approvals.” (pg. 24)

- The City will lead a concept design of the two open spaces with the intention that the improvements would be implemented “in kind” by the adjacent property owners.

- The open space plans will contain a Phase I and Phase II design to allow for flexibility in implementation.
Design Guidelines

• Summer 2019, City staff met to learn about the park (staff from RPCA, Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services, Archeology, Housing, etc.)

• Using each person’s expertise, a list of design principles for the park was created
Design Guidelines

- Wilkes Street Park will be improved to include play areas, seating, open passive areas that will be designed to be accessible and accommodating to all ages and abilities.

- The improvements to the Wilkes Street public open space will incorporate the history of the neighborhood through interpretive design elements.

- Maintain the multiuse path as part of the park design. The path needs to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists safely.

- RPCA 2019 Needs Assessment indicate the some of the strongest needs for Alexandria residents are walking trails and loops, outdoor public art, natural areas and access to nature.

- Park design will include shade, incorporate CPTED standards, and replace site furnishings with City standard furniture (including light poles).
Community Surveys

- Two online community surveys to collect input for the park’s redesign
First Survey

• Used to gain insight on what the community would like the park to look like

• Survey was available from August 14 until September 11

• Input collected was used to create three design proposals
Tree Preservation & Removal
Option 1 Design

*Note: Wilkes Park Public Art component to be designed, located and installed through a separate process.*
Option 2 Design

Legend:
1. Park Gateway - Entry Signage
2. S Patrick's Plaza
3. 5 (W) Pedestrian Park Pathway
4. 8' (W) 2-Way Cycle Route
5. Woodland Discovery with feature seating
6. Nature Play Area (All Ages)
7. Interpretation / Resting Point
8. Plaza (Raised Table)
9. Building Arrival
10. Memorial Garden - Relocated Veteran Memorial Rock
11. Picnic Area & Shelter
12. Multiuse Lawn
13. Buffer Planting
14. Woodland
15. Bird Boxes
16. Insect Hotel
17. Education Node

*Note: Wilkes Park Public Art component to be designed, located and installed through a separate process.
Second Survey

- Survey was longer and was used to have public weigh in on the two design options presented.

- The second survey was open from November 6 through December 4

- Survey results were almost equal, ultimately decided on Design 1
  - Contained transportation route, but allowed the park to still function as a park and not solely as a transportation route
  - The two paths reduce the amount of useable space in the park
  - Staff asked that the playspace be increased to accommodate neighborhood needs
HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN
OVERALL SITE PLAN

S. Patrick Street
Residential Block 4
Wilkes Park
(East)
Residential Block 1
S. Alfred Street
Wilkes Park
(West)
Residential Block 2
S. Columbus Street

21.01.21
ASLAND CAPITAL PARTNERS
CONCEPT AIMS

- 12' (1' + 10 + 1') Shared pedestrian & bike route
- Creation of Linked Small to Medium Spaces
- Mix of Active and Passive Program
- Retain Existing Trees

FRAMEWORK PLAN NTS

*Note: Wilkes Park Public Art component to be designed, located and installed through a separate process.
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN NTS

Legend

1. Park Gateway - Entry signage
2. 12’ (W) Main Park Shared Route (Pedestrian & Bike)
3. Feature Arrival Area - Shade Structure & Seating
4. Nature Interpretation Area (All Ages)
5. Resting Points
6. Plaza (Inc. Raised Table)
7. Building Arrival
8. Play Area (All Ages)
9. Memorial Garden - Includes relocated veteran memorial rock.
10. Multiuse Lawn - includes picnic tables and seating
11. Buffer Planting
12. Stormwater Basin

*Note; Wilkes Park Public Art component to be designed, located and installed through a separate process.
HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN
PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES

HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

PARKER RODRIGUEZ, INC.
Planning  |  Urban Design  |  Landscape Architecture

ASLAND CAPITAL PARTNERS

21.01.21
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN NTS

Legend

1. Park Gateway - Entry signage
2. 12' (W) Main Park Shared Route (Pedestrian & Bike)
3. Resting Points
4. Plaza (Inc. Raised Table)
5. Play Area (All Ages)
6. Memorial Garden - Includes relocated veteran memorial rock.
7. Multiuse Lawn - includes feature swings
8. Meadow Planting Area
9. Stormwater Basin

Meadow

Education Node

Property Line

HERITAGE AT OLD TOWN
BLOW-UP PARK PLAN (EASTERN)
Park Planning Process

- **Pre Planning**
  - **August 13:** RPCA hosted a virtual kick-off meeting with the community.
  - **August 14 – September 11:** RPCA received input through Community Survey

- **Planning Process**
  - **September 17:** RPCA present the park project and survey results to the Park and Recreation Commission.
  - **September 18 – October 16:** Using the public input, the developer design team prepare design options for the park.
  - **November 5:** RPCA host a second community meeting with the applicant design proposals for the park.
  - **November 6 – December 4:** A second online survey and public engagement is conducted asking for community feedback on the design options.
  - **December – January:** Developer design team prepare a final park design using community input collected.
  - **January 21:** RPCA present final park design to the Park and Recreation Commission for public hearing.
  - **February 18:** RPCA present final park design to the Park and Recreation Commission for endorsement.
Staff Comments

- Further refine the playspace design
  - Include play elements and locations
  - Include barriers if within 30’ of road

- Ensure CPTED compliance
Public Art Process

NEW PUBLIC ART COMING SOON

alexandriava.gov/publicart
@alexartsoffice • #artsALX
RECOMMENDATION: That the Park and Recreation Commission formally endorse the Wilkes Street Park design as presented by staff.

Questions