Simpson Park Playground & Passive Lawn Renovation
Public Workshop on the Final Concept Plan
October 17, 2016
Agenda

7:00 PM Welcome, Introductions, Project Background   Judy

7:05 PM Design Process and Revised Concept   Cara/Elisabeth
   • Review results from September meeting and on-line survey
   • Review concerns regarding fencing, surfacing and play structure proposals
   • Options for consideration

7:35 PM Discussion   Cara/Elisabeth

8:55 PM Next Steps   Judy

9:00 PM Adjourn
The Plan

KEYED LEGEND

1. Widen path 6-8 feet to enable north-south standard pathway
2. Adjust playground borders, improve entrances, and add natural play
3. Add stroller parking and plaza at playground entrance
4. Create open-use area and improve plantings in passive use areas
5. Connect pathway to E. Duncan Ave
6. Use bollards to limit pathway driving access to maintenance vehicles
7. Plant perimeter trees to create "green valley"
8. Provide new hard trails in east half of park
9. Provide new field entrance and ramp
10. Improve maintenance route to soccer fields
11. Provide new bleachers with equipment storage underneath
12. Provide new bleachers with concessions booths underneath
13. Create picnic area near concessions
14. Expand parking lot
15. Encourage use of forty-five total on-street parking spaces along E. Monroe Ave and Main Line Blvd for soccer field use
16. Improve dog park to include lighting, terraced hill, trees, and play features
17. Add maintenance storage shelter and yard between fields
18. Add vegetated bioswale along dog park edge and at maintenance yard

Note: CIP funds have already been allocated to install stairs at Monroe Avenue/basketball court and to replace the Little Simpson Press Box in 2014.

GRAPHIC KEY

Hard Trails
Bike Route
Park Bounds
Open Use Areas
Entrance Plazas
Athletic Fields
Dog Park

Simpson Stadium Park
Recommendations & Implementation Strategy

1. **Widen path to be 6-8 feet in width enabling a north-south standard pathway**
   Many Del Ray residents use this path to walk to neighborhood destinations, yet our foot path is constricted for simultaneous pedestrian, bicycle, and stroller use at its narrowest points. Widening this pathway would create an easier pedestrian route and meet the City’s standard width for sidewalks.
   
   ESTIMATED COST: $87,500 - $156,000  
   PRIORITY: Medium  
   PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years

2. **Adjust playground borders, improve entrances, add natural play**
   The proposed playground area will be moved slightly east to accommodate the widened path (recommendation #1). It will include a rubberized surface and new play equipment to serve multiple ages. Additional tree canopy will shade the area and new benches and trash receptacles will improve the space for parents and caregivers. The entire play area will increase with the addition of a basking wall and climbing features to the east of the playground.
   
   ESTIMATED COST: $325,000 - $475,000  
   PRIORITY: High  
   PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1-3 years

3. **Add stroller parking and plaza at playground entrance**
   The proposed northwest entrance will provide convenient access to the playground from Duncan Avenue and serve as a welcoming gateway to the entire park. Parents or guardians with strollers will be able to park them in notches along the fence line bordering the proposed entrance.
   
   ESTIMATED COST: $19,000 - $27,000  
   PRIORITY: Medium  
   PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years

4. **Create open-use area and improve green space in passive use areas**
   This plan proposes renovating open space to accommodate multiple passive uses and help to balance the type of activities in Simpson Park. With re-grading and improved landscape, the area will accommodate uses such as frisbee, picnics, and quiet relaxation. A second plaza including pervious brick pavers, benches, and trash receptacles will create a space for park visitors to congregate.
   
   ESTIMATED COST: $245,000 - $368,000  
   PRIORITY: High  
   PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years

The existing sidewalk between the YMCA parking lot and Duncan Avenue is very narrow, making it difficult for park users to pass each other, especially if there is a cyclist or stroller.

The playground is in need of replacement and equipment to cater to multiple age groups.

The current passive use space that is unfenced is north of Big Simpson. Its grass surface is in poor condition.
Findings from the Citywide Planning Effort

• 2011 and 2013, RPCA conducted a Park and Recreation Needs Assessments and found that, the highest City-wide needs are for un-programed spaces such as trails, natural areas, and picnic spaces;

• Yet, many of the City's parks, such as Simpson Park, are highly programmed and lacking of these needed items
Project Charge

• Accommodate **multiple passive uses** and **balance type of activities** to establish **open play uses** and **casual gathering areas**

• Renovate the **playground** for **ages 2-12**; add more shade

• Connect passive use areas

• Make Simpson Park family-friendly for **multiple-age groups**

• Collaborate with Artist Team
Project Budget + Grant Funding

- Project Budget - $776,400
- Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Land and Water Conservation Fund grant - $200,000
- Public Art Budget - $95,000
Project Area Boundaries outlined in red
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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Month(s)</th>
<th>Notes/Milestones</th>
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<td>Site Inventory Analysis</td>
<td>March/April</td>
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<td>Maintenance and Operations</td>
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<td>Concept Design</td>
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<td>Construction Documents</td>
<td>Oct/Nov/Dec</td>
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<td>Task C</td>
<td>Public Input and Meetings</td>
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<td>Community Outreach Letter</td>
<td>February 24th</td>
<td>Del Ray Citizens Association + adjacent property owners</td>
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<td>Kick-off Meeting</td>
<td>March 1st</td>
<td>Focus group meetings</td>
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<td>Workshop - Concept Alternatives</td>
<td>May 25th</td>
<td>Focus group meetings</td>
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<td>Workshop – Revised Concept</td>
<td>September 8th</td>
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<td>Commission for the Arts and Park</td>
<td>June/Sept</td>
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<td>Recreation Commission</td>
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<td>Workshop – Final Concept</td>
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Site Analysis
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Site Analysis
Guiding Principles

• Well integrated and multi-use, flexible space
• Inviting and safe and clear boundaries and comfortable enclosures/subspace (fence, seat walls, vegetation, topography, etc.)
• Easily understood circulation - clearly defined circulation paths with less cut-through paths and well defined entrances and access points
• Provide social space to accommodate a range of user groups, ages and social interactions
• Incorporate seamless integration of landscape, art, and play
• Project a sense of place and community
• Low maintenance and resilient materials
• Access to ‘nature’ and provide health benefits
• Large and small open areas for spontaneous play
• Public Art selected and implemented in accordance with the Public Art Implementation Plan art goals
Community Meeting
May 25, 2016
Inspiration Board
Online Survey - Concept Design
May 25th - June 15th

Total of 61 responses
Three Concept Alternatives
Community Meeting Preferences

- **Concept 2 layout**
- Retain **concrete walk** at current width; add wider diagonal path
- Incorporate **natural play** features
- Muted (natural) **colors** with **accent** hues
- **Swinging** and **climbing**
- Mix of **rubber** and **wood fiber** play surface, mixed response on **stone dust**
- **Seat walls** use where possible
- **Shade trees** rather than shade structures
- Picnic **tables**
- Art that is **climbable** and good for **sitting**
Preferred Concept Alternative

- Mulch
- Tree stage/platform
- Cedar fallen logs and balancing beams (2 yrs+)
- Bike and stroller parking
- Climb on Seed Pod public art
- Seat wall
- Existing sidewalk
- Entrance plaza with pervious pavers
- Recycled Bonded Rubber
- Ex. 4" conc. path: widen to 6' with stone dust swath
- Existing tree (typical)
- Merry-go-round (5-12 yrs)
- Mosaic seed pods public art
- Swings
  - 3 belt seats
  - 2 tot bucket seats
  - 1 full bucket seat
- Engineered Wood Fiber
- Ornamental fence (typical)
- Parkour climbing course (5-12 yrs)
- Proposed shade tree (typical)
- Children's garden/grass maze with stepping stones and willow tunnel
- Water feature and drinking fountain area
- Seat wall
- Accessible transition from existing stone dust path to permeable paver path
- Seat walls set in grassy berm
- Landscape boulder (typical)
- Maintenance access road with removable bollards (permeable pavers)
- Picnic table with umbrella
- Proposed shade tree (typical)
- Proposed ornamental tree (typical)
- 8' wide permeable paver path with concrete header border
- Project limits boundary
- Accessible transition from existing stone dust path to permeable paver path
- Shallow swale to collect runoff from Big Simpson (connecting to underdrain system beneath playground)
Preferred Concept Alternative

- Lawn
- Tables with Umbrellas
- Seat Walls/Berm
- Lawn
- Proposed tree (typ.)
- Maintenance access
- Accessible transition to and from existing stone dust path to permeable paver path
- Shrub border
- Existing tree (typ.)
- 8’-wide path

East Duncan Ave
Preferred Concept Alternative

- Entrance Plaza
- East Duncan Ave
- Fence
- Shrub border
- Seat Walls/Berm
- Lawn
- Public Art
- Nature Play
- Swings
- Fence
- Willow hoop tunnel
- Accessible transition to and from existing stone dust path to permeable paver path
- Water feature + drinking fountain
- Preferred Concept Alternative
- Children’s Garden
- Parkour/Climbing
Community Survey Response

- Total of 286 responses to the survey (9/6-9/26)
- Positive feedback (purple)
- Concerns raised regarding playground surfacing, playground equipment, and playground boundaries/fencing locations
Discussion

• Playground Surfacing
• Playground Boundaries/Fencing
• Playground Equipment Options
Playground Surfacing

- Wood
- Landscape Mulch
- Poured Rubber Surface (Shown in blue)
- Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)

E. Duncan Ave

Nature Play

Public Art

Parkour/Climbing

Children's Garden

Swings

Fence
Combination Poured in Place Rubber and Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)
Background on Surfacing Selection

• The rubber surfacing provides **ADA accessibility**, provides consistent **impact attenuation**, improves **site drainage**, and reduces **maintenance**.

• The community expressed interest in using **rubberized surfacing** in the **Citywide Plan** with **244 completed surveys** collected in that effort.

• This plan **splits the surfacing** material into areas with **rubber surfacing** and areas with **engineered mulch** or shredded hardwood mulch, where applicable.

• The **City's health department** has conducted extensive **research** on rubber materials here: [https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploaded Files/recreation/info/AlexandriaHealthDepartmentCrumbRubberReview 16Sep2015PRC.pdf](https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploaded Files/recreation/info/AlexandriaHealthDepartmentCrumbRubberReview 16Sep2015PRC.pdf)

• The rubber surface is **cleaned by pressure washing** and can be further washed using **biodegradable or organic solvents**, as recommended by the manufacturer.

• The poured in place rubber surface will contain a **subsurface drainage** system to quickly drain water and **reduce standing water**.

• As with many finishes and surfaces, during hot weather the surfaces may get warm however the rubber surfacing **does not typically exceed the temperature of a tennis court**. Adults are advised to **use caution** and to check surfaces **before allowing** children in the playground or on equipment. **Lighter colors** will be used at Simpson.
Preferred Concept Alternative Boundaries/Fencing Location

- Gate + walls
- Shrub border
- Hill/berm
- Lawn
- Playground
- Big Simpson
- YMCA
- Tennis
- E. Duncan Ave

fence
Seat walls
Metal ornamental fence
(City standard)
Preferred Concept Alternative Playground Features

- Merry-go-round
- Swings
- Parkour/Climbing
- Stepping Stones and Willow Hoop
- Nature Play – Balance Beam Logs, Climbing Cedar Logs, Low Tree Platform
- Boulders
- Seat Walls/Climbing Area
- Free Play/Lawn

East Duncan Ave
Swing and Spin
Parkour Climbing Course

Ages 5+ (5-12)
Half Parkour Climbing Course

Ages 5+ (5-12)
Track ride tower (transfer station not shown)
5+ (5-12 years)
Play Tower with slide and rings
Ages 2-5

Ages 2-5

Ages 5-12

Ages 2-5
Springers 2+ (2-5 years)
Overhead Fitness Ladder and Somersaults

Ages 13+

Ages 5+ (5-12)
Next Steps

• Final Concept posted to project website by the end of October

• Construction Documents October – December

• Construction in Spring of 2017
Contact Information

Judy Lo, ASLA, PLA
Urban Planner
City of Alexandria
Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Division of Park Planning, Design + Capital Projects
1108 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703.838.6344
judy.lo@alexandriava.gov