

Cronin Wainwright Playground
First Community Meeting, Monday, January 31, 2011
Location: Epiphany School

Attending: Cathy Baker-Eclipse, Project Manager, Boston Parks and Rec. Dept.
Clara Batchelor, Principal, CBA Landscape Architects LLC
Member of the Community, City Councilor Maureen Feeney and
Representatives from Councilor Maureen Feeney's office and Charles Yancey's office. (See attached list.)

Cathy Baker-Eclipse opened the meeting by giving some overall parameters.

1. The park will be funded by the City's capital improvements budget and from a PARC grant.
2. The construction budget for the park is \$875,000.
3. The design needs to be completed by June 30, 2011. The construction needs to be complete by June 1, 2012. Construction should begin in August or September of 2011, after the summer camp programs have ended.

Clara Batchelor asked how the park was used. The following comments were made.

1. People walk their dogs around the outside edge of the park.
2. Two daycares in the area use the park.
3. The basketball court is in terrible shape but still a very important feature of the park. The lights don't work. The lights of the street hockey court that was removed do work.
4. Family Fun Days are scheduled in the park over the summer by B.O.L.D. Teens and St. Marks.
5. Epiphany uses the ball field for softball and for other outdoor activities.
6. There does not appear to be a Little League team that uses the ball field. There is a Savin Hill and a Cedar Grove League. They practice elsewhere.
7. St. Marks uses the park in the summer and for their after school programs.
8. Everyone cuts diagonally through the park to get to the T stop.
9. A neighbor (Rev. Bill Loesch) has actively planted and cared for shrubs and flowers in the park, particularly at the corner of Wainwright and Brent Streets.
10. Four square is not popular. There used to be a half court basketball court where the Four Square is now, which was used more often.
11. Double Dutch jump rope is not popular.

People were asked what they would like to see in their park. The following comments were made.

1. It was stated that it would be nice to have a soccer field at Cronin Wainwright for informal use. Many more children are interested in soccer. (Baseball is not very popular now.) There is an All Dorchester Soccer League. They use Pope John Paul Park and sometimes use Hemenway as an alternative. Some of the kids in the league and their coaches live in the neighborhood.
2. There should be two basketball courts. One for older kids and adults and one for younger kids. The court for younger children should have adjustable height basketball backboards or backboards that are permanently eight feet. All backboards should be polycarbonate.
3. Consider a multi-purpose court.
4. Flood areas for ice skating in the winter. There was a person who works for the Boston Bruins and they are interested in partnering with a group to promote ice skating, especially hockey programs. Cathy will talk to that person in more detail to find out if the Bruins can provide funding and/or maintenance.
5. There should be a continuity of lights around the perimeter of the park. There are cobra head lights on Wainwright and Brent Streets. There is currently a program in the City to relamp these lights with LED fixtures. There are shoebox lights on Melbourne and Brent Streets. There is no current program to replace these light bulbs.
6. More lights are needed throughout the park. Lighting is very important for keeping out undesirable activity. The northeast corner is particularly dark.
7. Electric outlets are needed in the park to be used for Family Fun Day, movie nights, and other activities.
8. A softball field is not needed. A multi-purpose field is more desirable. People do not want to keep the baseball backstop.
9. An informal soccer field is desirable.
10. Water play in the park would be great. It gets very hot in the summer.
11. The park needs more shade. Trees and umbrellas could be used.
12. A water fountain is needed near the basketball court.
13. A sprinkler system or at a minimum, a yard hydrant, is needed to care for the areas landscaped by the neighborhood.
14. Use flowering shrubs and flowers in the landscape.
15. Expand the area for play equipment.
16. Bike racks are needed for people who bike to the park.
17. An interior path for walking/biking is desired. (Cathy explained that biking in the park is not allowed.)
18. More benches for sitting are desired. Currently there is only one in the park, besides the ones in the play equipment area and the softball teams.
19. Get rid of the tall fence around the perimeter of the park. Replace it with a "green" fence or ornamental fence.
20. Use the southwest corner for a passive area.
21. The park should have "green" features.
22. The green feeling of the park should be maintained. It should not be filled up with hardscape.
23. The park should be multi-generational.
24. The park needs more entrances, especially near Joseph Street.



25. More activities need to be scheduled for the park to increase the positive use of the park. (ParkArts? Movie Nights? Etc.)
26. Plan for people cutting through the park. Users will continue to do this.
27. Wainwright Park has a negative reputation. Maintenance at the park (mowing and trash collection) is neglected.
28. Consider changing the name of the park. There is a plaque to James Cronin. It was suggested to call the Park the Cronin Park, not Wainwright Park.
29. An emergency phone in the park would be a good thing. Cathy explained that police phones are very expensive and because most people have cell phones, fewer police phones are being installed.

Flooding in the park was discussed. The water comes over the north property line. It was asked if the water could be captured and used for irrigation. Clara mentioned that many municipalities do not allow water collected from the ground to be reused for irrigation. Capturing the water in drywells and using it to recharge the ground water was a more likely solution that is still environmentally sound.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 16th, at the Epiphany School. CBA will present three possible schemes for the park based on tonight's discussion.

