

Carroll Knolls Local Park Renovation Project Community Meeting #1 Meeting Notes

Date/time of meeting: December 5, 2017 from 7:00PM-9:00PM

Location: Capitol View-Homewood Park Activity Building, 2929 Edgewood Rd, Kensington, MD 20895

Number of attendees: 23

Parks Staff in attendance:

Lucas Bonney, Project Manager, Park Development Division (PDD)

Tricia McManus, Design Section Supervisor, PDD

Michael Ma, PDD Chief

Greg Fiala, Park Manager II

Michelle Nelson, Community Garden Program Coordinator

Bob Green, Accessibility Coordinator

Dominic Quattrocchi, Park Planning

Alex Girr-Borrayo, Public Affairs & Community Partnerships (PACP)

Purpose of meeting

To receive feedback from the community on existing park conditions and to discuss the future vision for the renovation of Carroll Knolls Local Park, located at 10500 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20902.

Meeting summary

Community Meeting #1 began with a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview for the project, including a review of existing site conditions, opportunities for future park improvements, preliminary park program ideas, and the proposed project schedule. Staff distributed sheets of paper containing the Project Manager's contact information and space for participants to write down their comments. Following the presentation, Staff posed a series of questions hoped to encourage participants to discuss their top priorities for improving the park. A summary of the meeting discussion is outlined below.

Discussion

A. General Comments

1. There was a question about the difference between a neighborhood and local park, as Carroll Knolls is categorized as a local park. Staff responded that local parks serve a broader geographic area and include facilities such as ballfields, which draw users from a wider area.
2. Neighbors expressed their preference that this should be a walk-to park for the neighborhood.
3. If this park is providing activities for outside visitors, there should be bathrooms and lighting. Park staff responded that parks close at dusk, and lighting and bathrooms are typically not provided in local parks.
4. There was a suggestion that Carroll Knolls should be expanded to be part of Evans Parkway Park and a question whether a bridge could be provided across Georgia Avenue. Staff responded that a bridge would not be within the scope of this project, but staff could investigate with the Maryland State Highway Administration whether there are additional traffic-calming measures or pedestrian crossing improvements that could be provided.
5. The Department of Parks Community Garden Coordinator reported that there have been public requests from residents in the Wheaton vicinity for community gardens, and this park would be an ideal site since it has level, open sunny areas and access to a source of water. Participants were open to considering the idea depending on the amount of space that would be required, but suggested that there may be other larger nearby parks that could more easily accommodate this use.

B. Desired New Park Amenities - The following new park amenities were recommended by meeting participants:

1. Playground, including play elements that are different from what is provided at Evans Parkway Park. Net climbing structures were mentioned.
2. Basketball court, perhaps similar to the enclosed multi-game court at Kemp Mill Park. For kids the rims should be 8 feet high, not 10 feet, and they should be permanent and not adjustable rims.
3. Hard-surface pathways through the park could help serve as a neighborhood

connection.

4. There was a suggestion that since Evans Parkway Park already has basketball courts and is walkable for teens, this use may not need to be provided at Carroll Knolls Park (especially if space is limited.)
5. Other activities for older kids or teens, such as a permanent pump track or skateboarding activities to complement the playground area.
6. Natural play elements.
7. Picnic areas that include a shelter and grills.
8. Natural surface paths and/or boardwalks through the wooded area to provide a walking loop and connections to the neighborhood streets. The paths need to stay dry, so some use of boardwalk or bridges may be appropriate.
9. Enhancements to the wooded area, including non-native invasive plant removal, native plantings, rain gardens, drainage improvements, educational elements, bat and bird houses, and seating areas.
10. Activities for adults, such as exercise equipment and quiet gathering areas away from the noisy and active areas of the park. The park could be designed so that areas are separated from view.
11. Dog Park, which could include agility equipment for dogs. There was a comment that a dog park adjacent to busy Georgia Avenue could be dangerous to dogs if they get loose.
12. Different and possibly unique types of seating.

C. Existing Park Features to be Preserved

1. The wooded area should be retained and enhanced.
2. A fence should remain along Georgia Avenue. It could be made higher and include a vegetative buffer to provide additional screening and separation between the park and the road.
3. Passive open green lawn area for unprogrammed uses.

D. Existing Park Features to be Changed

1. The parking lot is too large, and the space could be utilized better. The parking lot is currently being used by driving schools and people loitering in

- the park. The spaces should be reduced to only what is needed for the activities provided within the park. At a minimum, some basketball standards could be put up in the interim until the park is built.
2. Reduce mosquitos by improving the drainage, mitigating and reducing areas of standing water.

E. Good Examples of Other Nearby Parks – The following parks were mentioned by participants:

1. Takoma Piney Branch Local Park – for skatepark and two playgrounds (one with climbing net structure)
2. City of Takoma Park dog park (adjacent to Takoma Piney Branch Local Park)
3. Rose Park in Washington, DC – dog park, court, playground, planting, nicely organized and separate areas for different uses.

F. Additional comments received in writing:

1. Carroll Knolls should consider employing the sustainable principles and multi-purpose nature of amenities offered at Evans Parkway, although at a smaller scale. Consider adding a playground with slides, see saw, balance beam, yellow spinning chair, swings, and wood chip surfacing.
2. Consider incorporating artwork into the design, possibly commissioned by a local artist.

End of meeting notes