



MEETING REPORT

MEETING DATE: March 28, 2017

STAFF ATTENDING:

Michael Ma	M-NCPPC Park Development Division Chief
Patricia McManus	M-NCPPC Park Development Design Section Supervisor
Ching-Fang Chen	M-NCPPC Park Development Project Manager and Landscape Architect
Andrew Tsai	M-NCPPC Park Development Engineer
Dominic Quattrocchi	M-NCPPC Park Planner
Bill Tyler	M-NCPPC Southern Parks Division Chief
Mohammed Turay	M-NCPPC Park Manager
Alex Girr-Borrayo	M-NCPPC Public Affairs and Community Outreach Coordinator

PROJECT: Acorn Urban Park Renovation

SUBJECT: Community Meeting #1

Staff presented the project background, existing conditions and a preliminary program of requirements for the park. Jerry McCoy, President of the Silver Spring Historical Society, presented the history of the park. An overview of the process and schedule was also discussed. Approximately 28 people attended the meeting and provided input and ideas after the staff presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

A summary of the meeting discussion, as well as comments that were submitted before and after the meeting are included.

History

- The park and spring is a remnant of Francis Preston Blair's country estate "Silver Spring" named after his discovery in 1840 of a mica-speckled spring.
- Mr. Blair was influential in national politics advising several U.S. presidents. Many Washington luminaries visited Mr. Blair's country estate.
- There is a historic record of President Abraham Lincoln playing town ball at the estate. It is unique as being a place at which President Lincoln was said to be happy and relaxed (Abraham Lincoln in the National Capital by Allen C Clark, Press of W. F. Roberts Co. 1925)
- The Acorn gazebo may be the world's largest acorn. It was built to commemorate Mr. Blair's marriage proposal to his wife under an oak tree.

General Comments

- Additional open space is needed for the neighborhood in this highly-developed area of Silver Spring. There is no place for children to play or to walk dogs.
- Consider acquiring certain pieces of land nearby to increase the public park area. A large (40-acre) land holding by the Tower Companies was brought up as a possibility to provide public parkland or to have privately-owned public open space managed and programmed by the Department of Parks. Also consider purchasing the ExtraSpace Storage property at 8001 Newell Street to use as future park.
- Jesup Blair Local Park was mentioned as a large nearby park that provides ample opportunity for active recreation and children's play areas and can complement the use of Acorn Urban Park. There were comments that Jesup Blair park is difficult park to reach by foot, as Georgia Avenue is very busy and would need to be crossed. There was a suggestion to work with DOT and SHA to improve the pedestrian crossing of Georgia Avenue at several locations, in order to provide better access to this park.
- The community engagement process should be inclusive and engage families with small children, who may not have been able to attend this public meeting.
- Requests have been made for improvements to this park for ten years. A park with this much historical significance should be given more attention than it has been given and should be properly maintained into the future.
- There were questions whether staff was working with the adjacent property owner for the renovation of park.
- The Arts Walk between 8045 Newell and the County garage is sometimes used for games and gentle ball-playing by young parents.

Comments Regarding the Existing Park

- The park is not utilized enough and needs activation. There have been some festivals in the park and on Kennett Street in the past.
- Some like the park as it is, including the historic aspects of the park, and want the park to be maintained as a bucolic green oasis with no additional paving or impervious surfaces.
- The park is a good place for reading, sitting and strolling.
- The historic features have been compromised and need to be restored. Storm water is impacting the historic spring, the basin and granite inscription are covered with mud from rain events, and rocks are being thrown into the area which could damage the granite marker. Drainage issues need to be addressed, a new nymph should be provided in the grotto, and the water feature should be restored to working condition.
- The paved walk along the building is too wide and could be narrowed.
- Retain the murals on the building wall which depict the history of Silver Spring.
- The historical features are underrepresented, and educational opportunities are missing.
- Smoking restrictions should be enforced within the park.
- The community-dedicated dogwood tree and plaque need to be replaced.
- Maintenance and upkeep of trees should be a priority.
- Acorn Urban Park is a neighborhood jewel and amenity for the community. The community should be built around humanity, nature, and the history of this area, as opposed to the needs of cars and traffic flow.

Suggestions for Improvements to the Park

- The park has the potential to be a great heritage tourism spot. Focus on the history as a basis for additional development or programming of the park.

- The park needs to be activated and should engage a wide range of users. Festivals and events should be planned to promote the park.
- Retain green space that can accommodate the historic features while providing a neighborhood amenity for people without cars.
- Seating opportunities should be increased and improved throughout the park. Consider providing longer benches within the Acorn gazebo and built-in seating around the sunken grotto to allow people to sit around and focus attention on the grotto. An example of a circular bench at Dupont Circle was brought up. In addition, the benches along the wide sidewalk are facing the building wall and should be re-oriented to face the park. Make sure the seating is comfortable.
- Enhance connections to the surrounding parks and public open spaces that are part of private developments.
- Consider closing the adjacent section of Newell Street from East-West Highway to Kennett Street for special events or perhaps permanently to add additional usable space to this important park. A regular schedule of Sunday closings, May through October, could help make the park more visible and useful. Closing this section of Newell Street and expanding the park to incorporate the green space in front of the Argent Apartments could truly serve the neighborhood's needs while paying proper homage to the history of Silver Spring. It would be best if Newell were a permeable surface (grassy) and some of the fences were removed around the Argent Apartments to integrate the open space.
- Provide a comprehensive interpretation of the history of the park. Consider ways to highlight the significance of the Blair Mansion and Lincoln's visits. A statue of Lincoln playing town ball and bronze ground markings were mentioned.
- Look to integrate with DC on the historical presence and interpretation.
- Create space that can accommodate gentle ball playing and games.
- Create play opportunities by adding game tables or incorporating game patterns into the walk such as hopscotch or games with a historical focus.
- Protect existing significant trees. Plant more oak trees (with acorns) and some nice plants/landscaping in and around the stone grotto. Provide better access to the sunken grotto at the historic spring.
- Increase the visual presence of the park. Make the space feel bigger.
- Continue to search for the missing mill stone, and reinstall it.

NEXT STEPS:

- Investigate possibilities for closure of Newell Street and improvements to pedestrian crossings on Georgia Avenue.
- Develop concept alternatives based on the Preliminary Program of Requirements and community input.
- Meet with the community to review concept alternatives and obtain input.



MEETING REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 15, 2017

STAFF ATTENDING:

Michael Riley	M-NCPPC Director of Parks
Mitra Pedoeem	M-NCPPC Deputy Director of Parks
Michael Ma	M-NCPPC Park Development Division Chief
Patricia McManus	M-NCPPC Park Development Design Section Supervisor
Ching-Fang Chen	M-NCPPC Park Development Project Manager and Landscape Architect
Andrew Tsai	M-NCPPC Park Development Engineer
Joey Lampl	M-NCPPC Park Planning and Stewardship Cultural Resource Manager
Stephen Chandlee	M-NCPPC Southern Parks Operations Manager
Alex Girr-Borrayo	M-NCPPC Public Affairs and Community Outreach Coordinator
Kristi Williams	M-NCPPC Public Affairs and Community Outreach Division Chief
Derrick Williams	M-NCPPC Park Police
Holt Jordan	Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture, LLC., design consultant

PROJECT: Acorn Urban Park Renovation

SUBJECT: Community Meeting #2

Justin Chappell, Silver Spring Neighborhood Association President made opening statements, thanking the Eastern Village Cohousing for hosting the meeting. Staff reviewed the project schedule, history, community input to date, project objectives and program of requirements.

Key comments brought up by the community were identified including the need for additional open space and space for play in the neighborhood, concerns for historic preservation and interpretation of existing park features, and the need to comprehensively interpret history that is inclusive and accurately reflects the diverse, multi-cultural history of Silver Spring. Staff shared the draft *Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan* (EPS) in the Silver Spring pilot area, including recommendations for future park open space in the neighborhood, specifically the potential acquisition of the *Extra Space Storage* at 8001 Newell Street. Staff also explained that the development of the park will be guided by the Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A for Historic Resource Preservation. Staff shared possible themes for future interpretation with the intent to be inclusive and reflect the diverse and multi-cultural history of Silver Spring. Separate meetings will be held with a focus group to gather input regarding interpretive content, and staff encouraged experts and residents who are interested to participate.

Images of relevant examples that might be applicable to the project were shown for inspiration. Three preliminary concept alternatives were presented including the studies for temporarily and permanently

incorporating Newell Street into the park. A pedestrian connection from the neighborhood west of Georgia Avenue to Jesup Blair Local Park was also discussed.

Approximately 40 people attended the meeting and provided comments. After the group discussion, staff invited the attendees to mark on the image boards to show their preference for specific design or program ideas. 6 color dots were offered to each participant. Some people also submitted written comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation and concept alternatives were generally well received. A summary of comments and discussion from the meeting is outlined below.

- This is a very densely developed area, and there isn't much open space nearby. Kids need more space to play and throw a ball. Provide more usable open space by acquiring additional property or by closing Newell Street.
- Residents expressed strong support for creating additional park open space for recreational activities in the south Silver Spring neighborhood. A question came up regarding the size of the *Extra Space Storage* at 8001 Newell Street. The current *Days Inn Silver Spring* property at Kennett Street and 13th Street was also mentioned as a candidate for future open space.
- There was a question regarding Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Staff explained various design responses such as keeping physical barriers or planting buffers low to ensure visibility throughout the park and encourage street surveillance to create a safer and more accessible park environment.
- The proposed design should consider maintenance implications. Staff mentioned the maintenance team has been involved in the design and will continue to be involved throughout the design process. Maintenance considerations will affect the choice of materials to be used in the park.
- There was a preference expressed for concept Alternative C, because it maximizes the open space, and allocates more green space with less paving.
- The acorn is static and seems to constrain the alternatives. Since it has historically been moved before, has relocation of the Acorn Gazebo been considered? Staff responded that the existing tree adjacent to the gazebo is constraining the options more than the gazebo itself. The benefit of relocating the gazebo may not outweigh the costs.
- There was discussion that Discovery Communications will be leaving the building and had the change of tenants been considered. Staff responded that the adjacent building tenant did not impact the design of the park.
- One resident thought that all the concept alternatives were an aggressive attack on green open space in the neighborhood and that people could drive a few blocks to Woodside, Ellsworth, and Jesup Blair parks. The park doesn't need anything except good lawn and drainage. It should be kept as is.
- Consider changing the two-way street to a one-way as an option to expand the park. Temporary closures of Newell Street could test the impact on local traffic. Another resident said that the neighborhood deserves more than just a strip of Newell Street.
- The 28 Silver Spring Downtown Shuttle Ride-On Bus currently travels west from 13th Street to Kennett Street and east through the section of Newell Street by the park towards East-West

Highway. The shuttle doesn't run on Sunday. Temporary street closure of Newell Street will require coordination with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation Ride-On bus service. Since the route is one-way, closure of one lane of Newell Street might not impact the service. The location of stops may need to be adjusted.

- Retain green space near the historic acorn and spring, and provide opportunities for interpretation. There should be no bikes in the park in this area.
- There was a question whether the park will be lighted and the hours of operation. Current park policy states that parks are closed at dark. Some urban parks provide lighting to allow safe passage through the park. Residents should call Park Police if there is activity in the park after the dark.
- There was a request for a safe crossing of Georgia Avenue from the South Silver Spring neighborhood to Jesup Blair Park at 3th/Burlington Avenue and Eastern Avenue NW.
- Interest was expressed in the historic interpretation. The interpretation of the mural is not true history and needs to be corrected. A mural in Wheaton that points out historical inaccuracies was mentioned as an example.
- Concern was brought up about the bike path being incorporated into the park should the park incorporate Newell Street.
- M-NCPPC has established funding for a Park Refreshers program to move smaller project forward faster. Renovation of Acorn Urban Park will be implemented through this program and anticipates detailed design and permits beginning in FY 20 with construction in FY 21. The project has a construction budget of 1.5 million based on the initial cost estimates for the concepts.
- Consider a two component, two step project for Acorn plus the *Extra Space Storage* site and the hotel sites. The budget should be 10 million not just the 1.5 million allocated for the Acorn Park site.
- Mitra Pedoem, Deputy Director of Parks, explained the Capital Improvement Program process and encouraged residents to become advocates to support the Energized Spaces Functional Master Plan and the Capital Improvements Program. The Department of Parks will provide interested citizens information on how and when to advocate for the land acquisition and development of Acorn Park.

The following written comments were submitted during and after the meeting:

- Make park useful for all ages and not just for the children.
- Don't make too many changes. It's a small park. Just fix the drainage problems.
- Do not remove the Acorn Gazebo from the site. It's a landmark and reference point for our neighborhood.
- Fix the spring pump and re-install a nymph to bring the spring back to life. Use protective screen to protect the nymph. Orient benches to face into the park.
- Like additional historical signage. Acknowledge Abraham Lincoln having spent time in the area.
- "Fair Housing," "Restrictive Convents," "Montgomery College" history could be included in signage, highlighted on land from future nearby acquisitions.

- Like the idea of adding street light and colorful crosswalk at street crossings into Acorn Urban Park and Jesup Blair Local Park for traffic calming and visual highlighting.
- Acorn Park is bucolic, contemplative and green. Future renovation should retain these characteristics. Less hardscape and more green space is preferred.
- Privacy and security concerns were expressed by first floor residents of Eastern Village Cohousing for creating a park on the Extra Storage Space site.

NEXT STEPS:

- Coordinate with the Maryland State Highway Administration to improve pedestrian crossing on Georgia Avenue to Jesup Blair Local Park.
- Advance and refine concept alternatives based on the community input.
- Seek input from Historic Preservation Commission to develop a preferred concept.
- Meet with the community to review the preferred concept and obtain input.



MEETING REPORT

MEETING DATE: September 25, 2018

STAFF ATTENDING: Ching-Fang Chen M-NCPPC Park Development Project Manager and Landscape Architect
Patricia McManus M-NCPPC Park Development Design Section Supervisor
Michael Ma M-NCPPC Park Development Division Chief
Bill Tyler M-NCPPC Southern Parks Division Chief
Mohammed Turay M-NCPPC Park Manager
Alex Girr-Borrayo M-NCPPC Public Affairs and Community Outreach Coordinator
Holt Jordan Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture, LLC., design consultant

PROJECT: Acorn Urban Park Renovation

SUBJECT: Community Meeting #3

Ching-Fang Chen, M-NCPPC Park Development Project Manager and Landscape Architect, presented the background of the project and the recommended concept. The presentation reviewed the project schedule, history, community input to date, project objectives and program of requirements. The presentation briefly reviewed the design inspiration and the schematic concept plans (A, B and C) that were presented at the previous community meeting along with the public input. In the presentation, staff also reviewed the comments provided in the Focus Group meeting regarding historic interpretation (May 22, 2018) and the Historic Preservation Commission preliminary review meeting (June 13, 2018).

The recommended park plan was developed based on the community's preference for schematic Concept C to maximize the usable open space and allocating more green space in the park by reducing paving. The plan was presented to the community using diagrams, plans, details, precedent photographs, sections, and "before" photos and matching "after" 3D renderings.

The plan recommends the following:

- Retain and restore the historic spring and Acorn gazebo. Rehabilitate existing stairs to meet code. Restore the water feature at the grotto.
- Create a consolidated interior lawn as community open space for flexible activities.

- Build a wooden platform for seating and gathering while protecting existing tree roots.
- Provide ADA accessible ramp, boardwalk and walkways as well as a safe street crossing.
- Provide boulders and low visual impact play elements that complement the park setting.
- Provide a multi-use terrace that transitions into the Kennett Street sidewalk and existing building exit.
- Integrate bioretention facilities with the boardwalk and play area to treat stormwater. Capture sidewalk runoff.
- Provide seating opportunities throughout the park.
- Provide interpretation opportunities.
- Relocate lighting to the street front to enhance the park. Install ground level and /or other lights to highlight the historic features and provide safe passage through the park.
- Protect existing significant trees. Add new trees and groundcover planting to provide an aesthetic environmental setting for the historic features and to buffer the park from the busy street activities.

The project schedule anticipates the facility plan to be presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board in spring of 2019. If approved, detailed design and permits are planned to occur in fiscal year 2020 with construction in fiscal year 2021.

Approximately 18 people attended the meeting and provided comments. After the group discussion, staff invited the attendees to provide further comments via email or Open Town Hall.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation and recommended park plan were generally well received. A summary of comments and discussion from the meeting is outlined below.

Circulation

- The primary concern expressed by multiple attendees was that the plan does not provide a direct pedestrian route through the park from the sidewalk at the corner of Kennett Street and Newell Street to the corner of East-West Highway and Newell Street. Meeting attendees indicated that this is the most common direction of pedestrian travel through the park. Ideas and suggestions to improve the circulation and provide more direct access included the following:
 - Add a sidewalk along the entire length of Newell Street. Staff noted that the existing large white oak tree and Acorn Gazebo would be negatively impacted by this.
 - The configuration of the seating wall along Newell Street and sidewalk transition to the boardwalk could be softened to improve pedestrian flow and allow more direct access to other areas of the park. A large boulder could be placed to keep people from continuing to walk along Newell Street into the area with the oak tree and gazebo.

- A resident expressed concern that the proposed walkway is near the gazebo where people frequently smoke. Staff pointed out that smoking is prohibited on M-NCPPC park property and a sign could be added as a reminder of the regulation.

Program

- There was a comment to reconsider the play and open space and that the park may not be suitable for play equipment. Consider incorporating nature play with boulders and/or logs and eliminate the play equipment. This would allow better access/circulation through the park without reducing the open lawn area.
- One resident noted that families with children were not present at the meeting and did not think they would agree with removing play elements.
- Residents recommended providing free Wi-Fi to make the park more usable.
- There was support for the increase in green space and planting, configuration of the bio-retention with the boardwalk/bridge, and the plan to protect trees.

Interpretation

- There was a suggestion that the Wi-Fi log-in portal or landing page could have historic information about the park and Instagram filters.
- Consider integrating the park with nearby DC interpretive sites. Consider interpretation of the Civil War.
- There is good interpretive information at Jesup Blair Park, although not in a prominent spot. It's important to have good placement for signage.
- One person mentioned desired interpretive themes to include Lincoln, the Civil War and slavery.

Materials

- Several opinions were expressed regarding the character of the railings. Some wanted them to be clean, minimized and to disappear visually into the landscape. Others suggested that they have a more bucolic character of wrought iron or rustic wood to stylistically mimic historic features of the park. Staff noted that metal handrails can be smaller than wood and can be visually less intrusive. Maintenance needs and durability also need to be considered.
- Residents expressed concern that the wood boardwalk may rot over time, as it is close to the damp ground. Consider using a composite material such as Trex. Staff mentioned that the structure for the deck will not be wood. Rot-resistant wood decking, such as Ipe or black locust could also be considered.
- Consider the design of the walls, as they could encourage skateboarding and be damaged.

Other

- A resident inquired about maintenance of new facilities in the park. Staff noted that MNCPPC Maintenance staff has been closely involved with the design process.

- Staff showed sections and a grading plan to demonstrate that the steps and landings are reconfigured on Newell Street to be more efficient and to help capture water running into the spring.

NEXT STEPS:

- Advance and refine the recommended plan based on community input.
- Review plan with Historic Preservation Commission for approval of design.
- Finalize recommended facility plan and submit to Montgomery County Planning Board for approval.



MEETING REPORT

MEETING DATE: May 22, 2018

STAFF ATTENDING:

Patricia McManus	MC Parks -Development Design Section Supervisor
Ching-Fang Chen	MC Parks - Park Development Project Manager and Landscape Architect
Julie Mueller	MC Parks - Park Planning and Stewardship Cultural Resources Planner
Alex Girr-Borrayo	MC Parks - Public Affairs and Community Outreach Coordinator
Michael Brown	MC Planning - Area 1 Planner Supervisor

PROJECT: Acorn Urban Park Renovation

SUBJECT: Focus Group for History and Interpretation of the Future Park

PURPOSE

This is a follow-up meeting of the second community meeting for the renovation of Acorn Urban Park. The intent is to gather input regarding **history and interpretation** for the future park from those who expressed a special interest in discussing this topic at the second community meeting. The project is currently in the facility planning phase. Historic interpretation of the existing park features was identified by the community as one of the key issues for the renovation. Concerns were brought up for the need to comprehensively interpret history that is inclusive and accurately reflects the diverse, multi-cultural history of Silver Spring. Although interpretation is not part of the facility plan scope, in response to the public concerns, M-NCPPC invited the residents and experts who were interested to participate in a discussion on this subject.

This meeting was announced in the prior public meeting on November 15, 2017. Additional outreach was made via project web-page, social media and direct email notices. Ideas that were brought up will be further defined and developed in the detail design and construction phase in the future. Approximately 25 people attended the meeting and provided comments. Ching-Fang Chen made the introduction and Julie Mueller moderated the discussion. Several people submitted written comments before and after the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

A summary of comments and discussion from the meeting is outlined below.

- The outreach process needs to be more inclusive. The attendance missed representation of multi-cultural demographic of the County, including Lyttonsville residents. M-NCPPC should expand outreach to Montgomery County's African

American communities to better represent the history of the area and not just the park. The Silver Spring Regional Services Center may also like to participate.

- Make sure all physical changes to the park are consistent with master plan recommendations and prior studies.
- Interpretation should focus on history of the features of the park as a moment in time - Acorn Gazebo, historic spring and grotto. Add plaque to explain the history of the Acorn Gazebo, a rare example of mid-19th century landscape garden architecture.
- Interpretation should be inclusive and sensitive and not be told through one set of eyes. It may include early history of the Silver Spring and the evolution of the site through time to the current days.
- The murals present an educational opportunity to point out the story we told at one point in time and ask the question what did we leave out. They represent the broader history of Silver Spring as opposed to the site itself.
- Historical events of the site could focus on the acorn and grotto, the 19th Century Blair family, slavery in the Blair family (i.e. who built the acorn), and the mixed history of the Blairs.
- History is not static. Explore ways to engage the public for the dynamic and changing history up to our time. The National Civil Rights Museum was brought up as an example which included interactive media and external listening posts that guide visitors through five centuries of history.
- Provide opportunities for access to history that's missing, particularly the black history and history of other ethnicities. History of Native Americans could be included to explain who were the first people here.
- Oak trees have a strong meaning to the area and to the acorn gazebo and should be main components of the park.
- A quote by James W. Loewen was brought up. *"The antidote to feel-good history is not feel-bad history but honest and inclusive history"*.
- Think in a dynamic way about ways to engage the public and themes. Be inclusive and welcoming to all. Themes could include builders, politics, enslavement, church life, and family life (which was not always "feel bad" history.)
- Think outside the box with respect to themes. What's the black map of Silver Spring in Montgomery County and how does it compare to the white map.
- Bring more people into the group to discuss interpretive themes. The area has changed and our perception of the area has changed.
- Consider use of technology for interpretation. Press a button to see and hear history. Wifi should be provided in the park.
- There is an opportunity to use double sided signs for more interpretation. The back of existing signs could add interpretation.

- Acorn Park can be a springboard for interpretation beyond its boundaries to guide people to other nearby historic sites in Silver Spring, including the Wayside Inn and Bottleworks Lane. Bottleworks Lane may be renamed for Roscoe Nix a pioneer of modern civil rights in Montgomery County. Julius Hobson was also mentioned.
- The National Park Service's Historic Trail interpretation was mentioned as an example, as was the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale, Mississippi, where markers are located at various destinations within the city. Acorn Park could serve as a one site on a map with others to provide linkages to other historic destinations in the County and District of Columbia. It could be a starting point for a much larger project.
- Acorn could be the starting point by use of technology to tell stories with sound. If the story and interpretation changes over time, it can be changed. This could keep physical interpretation limited and compact. Websites, QR codes, wifi and other means that don't take up program space should be considered.
- Technology does not always work. People may not be interested in reading codes to get to information on electronic devices. Interpretation should not require visitor to provide his/her own equipment.
- Acorn Park should retain its bucolic character. The scope of interpretation should be appropriate to its physical setting. Be careful not to turn the park into an interpretation marketplace.
- Partner with community, interest group or universities to provide interpretation programming or use events to expand history and learning opportunities.
- Descendants should be interviewed to share history through their eyes. Bring those voices into the discussion as an overlay for this site.
- Include history of park development. Consider opportunities in relations to possible physical park expansion.
- The memory wall brings broader history into the park. There is more to be gained by contextualizing the memory wall than by altering it. Interpretation could be added to provide background of the artwork, explain the historic fact about segregation and point out what may be inaccurate.
- Include memorialization of twenty (20) individuals who were enslaved by Silver Spring founder Francis Preston Blair, Sr. in 1850. Include the identification and acknowledgement of two individuals whom Blair enslaved; Henry Lemon and Nannie Jones. Repair the spring, make reference to Abe Lincoln playing town ball on the site, and interpret the Acorn gazebo with signage or QR codes.
- Program activities that are recreational and informational within the park. Consider maintaining a database of groups to draw from. As we learn more, we can do more programming.
- Be cautious to rely on programming, as it can come and go if budgets are not available. There should be permanent interpretation on site, even if it's low key.

- Consider depicting five pivotal points in Silver Spring History that we want to learn from.
- All interpretive information should be submitted for peer review to ensure that it's accurate. There was discussion of having several local universities review the information.

Additional comments received in writing before and after the meeting is outlined below:

- Place a commemorative sculptural grouping of President Abraham Lincoln playing "town ball" (baseball).
- Repair of the WSSC water line that will allow "symbolic" spring water to flow within the spring grotto. The MCDP and SSHS can then co-host a revival of "Silver Spring Day." "Silver Spring Day" was originally adopted on May 10, 1955 by the Montgomery County Council. The proclamation declared, "Be it resolved by the County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, that Saturday, May 28, 1955 and the last May in each succeeding year shall be known as 'Silver Spring Day' in commemoration of the restoration on May 28, 1955 of 'The Silver Spring,' dedicated as an ever-flowing tribute to the men and women responsible for the greatness of Silver Spring, Maryland, and its bright future through civic and community service."

This new annual event can feature a "Turning on the Spring" ceremony, in which the WSSC water line is turned on and the spring "flows forth". This event embodies great potentiality of becoming a very popular tradition.

- Prefer the idea of building interpretation into the site framework such as seating, paths, walls, etc. The more that can be simply there, 24/7, the better: it teaches more and teaches always. The metal "boxes" for each US county in which lynchings occurred in the Lynching Memorial (National Memorial for Peace and Justice) in Montgomery, AL is a relevant example.
- The footprint of the Blair mansion lies under 8045 Newell Street. This could be included in some way to contextualize the park history.
- Include how the Blairs contributed to ending slavery.
- For the Memory Wall, the caption under the movie theater scene omits segregation. Perhaps the caption could or should be replaced with one worded differently, including the process of segregation's ending. Or, one could post, along with the artist's name and the year of creation, a disclaimer, stating the artist's inspiration, acknowledging the images' lack of historicity.
- Offer other historical interpretations nearby to reduce pressure to include all of it in Acorn Park.
- Additional sign could be placed overlooking the sign about the Underground Railroad event along Georgia Avenue ("Chaplin Arrested!") near Jesup Blair Park. The new sign could offer social history about Black Americans in ante-bellum Montgomery County. (The current sign describes an event mainly from the view point of the Whites involved.)

- Newer signs at the bottom of the bridge leading into Jesup Blair Park provide an exemplary start to presenting the social history. The signs include photos of 19th century African-Americans and mention the lives of slaves at the Blair Mansion. Providing information from the view of a child, a sign explains that Blair's grandson would have been aware of "seven enslaved children". Instead of this information included in Acorn Park, it is presented at the more spacious Jesup Blair Park.