

Community Meeting #3 – Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park

Location: Sligo Avenue Park Activity Building, 6:30 pm – 8:30pm

May 29, 2019

Meeting Notes

Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park Improvement Project

Community Meeting #3

Montgomery County Department of Parks

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC)

Park Staff Present at the Community Meeting #2

Wen Huang, Project Manager, Park Development Division

Judie Lai, Architecture Section Supervisor, Park Development Division

Patricia McManus, Acting Division Chief, Park Development Division

Bob Green, ADA Compliance Project Manager, Park Development Division

Sean Harbaugh, Regional Operations Manager, Southern Region

Alex Girr-Borrayo, Public Relations and Outreach

Number of attendances from the community: 35

Notable guests:

Peter Kovar, Council member of Takoma Park City

Ken Silverman, from office of Montgomery County Councilmember Hans Riemer

Meeting Summary

Patricia McManus welcomed attendees and provided an introduction of the meeting's purpose including a potential date of July 18th to present the project to the Planning Board. The Project Manager followed by sharing a PowerPoint presentation of the project, including a brief review of previous community meetings and comments, comments submitted via the Town Hall forum and an updated improvement plan that includes a new futsal court ~~in~~ within the park's tennis courts.

The second part of the meeting allowed attendees to ask question and provide feedback and comments regarding the updates.

Input from the meeting, as well as further public comments that will be received through Open Town Hall forum, will be used to further develop the plan, which is currently scheduled to be presented to the Planning Board on July 18th, 2019.

Improvement Plan update

Subsequent to the feedback received during and after the 1st and 2nd community meetings and associated Open Town Hall surveys, Montgomery Parks hired a consultant to develop the conceptual site plan that was shared with the community through the third Open Town Hall survey in January,

Community Meeting #3 – Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park

Location: Sligo Avenue Park Activity Building, 6:30 pm – 8:30pm

May 29, 2019

2019. Over half of the survey participants rated overall satisfaction with the plan; a quarter of the participants expressed disappointments with the exclusion of futsal from the multi-purpose court.

Parks revisited the area and evaluated the sports courts within 1-mile walking distance of the Silver Spring Intermediate Park. A total of nine (9) tennis courts exist but no futsal opportunities were located within the project area.

Since there are no other planned or funded park renovation opportunities in this area in the near future, the proposed improvements at Silver Spring Intermediate Park provide an excellent opportunity to increase the area's equity and the park's ability to serve more people with differing needs while maintaining the park's unique characters, open space, and mature trees. Accordingly, Parks proposes to convert one tennis court to a futsal court in response to the community's feedback.

The project team has also met with Takoma Park City's Urban Arborist and Montgomery County Planning Department's Forest Conservation plan reviewer, and made additional adjustments to the previous concept plan to better protect the significant trees in the park including:

- a. a wood deck next the playground in lieu of a concrete pad for seating;
- b. adjusted natural play components location and the configuration of the SWM facility next to the playground;
- c. adjusted walkway alignment next to the multipurpose courts;
- d. adjusted walkway configuration next to the basketball courts.

The overall improvements in the current design include:

1. Walkway:
 - a. Accessible walkway and ramps that connects the main park entrance, bus stop, courts, and playground
 - b. New walkway that connects the Chicago Ave/Boston Ave entrance to the rest of the park
2. Parking lot:
 - a. New ADA accessible parking space
 - b. Designated location for portable restroom, with screen
 - c. New drinking fountain
 - d. New bike racks (4)
3. Stormwater Management:
 - a. New bioretention areas to treat stormwater runoff on site
 - b. A regrade of the open lawn area to optimize the draining condition and create a consistent and user-friendly play area
4. Retaining Wall:

Community Meeting #3 – Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park

Location: Sligo Avenue Park Activity Building, 6:30 pm – 8:30pm

May 29, 2019

- a. Replacement of the existing retaining wall and guardrail at the SE corner on Boston Avenue
- b. Repairment of the existing white retaining wall along Boston Avenue, with new guardrail
5. Playground:
 - a. Accessible entrance to the playground
 - b. New safety fences along Boston Avenue
 - c. New fixed tables on a wood deck next to the playground
 - d. New natural play area and boardwalk near the existing playground and the new bio-retention area
 - e. New bike rack (1)
6. Courts:
 - a. Basketball courts: taller fences, new seat wall, additional benches
 - b. Multi-purpose courts: repaved court surface, new central fence and gate that divide the courts to serve for futsal, tennis, and pickle ball, new four (4) practice walls (two on each side of the new central fence), new benches; removal of existing practice wall at the eastern fence
7. Bus Stop: accessible walkway linkage into the park, with additional benches next to the waiting area adjoining the bus stop

Community Comments

Upon completion of the presentation, the following topics were raised and most of which are related with the added futsal court in the park:

1. If SSI-NP's tennis courts has the highest usage among all other parks within this area, why do Parks convert the tennis court in this park to a futsal court? Are there other more suitable sites for futsal?

Parks' response: There are no park renovation/improvement projects planned or funded within this area in the near future. Parks proposes to use this improvement as an opportunity to provide the facility that has been requested by various members of the community.

2. This is park for family and children in the neighborhood. Making the walkway more accessible will increase cut-through from the parking lot to the bus stop and will cause more noise and disturbance to the park.

Parks' response: It is Parks vision to be more inclusive and welcoming to all members of the community; we don't want to discourage its use and enjoyment by the public.

3. Discussions among residents of the difference of futsal vs. soccer.
4. Discussions among residents why futsal court is needed in lieu of grass field.
5. Many residents and kids were supportive of the futsal court and multi-purpose court in this park.

Community Meeting #3 – Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park

Location: Sligo Avenue Park Activity Building, 6:30 pm – 8:30pm

May 29, 2019

6. Some residents preferred to keep the two existing tennis courts. Two tennis courts in Montgomery College will be taken away.
7. Will people who use the futsal court drive or walk? Worries about the parking capacity of the park.

Parks' response: It is expected that most of the users are from the community who may walk, ride bikes, or drive to the park. The improvement plan proposes 5 bike racks that can accommodate 10 bikes, which will help to alleviate the concerns of parking capacity. Audience gave applause to the bike racks.

8. If the futsal court is played by leagues that will be a concern for this small park.

Parks' response: The proposed futsal and tennis courts will not be permitted. They are at first come, first serve use.

9. Confirmation that the open green area will be preserved, and no programmed facility will take away the green space.

Parks' response: Confirmed.

10. One resident suggested to make the futsal court more multi-function by adding paint lines for pickleball and volleyball. An equipment library shed was also proposed to store often used sports gears such as different nets and goals for community use. Other residents expressed concerns about the maintenance and security of the shed.

Parks' response: Parks will take this suggestion under consideration with regard to operation and maintenance.

11. One resident concerned that the added benches will attract homeless people from nearby shelter staying in the park.

Parks' response: Benches can be designed to discourage this activity.

12. Residents asked about the status the WSSC study of the sewage issue along Boston Avenue and how it will affect park construction.

Parks' response: Parks has been coordinating with WSSC; we understand their study is still underway. The park renovation construction will be coordinated with WSSC.

13. Will the park be closed during construction? How about the playground which is often used by the neighborhood kids?

Parks' response: For safety concerns, the park will most likely be closed during construction. Parks will study the possibility of phasing the construction around the playground, so its closure time will be minimized to the extent practical.

Community Meeting #3 – Silver Spring Intermediate Neighborhood Park

Location: Sligo Avenue Park Activity Building, 6:30 pm – 8:30pm

May 29, 2019

14. Takoma Park City asked if this project will include the sidewalk improvements along Philadelphia Ave.

Parks' response: The sidewalk improvement along Philadelphia Avenue was studied. The trees long the sidewalk forms important urban forest that could be impacted. Parks coordinated with the City's engineer a year ago and was told that the City will repair the sidewalk within ROW of the street by using flexi-pave material to protect the trees. Sidewalk improvements along Philadelphia Avenue are not included in our work program.

15. Residents asked the condition of the added fence and backstop walls in the multi-purpose court.

Parks' response: The fence will be the same chain link fence around the courts. The backstop/practice walls for tennis practice will be added on both side of the new fence. The original practice wall on the SE of the fence will be removed.

16. Takoma Soccer League lead coach confirmed that futsal is different from soccer. The league will continue using the grass area for practice. No organized games will be scheduled on the court. He also suggested that the court be open. No goals are needed. Cones would be sufficient to serve as goals.

17. One resident asked if the playground is ADA compliant. If any equipment should be improved to be accessible.

Parks' response: The playground was built in 2001. Parks will look into the possibility of new/additional accessible equipment.

18. One resident suggested to post the latest plan on Open Town Hall for those people who couldn't attend the community meeting.

19. Residents appreciated the ongoing communication and multiple outreach efforts that Parks has had with the community.

END OF MEETING NOTES