



To: Dowdy Park Planning Committee

Date: November 24, 2014

Memorandum

Project #: 33932.00

From: John Jennings

Re: Design Charrette / Committee Workshop

Attendees: Kelly Wyatt, Susie Walters, Theresa Kerber, Dave Elder, Holly White, Ben Cahoon, Kerry Sanders, Ralph Barile, Andy Garman, Chris Dewitt, John Delucia, John Jennings.

Agenda: Recap of Public workshop evening before
 Homework review
 Programming Discussion
 Theme / Design Discussion

Following are notes for the workshop with the Dowdy Park Planning Committee held Friday November 21, 2014:

- In 2013 the Town voted 1 cent tax for "Parks and Paths" which equals about \$200K /year.
- The Town's Public Works Department maintains town parks now.
- The Dowdy Park Property is located in the "Bonnett Street District" - a family focused theme and land use strategy.
- It would be good to link the Dowdy Park to other parks/open space through connectors at the YMCA property.
- The Town is looking for more park open space and recreation places.
- Current Board is wanting to promote Wellness, connections, and reduce travel through improved mobility options.
- This project should look at the large array of program elements and identify what is 'right' for this site and where other identified programs can go on other Town land holdings.

Highlights of Public meeting Thursday evening – [see separate meeting notes.]

- Lighting needs to be included to extend the day use and for safety.
- Need to balance youth and senior user needs.
- Public safety is important and the design should encourage community policing.

Committee Homework Slide presentations:

Kerry Sanders-

- Art should be a major theme and reflected in the design in all the elements – layout, walls, play equipment, architecture. Stretch the users' imagination and create multiple points of social interaction.
- Like to see play areas that are works of art throughout the park – not just a playground.
- Festival space can be used for art events, farmers markets, etc. Paving should be interesting and can be a palette for art like chalk drawing.



- An art wall should be something that could tie the park elements together. It could change on a regular basis and be done by students in schools and professional artists as well.
- Create gateways at the corners of the park to celebrate the entrance and entice users into the park.
- Use sculpture as a wayfinding tool and integrate into the landscape to create interest, tell stories or provoke thought.
- Art works should be developed to be interactive and bring the town together (a mosaic wall mural for instance, or make site furniture elements of art – Benches, Trash Receptacles, bike racks, shelters, etc.)
- The landscape should be 3 dimensional and could be very strong forms to highlight program and space.
- Use of color is important. Work with creating points of perspective with placement of program elements.
- Consider the relocation of the Veterans War Memorial to the park.
- Can we make the stormwater system tell a story and be creative in its solution (rain gardens)?

Susie Walters –

- Expand wellness ideas with use of “Fit Trail” (0 station minimum)
- Program should include passive recreation and group activities (Bocce / Horseshoes)
- Connect Dowdy to the other Town Parks and open space systems (Y- Woods)
- Tell the story of the connections with maps and wayfinding graphics.
- Shade is important – use trees and shelters (native OBX character).
- Introduction of ‘greens’ and gardens should be considered to counter the typical more rural and rustic landscape of the Outer Banks. Need quiet and contemplative spaces as well as active program areas.
- Should look at the theme of ‘traditional Town Green’ as an option. Need to understand balance of green space verse natural landscape upon water management and maintenance practices.
- Need to evaluate capital improvement cost with maintenance costs in review of design concepts.
- Commission needs to fully understand the operations impacts of program elements and make plans for approach to phasing and long term management.

Ben Cahoon –

- Art in the park is important and can help set the park apart as a unique place.
- Space needs to be flexible – market one day, event site another and open plaza for park users to sit or kids to play.
- Create active seating options – walls , steps, lawn.
- Architectural elements need to be integrated into the landscape and can perhaps be multi-use (walls/ canopies).
- Develop a three dimensional landscape reflective of the native dunes – use depressions as nodes for people gathering.
- Look at investing in a significant piece of art / architecture (see Millennium Park in Chicago). It becomes an attraction and differentiator.
- Have open lawn areas for visual relief to our typical OBX sandy / shrub landscape.



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- Need places to picnic – different scales and scattered throughout the park.
- Like the idea of a central space that is defined by rolling lawn. Does not have to be excessively large – but the relief is important.

Theresa Kerber –

- Need a variety of program elements – include some non-traditional activities like Bocce or Horseshoes which are showing a comeback.
- Design program spaces to correct dimensions and grading.
- Push the envelope and look at activities that may not be thought to play safe – like: Zip line, Climbing walls, skate park, slides integrated into sloped mounds.
- It is important to create opportunity for completion and engagement of others (double slide – side by side)
- Keep kids in motion and playing together is important
- Shade is critical
- Look at topography as opportunity to create variation and act as play object – kids love running up and down the dunes – play sand or hidden treasure / digging.
- Encourage use of the space – not preclude use.

Kelly Wyatt –

- Outdoor site furnishings should focus on being green and flexible in use.
- Create public art with site furnishings to make the park unique.
- Shade should be a priority and use of architecture / wind screens could be a key part of the park identity.
- “Outdoor Library” concept.

Dave Elder –

- Park should be ‘green’. Find ways to use trees for scale and identity / focal points.
- Plantings can help with traffic control and separation of uses.
- Use native plants.
- Integrate children and adult activities – encourage engagement and observation.
- Integrate program activities (seating a skateboard area) (large rock for sitting and climbing) etc.
- Create strong spatial forms and use three dimensional framework for the topography.
- Use sculpture as way to ‘brand the space’.
- Place objects as way to draw park users into the park and create identity.
- Use tree and planting placement to make a statement that counters the normal OBX character – i.e. bosque of trees, heavily planted shrub beds and groundcovers.

Andy Garman –

- Should look at big central lawn to tie program elements together.
- Introduce art where you can – site furnishings, space definition, gardens, wayfinding / identity program.



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- Structures should reflect a 'Nags Head' theme and locale – storm resistant, materials in common, balance.
- Perhaps shade structures can be used for other functions such as market stalls so you get multi-use out of the investments being made.

Dog park and Skate parks were a recurrent theme from the survey. The group discussed with a five acre site it will be difficult to cater to a narrow user group. The committee talked about the vision of this park as more of a Town Green and gathering/focal place for the community. There are other places for some of the larger land consumptive uses – dog park at Satterfield Landing park, skate park improved with upgrades and changes to the YMCA facility. It was consensus that no ball fields were desired in the park but if open lawns could accommodate some element of turf field use that would be a plus (multi-use youth soccer for instance). Should look at possible introduction of a multi-use court for tennis backboard, basketball court, volleyball. Definitely need a restroom. Minimum for men (1 and 2) and women (3).

Emphasis on showing open space system connectivity to "ocean to sound" is really important. Tie into bike and pedestrian pathway improvements that the Town will be making in the future.

The committee then met to develop some bubble diagrams reflecting some of the thoughts above and to give guidance to the design team. The meeting adjourned slightly after 12:00 noon.