

Development Activities Meeting Report

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

Logistics	Stakeholders
Project Name/Address: Mellon Park Entrances and Signage Improvements	Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident): Point Breeze Organization
Parcel Number(s): N/A	
ZDR Application Number: N/A	
Meeting Location: Zoom	
Date: January 4th, 2024	
Meeting Start Time: 6:30 pm	
Applicant: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy	Approx. Number of Attendees: 35
Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Historic Review Commission	

How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

<p>Introduction</p> <p>This project is the first phase of the Mellon Park Action Plan. Priorities from the action plan that pertain to this park include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve/provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access to both sides of the park - Provide more and better wayfinding and signage - More Park amenities (benches, tables, bike racks) - Respect the history, trees, open space, and landscapes that characterize Mellon Park <p>The project is the beginning phase, Tier 1, of the overall Action Plan. Goals of this project include upgrading existing entrances to visually communicate that both sides of the park are the same park. In addition, the project goals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish consistent design and materials for both sides of the park - Develop a signage package that provides opportunities for park identification, wayfinding, and clearly articulates park rules and regulations - Design welcoming entrances and provide consistent entrance experiences on both sides of the park - Provide Park amenities and site furnishings where appropriate - Provide a diversity of events without over-programming the park <p>Scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New entry plazas with specialty paving at existing entrances - Seat walls, piers, or other form of gateway where appropriate - Park identification, wayfinding, and interpretive signage where appropriate - Benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and other site furnishings where appropriate

Signage Information

The applicant provided an overview of signage standards and potential designs of signage. Signage standards were pulled from the City's 2016 Open Space Signage Standards. This signage package was also developed based on community engagement from stakeholders including historic and civic organizations. This package also received feedback from the Historic Review Commission and Planning Commission. This signage includes:

- Signage types that may be post, fence, or wall mounted
 - o Entry (Tall): 24"x36"
 - o Entry (Horizontal): 40"x60"
 - o Entry (No amenities): 24"x20"
 - o Boundary Sign (Vehicular): 60"x6"
- Signage type may be fence or wall mounted
 - o Boundary (Pedestrian): 16"x8"

Each sign will include informational blocks that provide regulatory language, identification, and directional (park map) information.

Material Selection

The asphalt paver material that will be used for entrances was selected based on its suitability with the existing materials of the park. Existing materials include cobblestone, sandstone, brick, exposed aggregate concrete, granite, concrete, asphalt, and colored concrete. This material can also be used at different amenities within the park as well.

Site Furnishings

Potential site furniture will include benches, litter receptacles, and bike racks based on existing City standards.

Potential Entrance Improvements

Fifth Avenue & Tennis Entrance

- Addition of entry sign (horizontal) post mounted
- Addition of bench
- Addition of entry pavers with 6" concrete band

Bakery Square Boulevard and Sally's Path

- Realign existing bike path to connect across Bakery Place
- Addition of bike racks
- Addition of transition curb and ADA pavers
- Addition of litter and recycling receptacle
- Addition of a new piano crosswalk
- Addition of a flowering tree
- Addition of an entry sign (tall), post mounted
- Addition of a bench

Bakery Square Boulevard and Living Place

- Will mostly remain as is, will include new sign
- Entry sign (tall), post mounted
- ADA pavers

Bakery Square Boulevard and Penn Avenue

- Intend to make this an identifiable, special entrance
- Addition of entry sign (horizontal) post mounted
- Will create plaza with seat wall for seating
- Addition of a bike rack
- ADA pavers
- 6" curb

Fifth Avenue – West Entrance

- Intend to maintain scale with existing fence
- Proposed sign (fence mounted)
- Addition of two flowering trees
- Addition of a litter receptacle
- Entry pavers with 6" concrete band
- Addition of a bench

Fifth Avenue – Main Entrance

- Intend to create a grand ceremonial entrance
- Entry sign (Tall); fence mounted
- Addition of two flowering trees
- Addition of a bench further into the park
- Addition of a plaza with entry pavers with a 6" concrete band

Fifth Avenue – East Entrance

- Entry sign (tall); fence mounted to blend in with fence, current regulatory signage could be added to this signage
- Addition of two flowering trees
- Addition of a bench further into the park
- Entry pavers with 6" concrete band

Beechwood Boulevard – West

- Addition of litter and recycling receptacles
- Addition of two proposed flowering trees
- Addition of a bench
- Addition of bike racks
- Entry sign (tall); fence mounted
- Entry pavers with 6" concrete band

Beechwood Boulevard – East

- Addition of two flowering trees
- Addition of litter and recycling receptacles
- Entry sign (tall); fence mounted
- Addition of a bench
- Entry pavers with 6" concrete band
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Beechwood Recreation Area Entrance

- Replace Park identification signage
- This entrance will be redesigned as part of the Action Plan

Penn Avenue & Fifth Avenue Entrance

- Entry sign (tall)
- This entrance was identified as a new entrance as part of the Action Plan

Fifth Avenue and Shady Avenue

- Corner sign to identify Mellon Park

Interior Signage

- Comfort station – North Mellon Park
- Walled Garden Entry – South Mellon Park, will be done collaboratively with Phipps Conservancy as they improve the Garden Center

Paving Options/Details

- Option A – unit paving (asphalt) over a slab of concrete
- Option B – exposed aggregate concrete similar to the new development at Bakery Square
- Brick clad concrete retaining wall to blend in with urban context

Next Steps

- Submitting for a Certificate of Appropriateness with the Historic Review Commission, get on the February agenda
- Receive permitting to start construction
- Put out bids for construction in August
- Construction starts Fall of this year (2024)

Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>Nice job with bike racks & benches. Is there an opportunity to create bus stop infrastructure that welcomes bus commuters to the park as they get off the bus? Something that ties the bus stops to the park. Besides a warm welcome, perhaps it encourages people to arrive by bus.</p>	<p>Yes. There are two bus stops close to the park. We are not proposing any immediate improvements at this phase of the project. The Action Plan did mention creating a new entrance near the bus stop at Fifth & Penn. We will do some pathway improvements along that corridor. We could address the bus stop during that phase. For the bus stop near the vehicle entranceway, we do not want to do anything as the entrance will be changed as part of improvements to that entrance later in the project.</p>
<p>Is there adequate lighting for the signs to be seen at night?</p>	<p>The street lighting is fairly adequate along Fifth. We are unsure as to the lighting for the interior signage. Lighting improvements will be included in later aspects of the park</p>
<p>What is the cost of this project and where did you get the funds? Are you coordinating with the City of Pittsburgh to make safety changes at the intersection by the park? Specifically, Beechwood and Fifth. Additionally, the pavement on Beechwood by the Garden Center is in bad condition. With the work you are doing and Phipps is doing, it will be obvious that the City also needs to do some work.</p>	<p>We budgeted \$170,000 for construction. We will identify where new paving should be. As part of this project, we will need to coordinate with the City. Hopefully, as we invest in our project and Phipps also invests, the City will make their own investments.</p> <p>This project is the first phase and is solely focused on signage and entrances. Later as we implement later phases of the Master Plan, we can work to address the traffic/safety recommendations.</p>
<p>I just wondered about the gate being removed on the Beechwood entrance. Can you explain the reason behind that? Thanks</p>	<p>We are not proposing removing the gates. They will remain open as they are now.</p>
<p>Have you considered a sign at the entrance to the parking area on shady avenue? that seems to be a place where many people enter the park and where the park begins</p>	<p>That is a possibility. That is part of the broader conversation that we are having with Phipps and other entities as we move forward on this project.</p>

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Will cobblestone eventually be removed accessing parking lot?	I do not believe that cobblestone will be removed. I would have to check Phipp's plan for the Garden Center. It's not accessible but it is historic. I believe they will be creating a sidewalk pathway from the parking lot to the center.
Will any of the signage convey the historic designation status of the park?	That is a good question. We will ask DPW how that can be done in compliance with park standards.
Is there any signage planned for the gap in the fence between the East and West parts of the south side? I remember there was a discussion earlier of how it wasn't always clear that those were connected.	Not yet, the Action Plan actually recommends creating a pathway in this area (Fifth and Shady). We are hoping the sign will inform people that this is Mellon Park property.
Have you considered changing the position of the trash receptacles at the entrance that goes into the parking area? There is a lot of trash there and only one trash can near the entrances behind the bus shelter. Perhaps more trash cans would be better.	We had not considered that yet. We can have a conversation with DPW to discuss and coordinate.

Planner completing report: Adriana Bowman, Neighborhood Planner