

MEETING MINUTES



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Richardson & Associates Landscape Architects

Project: Fort Williams Park Master Plan Update

Date of Meeting: 09/24/2020

Meeting Time: 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Meeting: *Steering Committee Meeting and Site Walk*

Date of Notes: 9/30/2020

Attendees:

Richardson Associates: Ken Studtmann & Todd Richardson

Gorrill Palmer: Will Haskell

Simons Architects: Kayla Caron

Fort Williams Park Committee and Town Staff/ Council Members:

Jim Kerney, FWPC

Ken Pierce, FWPC

Lauren Springer, FWPC

D. Theriacalt, FWPC

Suzanne McGinn, FWPC

Chris Cutter, FWP

Kathy Raftice, Town Employee

Jeremy Gabrielson, Town Council

1. INTRODUCTION

- Introductions and Goals of Meeting
 - Introductions were made and the goals of meeting were discussed.

2. PROJECT REVIEW

- Review of Scope and Overall Project Schedule
 - The overall project schedule was provided as part of a hand-out.

3. GROUP MAPPING EXERCISES

- 5 Adjectives that Best Describe Fort Williams Park
 - The Committee wrote down (5) Adjectives that best described Fort Williams Park_ See Attached List.
- Heart and Soul and Special Places
- Under and Over Utilized Places
- Summary of Mapping and Descriptions.
 - The Steering Committee divided into two groups and placed colored Post-It Notes on large scale maps.
 - 1) Red Dot for the Heart and Soul of the Park.
 - 2) Yellow Post-It Note for special places in the park.
 - 3) Blue Post-It Notes for under-utilized places in the park.
 - 4) Salmon Post-It Notes for over utilized places in the park .
 - Todd Richardson provided a short summary of the mapping exercise.

4. DISCUSSION OF PARK BY ZONES

- Todd Richardson Reviewed (17) Zones in the Park and the Steering Committee provided comments and thoughts. Following is a bulleted synopsis of the discussions.
- Zone 1 – Entrance/Meadow
 - Long views to Water.
 - Activities – sledding, ultimate frisbee (Middle & High Schools), Unorganized sports.
 - Area is Possibly Under-utilized.
 - Seasonally active.
 - Not scheduled for group use.
 - Old foundations throughout make it difficult for organized sports and groups.
 - Ground “Soft” in this area.
 - Sidewalk and berm curb along main entrance road – not ideal, safety concern for pedestrians.
 - Sidewalks in parks do not need to parallel roads.
- Zone 2 – Ships Cove Beach/Parking
 - Picnic slab – this is one of 4 rental locations, not being used now due to COVID.
 - Portal to Battery Keyes & Goddard Mansion.
 - Entrance to parking lot is challenged and cramped.

- Activities – beach, paddle boarding, rock climbing access, SCUBA center use, sitting in car and watching the ocean, swimming.
 - Lawn goes directly to shoreline with no buffer.
 - Narrow lawn area between parking and shoreline.
 - Very high vehicular use.
 - Swings – don't touch them!! Location seems a bit odd.
 - One of the few places in town that you can get close to the water in a car, which allows less active people to park and see the ocean and allows uses with equipment easier access (SCUBA, paddle boarding).
 - People park in the parking lot, stay in their cars and watch the water- especially in the winter months.
- Zone 3 – Battery Keyes
 - Awesome and unique views.
 - Trodden/Erosion.
 - Safety concerns/ Feels unsafe.
 - Remnant footprints of history.
 - Pavement extent was discussed. Lots of Pavement.
 - Zone 4 Goddard Mansion
 - Impressive!
 - Approach somewhat neglected.
 - Wedding venues occur here.
 - Local neighborhood pedestrians enter via this access road/ gate.
 - Safety concerns behind GM.
 - Geocache area.
 - Neighboring houses desire more buffering.
 - Invasive species around the Mansion.
 - People use the area as part of a perimeter run.
 - Zone 5 Battery Knoll
 - Spectacular views.
 - Large flag pole.
 - Uses: picnicking, kite flying, wedding sites, Pilates/yoga.
 - Pedestrian/sidewalk along the road.
 - Concrete pad areas are part of deeper buried structures/batteries.
 - Is there a better/improved use of this area or better delineation of uses?
 - Issues with lawn area.

- Zone 6 Cliff Walk Zone
 - What is the purpose of drop off loop? The Steering Committed provided no good answer for the need for the drop off and thought it could be eliminated. The drop off area currently conflicts with pedestrian movement.
 - 6 traffic turning movements from Ships Cove through this area along road.
 - Congested with vehicles and pedestrians.
 - Invasive reclamation program.
 - Complexity of styles – benches, fences, signs, guardrails.
 - Erosion, grades.
 - Safety concerns in some places.

- Zone 7 Lighthouse
 - Circulation from parking to drop-off/ lighthouse – pinched and congested. Usually MUCH BUSIER in normal year!
 - Central parking lot redone in 2019.
 - Vendor area – vendor selected through bidding process (3 in park).
 - Buses – long way to wind through the park to get to the lighthouse which is where most buses/trolleys want to get to with tourists.
 - Updated signage underway.

- Zone 8 Big Open Area (The Green)
 - Views! Tourists use the area heavily for pictures of the light house.
 - Finish area for Beach to Beacon.
 - Southerly portion is off leash area for dogs.
 - Old foundations and junk in the ground.
 - Tourist meander through this area.
 - Southerly end – old dirt pile for firing range – need to remove to improve views.
 - Under-utilized – highest and best use???
 - Firing Range- Steering Committee is looking into the possibility of have the firing range removed.
The Beach to Beacon finishes at the Green. A major event for the park.
 - Wedding Site.

- Zone 9 SW Woodland Preserve
 - Area for locals/treasured by locals.
 - Off leash area for dogs.

- Special place for locals.
 - (2) batteries in this area.
 - Cool structures/old spotlight.
 - Invasive plant species exist in the area.
 - Stockpiles for park maintenance, including snow in the winter.
 - Road plowed in winter allowing dog walking in winter.
- Zone 10 Sports Fields/Multipurpose Area
- Zone 11 Maintenance Building
 - “Back of house”/ park maintenance & support.
 - Not welcoming.
 - Stockpiles.
 - Playground in the middle which seems odd; general Safety Issues with playground in the middle of parking and the maintenance area were discussed.
 - Storage unit – used by park for plows, fertilizer, equipment; Police storage for bikes; Boy Scout storage; Little League storage.
 - Businesses
 - 1) Hours of park don’t coincide with normal business hours
 - 2) Lease agreements
 - 3) Town maintains buildings
- Zone 12 Officers Row
 - Main Former Entrance.
 - Sloped.
 - Large trees.
 - Gazebo – limited gathering space.
 - Mini parking lot at Shore Road – convenient to “locals” areas of the park.
 - Tree succession plan (in 2011 MP and currently being implemented).
- Zone 13 Officers Row/Picnic Shelter
 - Loose activities.
 - Picnic shelter.
 - Overflow parking.
 - Parking lot view below.
 - Great Views to Water- except for the parking lot below the picnic shelter.

- Zone 14 Pond
 - Amazing/different than other areas in park/special.
 - Water quality and quantity issues.
 - Surrounding areas could be improved.
 - Relationship of adjacent tennis courts – right place?
 - Possible winter skating (not currently used for this).

- Zone 15 Children’s Garden
 - Treasure trove.
 - Secret gem.
 - Harder to get to for tourists so locals like this area – Need to preserve this aspect of the Park.
 - More natural feeling.
 - Strip between Shore Road and Zone 14/15 – nice, quiet, locals, high elevation.

- Zone 16 Parade Grounds
 - Bleachers – used for HS graduation! Do not change.
 - Little League – not used this year.
 - Ball field had recently been rotated which made it worse than before.
 - Very little use of the area due to Covid.
 - Beach to Beacon “after race” activities occur here.
 - Family Fun Day activities occur here.

- Zone 17 Parade Ground/Overflow Parking
 - Pay to Park - \$\$\$.
 - Locals/everyone parks here.

- GENERAL DISCUSSION
 - Kathy Raftice working with Owen Chaplin from Gorill Palmer on historic/archive documents for park. Many are at public works and are not scanned

 - Pay to Park Analysis – need to get a copy from Town.

 - Central Parking Lot redesign (constructed 2019) – need to get a copy of plans from Town.

 - Maintenance and Care – Team will discuss further with Chris Cutter.

 - Surveillance/Security – minimal.

- Volume of buses, cars and pedestrians are down because of Covid-19. Typically, there are 1000 buses/day , trolley 3x/ day. Buses have a significant presence in the park .
- South Road – Constant ice problem in the winter. The Town is currently in the process of re-designing Shore Road. Team to obtain engineering drawings from the Town.
- Goddard Mansion; There was a general sense of from the Committee that they Mansion should be restored and made more accessible/useable- Cost is a factor.
- Parking Review; The Team will review how the parking functions- seasonal parking, which lots used by who, are parking lots in best location and are parking lots highest and best use for current locations?
- The need for a unification of styles for the amenities was discussed.
- The importance of providing “hidden” park spaces to preserve the opportunity for locals to have a sense of a “community park” within a nationally/international destination place was discussed.
- The batteries are not on the Historic Register. The importance of keeping the batteries vs. removing some was discussed. The general consensus from the steering committee was that some of the batteries could be removed.

- TIME PERMITTING

- The Items below were not discussed, but Richardson & Associates and Team will follow up with specific people to gather the items below.

- *Maintenance / Care of Park*
- *Operations; Police_ Surveillance, Security, etc.*
- *Revenue Streams – Parking, Wedding, etc.*
- *Regulations and Policy*

5. SITE WALK (*Time Permitting*)

- Site Walk
 - Time did not permit for a site walk, but the Richardson & Associates Team walked the site prior to the Kick-Off Meeting.

6. NEXT STEPS

- Marketing/ Public Announcements_ E-mail/ List Serves
 - The announcement and e-mail were shared with the committee.

- Committee Meeting_ Inventory, Analysis, and Assessment
 - November 2020