

NOTE*

At the last of the 5 community meetings, held on May 23, 2018, it was decided that the staircase to the right of the tower (seen on all of the slides but the second to the last) was a high cost element that was not favored by a majority of the attendees. The final design does not include this treatment, but like other elements, it appears in these slides because it was a discussion point.

Please use these slides to see the development of the community conversations, but refer to the final plan at the top of this website for the final design.

Thank you.



Prospect Hill Park, Somerville
Site Improvements

Community Meeting #5

23 January 2018

A community meeting was held in the Somerville High School Auditorium from 6 to 8 pm on Tuesday, January 23rd. Attendance was approximately 15 people. This is the final scheduled community meeting for the Prospect Hill Park Rehabilitation project.

The notes provide a summary of the discussion that took place during the presentation which showed development of the landscape concept and some details, amenities and sample plant palette.

Comments/Questions

1. Bump-outs and crosswalks: Support for the addition of bump-outs for traffic calming and pedestrian safety. Suggested western crosswalk be relocated to far western edge of site. Asked if three-dimensional painted crosswalks seen in other countries could be done here.
2. Woodland walkways: Clarified that repairs are intended to long sloping walkway in the woodlands, removal of walkways to the shed, and reconstruction of some of the stairs. Andrew created the footpath in defiance of the lack of City maintenance and hopes the path will be removed as things are renovated. There was support for the footpaths to remain from others in the community.
3. Selective clearing for viewsheds: Asked to verify proposed Union Square development locations and if they will be in viewsheds proposed to be opened. Clearing may extend to playground area.
4. Benches: Support for benches throughout the park as shown on the plans. Requests for a mix of backed and backless to encourage interaction. Bench to be City standard, steel ribbon bench. Black color is proposed to blend into the historic context.
5. Planting: Support for native species. Asked to confirm if coralberry is native. Arrowwood has leaf minor issues in Somerville, so an alternative viburnum should be used. Can lowbush blueberry be used?
6. Street trees: Differing opinions supported both continuous street trees and less trees dense street trees to allow views from houses across Munroe Street.
7. Apple trees on hillside: Some support for apple trees and others against the mess and potential for rodents.
8. Hillside turf alternative: Group supported a meadow on the hillside over “no mow” fescue grass mix.

9. Woodland planting: Asked if greater diversity and extent of planting can be proposed. The bottom of the hill is fairly sunny and could support plants like American holly.
10. Interpretation: Interpretive panels are proposed to be muted gray/silver in color (metal); full color is not proposed in order to be suitable for the historic site. Intent is to add locators to the guardrails to point out significant locations within the viewshed. How will interpretation on mid-level be incorporated? Can something be done on the top level of the tower plaza for views?
11. Lighting: Concern about lighting being too bright and of a warm color temperature. Cambridge has circadian lighting; can that be pursued?
12. Overlook: Support mix of backless and backed benches for group gathering and conversation.
13. Drinking fountain: Interested in bottle filler and dog bowl options.
14. Trash/recycling: New trash receptacles will have companion recycling receptacles.
15. Shed: Mixed thoughts about removing the walkways leading to the shed. Improved lighting and visibility should improve the area. Boulder or block seating north of the shed to help activate the area was discussed.
16. Access to mid-level of tower: Discussed alternatives for accessing the mid-level terrace: (1) new stairs/slope option, (2) cutting an opening through the existing wall along the existing stairs (likely will not meet code requirements), or (3) no access. Majority of group supported no new access to mid-level. Some discussion about adding the guardrail to the wall even if no access is provided to improve safety.

End of notes