

**Roeland Park Parks & Trees Committee  
Agenda & Minutes  
August 13, 2008**

**Committee Members Present:** Chris Handzel, George Schlagel, Joel Marquardt, Jan Grebe, Mark Kohles, Mike Miller, Josh Zaroor (by phone).

**Absent:** Megan England, Mike Foltz.

**Quorum Established:** Yes

**Also Present:** Mayor Steve Petrehn, John Carter

Review and approval of Minutes from July 9 meeting.

Josh reviewed the July meeting's discussion of perceptions of the city and how it affects our selection of design elements for the parks. The July minutes contain a full listing of ideas that emerged from this brainstorming session, which was felt to be extremely valuable as a tool to use in our future planning for the parks.

**Action Item: Overview of park spaces**

Chris reported that he had updated the aerial photo of the parks (and also the old Roeland Park School property) with dimensions and areas added, and that those were sent via email to the committee so that we may use them in our deliberations on the various parks. He pointed out that whereas Roeland Park has fewer acres of parkland for its population than the National Recreation and Parks Association recommends, there are parks accessible to our residents in nearby cities such as Mission, Fairway and Kansas City, KS. Mayor Steve Petrehn noted that Johnson County Park and Recreation District's Master Action Plan (MAP 2020) contains ideas for the county's future acquisition and development of existing and proposed parkland and recreation facilities and that we might also have a look at this. While we've previously discussed acquiring added parkland as a goal, Mayor Petrehn commented that we might come up with ways to make better use of our current assets.

Chris is working on a draft of a document with some proposals for such park features as benches and trash cans.

**Action Item: Art in R Park**

Timeline for approval of proposals for next round of art was discussed. A final decision on the art will be made at the September 10 meeting, with a tentative date for an Opening of the 3rd Friday in October (October 17). The target date for installation of this group is October 15. Joel noted that installation deadlines for the first two groups of works have not been well observed. Notably the large bronze eagle is still months from completion due to the immensity of the project; this is not seen as a problem and the proposal can be resubmitted when the piece is ready.

Eight proposals were submitted and reviewed. Few have observed the submission requirements (photo of piece, with person in the photo to give an idea of scale; artist's statement, etc.). The committee's preliminary decisions on the pieces reviewed are as follows. Final decisions will be made on Sept. 10.

1. Two pieces — Reilly Hoffman, "Train of Thought" and Zachary Meyer, "Golden Root" — have not yet been created. Instead, a sketch of the latter and a detail photo of the material

proposed in the former were submitted. Joel is to contact the artists and tell them that there is a presumption that those pieces will be approved, but that we want them to proceed with them so that we may see a photo at our Sept. 10 meeting.

2. Alicia Sciorie and Sean Starowitz's proposal for a community garden received favorable comments, but the committee felt that the timing of such an installation in fall/winter was not favorable, and that we would like to consider a more permanent placement, perhaps in one of our parks, rather than on the east cloverleaf. We will ask the artists to meet with the committee to discuss further their ideas for this piece as we feel it is well worth exploring.

3. Thomas Smith's "Gorilla" was felt to be too similar to the "Blockhead" piece currently in place on the north end of the Roe median. This piece will not be accepted. John Northington's concrete and tempered glass piece was not accepted.

4. The following were tentatively approved pending final approval on Sept. 10: Todd Baker's wood sculpture "Ed the Head," Derek Webster's steel piece resembling a creeping creature of some sort, and John Northington's circular piece, aka The Donut.

A short discussion on placement of the pieces was held. It was decided that the pieces that the city now owns should not be moved until the parks master plan is done and they can be permanently place in the parks where they will remain, as repeated moves can damage them. Joel asked that a committee member be involved in determining placement of the new pieces. If Derek Webster's piece were to be mounted on a wall or a building, it might be necessary to involve someone with engineering expertise to advise on structural and safety issues. If Reilly Hoffman's "Train of Thought" is to go in the median, Joel would like to work with the artist on placement. Further discussion of placement will be held on Sept. 10.

Mayor Steve Petrehn told the committee that Roeland Park resident Mikey Fletcher is in charge of the "42nd Street Mural Project" currently underway in Kansas City KS. He is looking for another mural site for when this one is completed, and it may be that County Line Road could be a suitable location. This would require a discussion of the piece itself, funding sources, materials sources, whether it could be considered as a piece for Art in R Park. It was suggested that Mikey Fletcher be invited to attend a Park Committee meeting to explore this.

### **Action Item: Sweaney Park**

Josh Zaroor and Mike Foltz have visited Sweaney Park and presented a draft document to the committee. This lists the good and the bad features of the park at present, and suggests some improvements in the physical layout, materials used, and uses for the park. Josh described a park he had visited in Québec which had an interactive play area that he found very appealing and suggested that we might consider something of the sort. Low stone walls were mentioned as away of creating a separation from adjacent homes, and benches were discussed. The draft proposal presented included a drawing suggesting some of these changes. It was noted that Katherine Sweaney still lives across the street from the park, and that any changes must be sensitive to that.

Suggestions and comments included involving the neighbors in a charette; seeing whether the 4 council members residing near the park might undertake to generate some interest in and discussion about the part; and postponing any major decisions until the street work that will be done on Wells and Neosho soon will be completed.

## **Action Item: Carpenter Park**

Joel Marquardt and Mike Foltz visited the park and considered ways to improve it. An aerial map of the park was distributed to the committee for discussion. It was determined that the general layout of the park is very good, and that areas of impact could help. It is important to get a better visual connection to the Cedar Roe Library, as currently the view of the library from the park consists of a dumpster and a prison-like wall.

The center circle is where "Goddess of the Deep," AKA the fishtail, is placed, and it is felt that this sculpture works very well there. However, the shrubs surrounding the circle are overgrown and should be removed and replaced with lower-growing ones. John will have Dan send us information about what the plans are for replacing these.

On the north side, some sort of simple "shelter" would be good for creating an "outdoor room." The paths could be made narrower, some lights behind the shrubs on the west and south sides would improve security, and a water feature with solar powered fountain was mentioned. If the current red sidewalks are kept, there may be ways to improve their appearance; or pea gravel walks could be considered. Other improvements suggested included low stone walls, perhaps with inscriptions, and moving the dog waste container.

Finally, it was suggested that if we add low stone walls, a wooden top could be placed on those to use as seating. And it was suggested that we reach out to the art community, perhaps with a contest for designing kid-friendly art.

**ACTION ITEM:** John Carter to communicate the Parks Committee's desire to be more involved and desire to be kept up to date with any landscaping changes or other material changes occurring in Parks and green spaces to the City Staff/Forrester/Public Works teams. The Committee understands it is an advisory committee, but feels it would be beneficial to the City to use its skills to assist Public Works/Forrester, etc with decisions impacting Parks and green spaces.

## **NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 10**

### **Draft Agenda for September**

- 1. Review August Meeting Minutes**
- 2. Art in R Park- Megan England and Joel Marquardt**
  - a. Finalize round 3 selections
  - b. Choose site locations
  - c. Review details of opening reception event/communication
- 3. Park Reviews**
  - a. Granada Park- Mark Kohles and George Schlagel
  - b. Juniper Park- Mark Kohles and Chris Handzel
    - Please have a short presentation with ideas on design, materials, park usage potential, art placement, etc.
- 4. Review Remainder of 2008 meeting agendas**
  - a. **October**

- **Park reviews**

1. Landscape Materials Discussion- need to identify who/what we want to discuss
2. Cooper Creek- Josh and Jan
3. Miscellaneous Green Spaces- Mike Foltz and Megan England
4. Next steps for Master Plan- Josh Zaroor and Chris Handzel

- **Tree update-** George and Mike Foltz

1. ?? meet with City Forrester and set up working session with

**b. November**

- **Park Reviews**

1. Art placement and Landscape materials discussions
2. Impact on Art in R Park future phases

- Plan open house for review of draft master plan

**c. December**

- **Master Plan**

1. Review draft/open house
2. Holiday party