

## **Meeting Notes Summary –August 9, 2008 at McClatchy Park stage.**

What is great about McClatchy Park?

- The trees on the site are desirable.
- The stage in the park is a great amenity.
- The pool facility, the base ball, and play fields are a desirable feature in the park.
- The brick façade of the P.A.L. building reflects the history of the Oak Park neighborhood. The building as a whole should be kept or at least the façade should be preserved.
- 'Green' open space areas of the park are an amenity.
- The park should not be overdeveloped.

What should be changed or looked at within the park?

- Houses along 37<sup>th</sup> create a very strong edge. Need to increase visibility into park from edges.
- Fee structure too high in the park.
- Trees need to be better maintained. Maintenance vehicles compacting soil around tree bases.
- Sidewalk width does not facilitate maintenance vehicles without trucks driving off of the walks.
- Baseball facilities need to be upgraded.
- Tennis courts should be upgraded or removed if not well used.
- Fields that are currently used for baseball should be more multi-use. They should accommodate more uses such as football or soccer.
- The P.A.L. building should remain and be moved to a new location.
- The pool area should be maintained and enhanced. Diving boards and fountains should be repaired.
- The stage cuts off views into and out of the park. Views should be opened up. Can this be accomplished through re-orienting the stage?
- Lighting throughout the park needs to be improved.
- More areas for community/civic gathering need to be accommodated for.
- The current playground needs to be expanded.
- Play activities for older kids need to be provided in the park.
- The 'kiddie' pool needs to be removed.
- Restrooms are in poor condition. New restrooms should be constructed or the existing restrooms renovated. In either case the location should be evaluated. Safety in restrooms is a concern.
- The entrance into the existing pool facility does not work well and should be looked at.
- There needs to be a more logical pathway system throughout the park.
- The stage needs to be more 'activated' with events and other uses.
- Electrical systems for the stage should be fixed.
- There need to be more water fountains throughout the park.
- Relocate existing tennis courts. Tennis should be located along perimeter of the park.
- The stones at the front of the stage should be removed.
- A lot of interest was expressed in the history of the park as 'Joyland'.
- The stage should have the ability to be lit for night performances.
- Some of the activities, such as tennis, should be located along the perimeter of the park.
- The history of the Oak Park Community should be indicated in the park in some fashion.
- Park activities should be coordinated with local schools.
- The park should be programmed with activities that are multi-generational.
- Any improvements that are considered should be within the maintenance capabilities that the City has available.
- Facilities and opportunities for team sports should be available.

- Vehicle traffic should be better controlled.
- Basketball courts are an amenity and should be retained but upgraded.
- What new things should be considered?
- A teen resource center should be considered.
- A new snack shack or café building should be considered.
- The park needs new or renovated restrooms.
- There needs to be better signage throughout the community to direct people to the park. And there needs to be better signage within the park locating different activities.
- ‘Joyland’ type activities should be considered within the park.
- Wider walkways to service large vehicles should be incorporated into the park design.
- The park should have a new play area.
- The park should have a newly constructed stage.
- Include more multi-use facilities. Some things that were suggested were fencing at the tennis courts and a boxing facility.
- Multi-use courts and fields.
- There should be sports teaching opportunities.
- The park needs new and more play facilities. Some things that were suggested were fenced play areas, age appropriate play areas, and a water feature.
- There should be an area for a farmer’s market.
- There should be an area for artist’s facilities.
- The design should include a perimeter walking and running trail.
- Walks should be rubberized.
- The design should include bike racks.
- Activities and facilities that are in the park should accommodate seniors and people with disabilities.
- There should be senior specific activities and uses in the park.
- Any new plantings in the park should be native and low-water use.
- Something similar to the past Oak Park Library is desirable in the park.
- A new playground should include some type of climbing structure (walls or nets)
- A year-round, multi-use pool with wide appeal should be part of the design.
- Group picnic areas should be located in the park. Some picnic structures should be located along the perimeter of the park.
- Picnic areas should be expanded.
- New lighting throughout the park should be included to facilitate evening activities.
- Changing facilities for performances need to be included.
- There need to be some type soft walks in the park.
- There should be more pronounced walks into the park from intersections. The park needs a ‘gateway’ type entrance.
- The park should include a community garden.
- Art programs for teens should be included.
- More facilities for teens need to be located in the park.
- Fitness stations should be included along perimeter paths.
- A skate park should be included as part of the park design.
- Include edible gardens in the park.
- Include a botanical garden in the park.
- There should be a facility for bike rentals or storage.
- Multi-use game tables should be used in the park.
- Educational facilities for learning opportunities should be considered. (community gardens, food preservation)
- A dog park should be included in the design of the park.
- The park should be a site for showing demonstration projects such as solar or other ‘green’ projects.
- Measures should be taken to improve safety in the park.
- Any new structures should include solar panels.

- There should be opportunities for Art in the Park.
- More public art displays
- Include an ice-skating rink in the park.
- Signage within the park and identifying the park needs to be improved.
- There should be a non-profit resource center.
- Include wi-fi in the park.
- There should be some type of amphi-theatre on-site.
- Include bocce courts.
- City should look into providing sports instruction.
- City should provide sports equipment for rental. Partner with local sporting goods stores/manufacturers to provide equipment.
- Include a putting green.
- Include an interactive fountain in the design.
- Partnerships with local schools should be explored.
- Things such as food preservation classes and demonstration kitchens should be part of the design.
- There should be cameras in the park.
- Asset mapping.

## **Analysis**

### **Community**

The community is one of the park's greatest assets. It is important that the design for the park address the functional needs desired by the community and the City. The design must provide the facilities and amenities the community has identified as being important, but it will be the community and the City that need to activate the park.

Below are different ways that the community as a whole can help in activating the park.

- Asset mapping to identify services and resources in the greater Oak Park community.
- Coordinate park activities with local schools.
- Multi-generational activities
- Sports education
- Activities and opportunities for teens
- Educational opportunities
- Park as an opportunity for demonstration projects
- 'Art in the Park' opportunities

## **The City**

City will be a great asset to the community and the park as they are ultimately the ones who will be responsible for maintaining the park and park facilities. They will further be able to assist the community in helping to activate the park with activities, addressing safety concerns, and acting as a liaison with other City offices and business.

Beyond developing a new master plan for the park, the community identified several issues in which the City can assist in addressing, either in the design or through coordination with other City offices or the Oak Park community at large.

- Evaluate fee structure for reserving facilities in the park
- The trees in the park need to be better maintained
  - wider walks to facilitate service vehicle access
- Issues of public safety
  - more police oversight in park
  - inadequate lighting
- Upgrades to existing facilities and amenities

## **The Design**

The Master Plan for McClatchy Park should reflect the concerns and wants of the community, as well as, respond to the overall desire of the City to develop a park design that inspires, engages, and motivates the users.

To begin to think about how to organize the more important design elements, we've looked at the design in four different parts. These are community facilities/spaces, activity spaces, amenities, and improvement areas.

### 1. Community Facilities/Spaces

#### a. Stage

There needs to be consensus on whether or not the stage remains in it's current location, if the existing stage is relocated, or if it is removed, redesigned, and relocated.

If the existing stage is to remain or be relocated somewhere else in the park, the following issues should be resolved in the design:

- Lighting
  - lighting should allow for night time uses
  - electrical issues should be addressed
- Visibility
  - the stage creates a visual barrier into and out of the park

If a new stage is to be constructed, the issues listed above must be addressed in addition to the following:

- Changing facilities

Is there a way to preserve the existing façade of the building? Keep façade in place or reuse brick?

b. P.A.L. Building

There needs to be consensus on whether or not the P.A.L. building should remain.

If the building is to remain several issues need to be addressed:

- How will the building be reused?
- Should only portions of the building remain and other parts reused?

c. Multi-Purpose Building

- Resource center
- Restrooms and changing facilities
- Café and/or concessions
- Equipment rentals

d. Restrooms

If the existing restrooms are to remain there are several issues that need to be addressed:

- The restrooms need to be renovated. They are currently in poor condition and there are safety issues as they currently stand.

If the restrooms are to be demolished there are several issues that need to be addressed:

- Where should new restrooms be constructed?
- Should there be more than one restroom facility constructed?

e. Existing pool building

- There needs to be a more strongly defined entrance into the existing pool building

f. Community gathering area(s)

- The community is a large part of this park. It would be a good idea to provide some type of community gathering space. As a 'programmed' space, perhaps this could be an area for things such as artist's displays. As an space that is not programmed, perhaps this could be a space where through different design techniques we could indicate the history of the park.

## 2. Activity Spaces

a. Community gardens

b. Multi-use fields and courts

- Basketball
- Tennis
- Baseball (existing)
- Soccer
- Football
- Open play fields

- c. Play spaces
  - Tot and school age play areas
    - age-specific play separated by age
    - accessible play features
  - Teen play areas
    - skate parks
    - climbing walls/structures
  - Water play
  - Game tables
- d. Tennis courts
  - There needs to be consensus as to whether or not we will keep the tennis courts
  - If tennis courts are to remain, it was apparent that they needed to be improved and updated. If there is consensus to keep the tennis courts this would be a good time to reconsider their location.
  - If there is consensus that the courts should be removed, perhaps we look into multi-use courts to facilitate some tennis play (ie. practice wall).
- e. Dog park

### 3. Amenities

- a. Pathway system
  - More logical pathway system throughout the park
  - Perimeter walking and jogging
  - Soft surface perimeter walks
- b. Historic design
- c. Lighting
  - Security lighting needs to be provided
  - Lighting that will allow for some night activities should be provided
- d. Signage
- e. Group and individual picnic
- f. Fitness stations
- g. Bike racks
- h. Water fountains

### 4. Upgrades to existing facilities and amenities

- a. Pool needs some upgrades
  - diving board
  - fountains
- b. Restrooms (if remaining)
  - upgrade and renovate
- c. Tennis courts (if remaining)

- resurfacing
- new fencing

d. Baseball facilities

***These meeting notes represent the understanding of the preparer.  
Please feel free to provide additional comments to this document in the form of written response.***

***End of Meeting Notes***