

DIX PARK MASTER PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Workshop #3 Notes

Wednesday, March 1, 2017, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Five Points Center for Active Adults, 2000 Noble Road, Raleigh, NC, 27608

Agenda

6:00pm **Welcome & Icebreaker**

6:15pm **Consultant Selection Process Update, Kate Pearce**

In November of 2016, the City received 18 submissions in response to a Request for Qualifications for Dorothea Dix Park. The Master Plan Executive Committee (Executive Committee) reviewed each submission, discussed as a committee, and decided to invite six teams to a first-round interview. As a result of those interviews, the Executive Committee invited four teams to submit a response to a Request for Proposals and attend final interviews.

The Executive Committee conducted final interviews the week of February 14 which generally included a scope and case study presentation, discussion and interactive work session. All four teams proved to be exceptional and are considered the leaders in their profession.

At the conclusion of the interviews, the Executive Committee recommended Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), a Brooklyn-based landscape architecture firm, to lead the master planning process. The selection of MVVA represents a critical step towards creating Dorothea Dix Park. Over the next few months, City staff will develop scope and work through the contract negotiation process. Staff will return to City Council in May for contract approval.

The following teams interviewed but were not selected.

- James Corner Field Operations
- Nelson Byrd Woltz
- West 8 + Sasaki

6:30pm **“Contemporary Trends in Park Planning and Design”, Mark Hough**

Mark Hough, landscape architect for Duke University, gave a lecture on the history of landscape architecture in the US. He began with the creation of Central Park, designed by Olmstead and Vaux, and the great parks amongst those ranks. Hough transitioned into Post-War Modernism, with landscape architects such as Dan Kiley and Lawrence Halprin, followed by Post-Modernism, a return to materials and forms.

Hough surmised that we are now living in a time of what some may term post-post-modernism or Environmental Urbanism. Today due to cultural change of re-urbanization and challenges with climate change and sea level rise, the field is being forced to innovate. Infrastructure is being reimagined, such as The Highline. Storm water is being managed with greenspace, such as Brooklyn Bridge Park. Working with natural systems and microclimates is taking precedence. Hough suggested that we must consider this when designing Dix Park, while maintaining the values of people, place, and purpose.

Mark Hough’s concluding statement sparked a conversation on what the purpose of Dix Park should be and how to find it. Hough and Pearce gave examples of the purpose of other great parks, such as MVVA’s Maggie Daley Park in Chicago focused on play for kids. Kate Pearce stated that the purpose will be decided by the people of Raleigh and take shape during the master planning process.

Hough and Pearce also noted that mistakes will happen in the process and that we will need to acknowledge that now, but mistakes often lead to innovation. Hough gave the example of the steps at Brooklyn Bridge Park being created simply because there was a surplus of concrete around the bridge. In the moment, Matt Urbanski of MVVA realized that they would make great climbing steps. The steps are now one of the most popular parts of that park.

A committee member addressed her concern about maintenance of the land. Pictures of parks are often taken when the grass is green and freshly cut, but it may not always look like that. Maintenance strategies and maintenance costs must be addressed during the master planning process.

Additionally, a concern about the actualization of the master plan was addressed. One woman explained that in her landscape architecture experience, master plans are made, but when it comes to implementation, the plans are not carried out due to funding. Kate replied with how we will break the project implementation down into phases. These will allow us to have some “early wins” for construction that keep people excited about the land, while keeping us on track.

An Executive Committee member asked about putting in temporary structures or a running trail during the master planning process. Pearce responded that events and demonstration projects are possible and that we will be doing to keep people excited about the park so that there is not planning fatigue.

7:15pm **Questions & Discussion**

8:00pm **Meeting Close**

Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 5, 2017, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Emyln Koster, Director of the Museum of Natural Sciences

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Upcoming Community Events at Dix Park

Invasive Species Removal, Saturday, March 18th, 9:00am, Rocky Branch Trail

Movie in the Moonlight, Saturday, March 25th, 8:30pm, Flowers Field

Historic Buildings of Dix Park, Tuesday, April 4th, 6:00pm – 7:30pm, Dwire Lot

Sky Watching, Saturday, May 6th, 9:00pm – 11:00pm, Big Field

*Register to attend and find out about more events at www.eventbrite.com, keyword search "Dix Park."