

Dorothea Dix Park

Master Plan Joint Workgroup Meeting

Date: Tuesday, May 8, 2018
Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm
Location: The Grill at Dix Park

Meeting Summary

The meeting began with updates about upcoming events at the park and past events, all of which are posted on Dixpark.org. Workgroup volunteers were told that there will be more opportunities for volunteering in the coming months. A spreadsheet will be sent out with sign-ups for volunteering. The Dix Park team is also working on scheduling more workgroup meetings so that members will have more opportunity to provide feedback and share their insights.

The meeting was focused on the buildings in the park. Staff asked workgroup members where they fall between wanting more buildings on the site or less. Staff noted that more buildings will offer more diverse uses, more potential for partners, more revenue options, and potentially greater capital needs and operating cost, less buildings would offer more open landscape, and potentially less capital and lower operating cost. The majority of workgroup members indicated that on a scale of more buildings to fewer, they preferred the middle ground with a slight lean towards less buildings.

Workgroup members were presented with the question “What values relative to buildings are important for making Dix Park a great park? Do you have any questions for the design team?” Members worked in small groups at their tables for fifteen minutes. Each table then had thirty seconds to share their findings. The responses to this first discussion question are attached. Workgroup members then worked on a second discussion question: “In your personal experience, what is an example from Raleigh or anywhere in the world where buildings in a public park had a positive impact on your visit? What kinds of activities took place inside those buildings?”

Discussion Question #1 Responses- “What values relative to buildings are important for making Dix Park a great park?”

- Create a Democratic Gathering Space for all
- The vision/filter: aesthetics, sustainability, function, narrative
- We need a vision that in terms of buildings dries the decision-making process. If the buildings stay, they should reflect the vision.

- Design for Function-First ask what do we want in the park?-Then is there a suitable building?
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Buildings are not monuments but tell the educational and cultural history
- Affordable space is important- for non-profits etc.
- Multiuse spaces are key! - Airbnb for pop-up shops could be a building use
- The group of houses can go but at least save a couple for the purpose of the story- Stone Houses should stay though!
- If new buildings are built they must be sustainable/very ecofriendly
- It's not the number of buildings that add or subtract value, but rather the density and gravity of clusters of buildings and their ability to create a sense of place and further Raleigh's reputation as a City of Oaks.
- The cluster of buildings must be walkable, pedestrian friendly, human scale, convenient to pastoral part of the park, but also convenient to transit etc.
- A semi urban revitalized gateway between city and country that produces revenue for the park and engages diverse populations drawing them into the park.
- Buildings should stay if they're historical -restore the modern use, structural integrity, and architectural significance
- Do not get rid of all the buildings because they draw people into the park. Have private sector uses that serve the public and invite them.
- Have space where an amphitheater can be set up but is not permanent so that there is not dead space between major concerts.
- Have something like The Assembly- a shared co-working space.
- Restaurants that offer mainly outdoor seating so you feel that you're in a park
- Use zoning to permit offices or industrial uses—protects space for museums, art, and education
- Provide an educational space for artists to be teachers
- Keep the landscape around the buildings so that buildings and parking lots don't run together
- All destinations open to the public
- Maintain buildings in concentration so that most pastoral landscape is unified.
- 20% buildings and 80% pastoral
- Offer a wedding venue to generate revenue
- Use historical markets
- Tell the story of the land through the buildings
- Keep the views! Especially the big field
- Have a pedestrian corridor that runs from the hospital to the farmers market with side branches to other parts of the park.
- Offer lockers, showers, and restrooms
- Use Gil Penalosa's 8-80 guidelines
- Have park docents for tours
- No long-term residents
- No Airbnb

- All business and buildings should be open to the public-no private sector
- Offer business incubators and breweries
- Bier Garten!
- Boutique hotel/event center
- Preserve the land and historic buildings
- Provide enough programming
- Open areas for people and pets
- Plan for flexibility and change
- Have pavilions!
- Use an abandoned building for paintball
- Cohesive preservation
- International welcome center
- Tell the long history/story in various ways not a single monument to a single purpose
- Volunteer opportunities!
- Budget resources
- The more buildings the more connections to diverse populations
- Use abandoned building for paintball-no maintenance required
- Use abandoned building for free expression mural painting
- Historic merit of the buildings should carry some weight
- Have digital maps of different eras as a display-solar powered
- Buildings preserved in different forms (some with no roof or windows for event space like Larkins on the River, Wyche Pavilion in Greenville, SC.
- Creative functional, attractive, cohesive preservation
- Remove some buildings to enhance others
- Enhance natural features
- Usage: Magnet school, Community college space, Cooking class space, Retreat centers/camp
- Possible new construction is okay
- Value added to a building
- Mission of a building should be either educational or recreational
- Have a building telling the story of mental health
- Give preference to non-profits that work on mental health care
- Keep views of downtown-careful with the height of buildings
- Honor Dorothea Dix
- Any possible archeological opportunities?
- Community inclusion through programs
- Civic Gathering Space
- Green/sustainable buildings
- Places for art therapy
- Ground leases can be key for revenue
- Offer both active and passive uses
- The Village at Grand Traverse Commons is a good example
- Make the park broadly appealing

- Put the Parks and Rec offices out there as well as welcome center
- Museum of Mental Health
- Affordable housing for city workers
- Mental health museum
- Commercial rental space for weddings
- Train station in the park
- Underground parking only
- Have a park ranger house
- Leave walls where possible and make a garden building
- Reuse materials for sidewalks- bricks, etc.
- Sell or donate all doors/windows to Habitat for Humanity
- Use gardens as resources for food
- Have a public art contest using materials found in the destroyed buildings-have people design the entrance sign to the park.
- Height of buildings should not block the views
- Transportation is KEY- have a tram connecting to downtown
- Keep lots of green space
- Have rentable event areas
- Have temporary work areas for startups
- Have rehearsal/practice rooms/cabins like in Interlochen, Michigan
- Temporary occupants of current buildings for now to generate money
- Mental Health Museum
- No residential
- Convention space/meeting space
- Fewer buildings
- Vistas
- Cost benefit analysis by seeing: Buildings that can 100% go? Ones that the city/partners can use now? Wait and see?
- Buildings could temporarily be city staff office space while the municipal building is being rebuilt
- Allow for flexibility in building space since we cannot predict the future trends or technology needs.
- 20% of the buildings can pay for 80% of the park
- Focus on the park to serve mental health needs through nature
- Have some low-cost food options at the park
- Think in terms of phased development-critical to have a long-term vision
- Look at successful projects like the presidio, Traverse City, Buffalo, Western State Hospital
- We can have a bucolic park AND keep the buildings with a variety of uses. They can coexist.
- Make the park broadly appealing
- Buildings represent the solid and best potential for revenue and to sustain the park
- We have no/little available non-“class-A” space anymore. Shops, spaces, performance locations, housing. The city can’t do much to stop or mitigate private development to meet this critical need but the city has tremendous potential to meet this need through Dix Park.

Questions for the design team:

- How do we create a space that adapts and evolves with the changing place and needs of the community?
- Which buildings have the most challenging mitigation and renovation? Which buildings have significant history? How do you define what is “significant history”?
- What are the appropriate uses for the existing or new buildings?
- What is the business model for the park? Capitol, operating models to help realize the redevelopment potentials? Private vs. Public money goals?
- Could this be a Chautauqua, NY model to use the building?
- How much residential would be appropriate for the park?
- How much commercial would be appropriate for the park?
- What is useful and what is not in terms of existing buildings?
- What is the vision for the park?

Discussion Question #2: In your personal experience, what is an example from Raleigh or anywhere in the world where buildings in a public park had a positive impact on your visit?

What kinds of activities took place inside those buildings? Specific examples:

- Epcot Ball as an iconic image
- Arch in St. Louis
- The Bean in Chicago
- The glass pyramid like in Paris
- An iconic structure like how Pullen has the carousel
- Eiffel Tower as a visual focal point-people spend as much time lying on the lawn looking up at it as they do climbing it.
- WWI Exhibit in Kansas City
- Mordecai reenactments in the buildings
- Golden Gate Park-California Academy of Sciences and de-young museum-both buildings are very nature-centric. The Cal Academy has an undulating green roof that helps bring in cool air to the building and the De Young Museum has a copper exterior coating that will turn green over time as it oxidizes.
- Met Museum
- National Mall
- Red Rocks in Colorado
- City Park in New Orleans
- Nathaniel Hall in Boston
- American Tobacco Space in Durham
- Parthenon in Nashville
- Music rehearsal cabins like at Interlochen in Michigan
- Chihuly Museum in Seattle -glasswork/greenhouse
- Reedy River Falls in Greenville
- US Arboretum in DC -Has old pillars from the US Capitol that serve as an architectural feature

- Renovated Prison in Virginia the workhouse art center
- Consider old US Military installations-what happens to them when they close and how are they renovated
- Balboa Park
- The Met in NY
- Zilker Botanical Gardens for its views of downtown Austin
- DC Capital Visitors Center
- Grant Park and the buildings like the planetarium
- Munich Olympic Sites made to public spaces
- Lawrence Halprin Interactive Fountains
- Chastain Park- amphitheater for off Broadway productions
- Eden Park in Cincinnati Ohio -Krohn's buildings blend into surrounding
- Place for kids and parents - like in Rotterdam Plaswijckpark
- The Bay Model museum in San Francisco area
- Greenhouse in Rockford Illinois
- Gardens by the bay in Singapore
- Barcelona's parks have some great views of the city
- Forest Park in Saint Louis
- Oslo Opera House
- Mecanoo's TU Delft Library with sweeping Green Roof
- Denali National Park Hotel - for luxurious stays
- Kew Gardens and greenhouse in England
- Rotunda gives good view of Balboa park
- Raleigh's theater in the park is a beautiful reuse of buildings
- St. Petersburg Russia museums
- City Museums with scale model of the city
- Free museums like at National Mall
- River surfing like in Munich
- Dance Space building in Milan
- Building ruins that create a maze in the park like Pamplona fortress
- Treehouse/cabin-like building like the Honey Suckle Tea House in Carrboro, NC
- If residential, have it be co-housing buildings like Bau-und Wohngenossenschaft Spreefeld in East Berlin.
- Outdoor café like Prinzessinnengärten Garten in Berlin
- Open Air Cinema like Holzmarkt25 in Berlin
- Yellowstone National Park buildings - parkitecture movement/style
- Integrate landscape into buildings like Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Water

Additional Wants for the Park:

- Indoor and outdoor performance spaces
- Conservatory
- Swimming pool
- Accommodate old and young

- Community gatherings
- Rehabilitative hospital
- Greenhouse
- Agrarian components
- Sports
- Murals on the Buildings
- Botanic Garden
- Kiosk for renting soccer balls, picnic blankets, frisbees, lawn games, etc.
- Movie WWII
- Wall for watching March Madness games
- Telescope
- Public Art
- Conservatory
- Museum
- Highline Food Hall
- Haunted Tour
- Boat Houses
- The more cultural features you pull to Dix Park the more you may drain resources from other places
- Botanical Gardens
- Fairmount Park
- Viewing tower
- Treehouse
- Good buildings in parks provide seamless transitions
- Small open structures
- Planetarium
- Skating Rink
- The bean
- Outdoor music
- Beer gardens by dog park areas so you can drink a beer, socialize and watch your dog play
- Gear shop for fixing broken bikes
- Tethered boat for kids to practice paddling
- Natural play space in Fayetteville NC—for Military kids
- Rent bikes or kayaks
- A viewing tower
- Stargazing space
- Buildings bring people to the park at night which will help with safety
- Spaces for-incubators, jobs, tech, urban ag., artists in residency
- Farmers market
- Shelter from the weather
- Shade
- Something spectacular
- A way to tour the park

- Water
- Safe places
- Park at night
- Incubator space
- Urban ag
- Artists in residence
- Giant parking garage for bikes
- Indoor play space
- Museums
- Water elements
- Ferris Wheel
- Markets
- Event Space
- Entertainment and performance venue
- Educational Displays
- Parties and Event Spaces
- Indoor outdoor flexible space
- Amphitheater
- Paintball
- Labyrinth
- Food Hall