

Dorothea Dix Park

Master Plan Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, August 8, 2018
Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm
Location: Walnut Creek Wetland Center

Meeting Agenda

6:00pm	Welcome & Updates
6:15pm	Discussion on Master Plan Principles
7:15pm	Breakout & Discussion on Theme Principles
7:45pm	Closing Thoughts & Next Steps
8:00pm	Meeting Close

The Master Plan Advisory Committee meeting began with an update on upcoming events at the park, a call for volunteers at upcoming events, the latest boost in social media stats from the sunflowers, and an update on the summer youth engagement process. Kate Pearce then introduced the Overarching Principles worksheet from MVVA. The committee worked in groups to review and discuss the principals. Their comments on each of the principals are below.

Principle 1: Bring Everyone together at Dix Park

- 1) **Dorothea Dix Park embraces its specialness as a large park in the heart of Raleigh and North Carolina to become:**
 - a) **A welcoming place to be enjoyed by everyone in the city and the region**
 - b) **A welcoming place in the capital to be enjoyed by everyone in the state**

The committee agreed that Dix Park should be a welcoming gathering place for all, yet also believed that the wording of this principal needs to be more specific and more inclusive.

- “The wording is too generic. You could take out the name ‘Dix Park’ and it could apply to any park. It needs to reference the specific site.”
- “It would be nice to have a vision that creates more of a story.”
- “It needs the word accessible to be included—and not only meaning accessible to those with disabilities, but also those of all socio-economic status’s too.”
- “Inclusive should be spelled out to say generations, races, nationalities and people of all abilities.”
- “There is not enough tie to the history of the land.”
- “There should be a better term than ‘specialness.’”

- 2) **Dorothea Dix Park supports diverse activities that offer something for everybody:**
 - a) **Meaningful, engaging and inclusive spaces for cultural events and activities**
 - b) **Meaningful, engaging and inclusive spaces for the enjoyment of nature, solitude, and reflection**

The committee agreed that Dix Park should support diverse activities and stated that it should provide even more for the city.

- “The space should foster creativity. We believe it should focus on creativity, expression, and mental health. The terms we chose to focus on are renewal, discovery, and expression. Dix should offer opportunities for all of that.”
- “The park should address already known issues in our city and our state as well. For example, youth training services. Can we train youth in the trades? How can the park be a space that people can come to help find their role/purpose in this city?”

3) Dix Park's circulation framework of walkways, multi-use paths, and roads balances access to and through the site for pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, and public transit.

The committee agreed with this sub principal statement and emphasized the need for multi-modal options. Some also were concerned about cut-throughs in the park.

- “We need to be sure that the multi-modal path has buffers to protect the pedestrian.”
- “We don’t want to create a path that encourages cars to cut through the space.”

Principle 2: Give Each Park Element its Own Voice

The committee largely agreed with the subpoints in this principal. The main comment was that legacy needs to be included in this. There was also a bit of confusion about what the tone of that voice is.

- “What is that voice we are giving? Is it loud, is it winey? We need to specify. We want Dix to be the leading voice for parks internationally.”
- “The park should focus on the overall theme of wellbeing.”
- “There aren’t many urban stresses in Raleigh, should be changed to daily stresses”
- Expanding the boundless feeling “suggesting an escape to countryside or wilderness... the park is a substitute for them. No iconic tower interruption needed.”

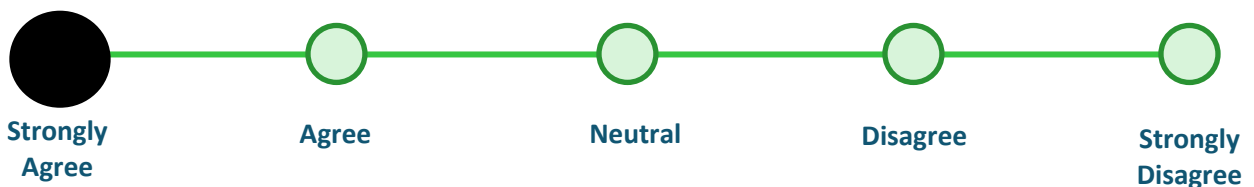
Principle 3: Be Resourceful

All groups agreed that the wording of this principle needs to change. Groups also mentioned that this is a good place to say we, as park designers and users are going to be good stewards of the buildings that we save. We also will create a place that the immediate neighbors can enjoy and benefit from.

After sharing their comments, the committee broke into groups based on the four specific topics of the overarching principals: Transportation and Circulation, Edges and Urban Design, Buildings, and Partners.

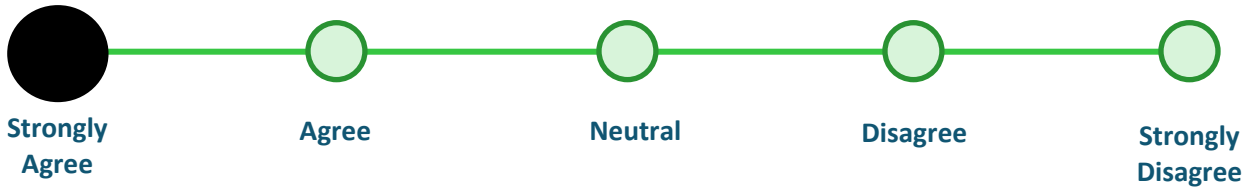
Transportation and Circulation

1. Unite the divided site with new, internal circulation routes, including a promenade loop.



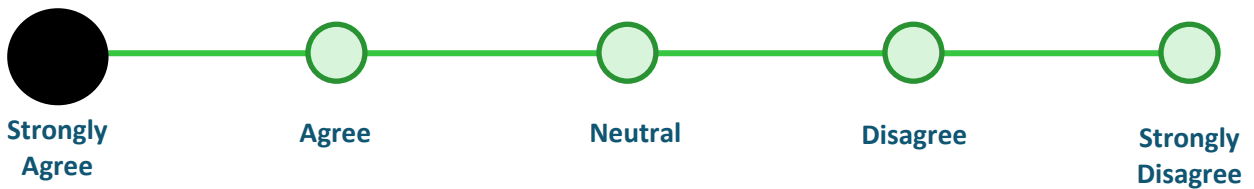
The group supported this priority but noted that, "Parking in the very center of the pedestrian loop seems like it's asking for accidents." Separation of modes is also key for the promenade loop.

2. Invest in improved public transit connections along the 3 main edges of the park - Lake Wheeler Road, Western Blvd. and Centennial Parkway.



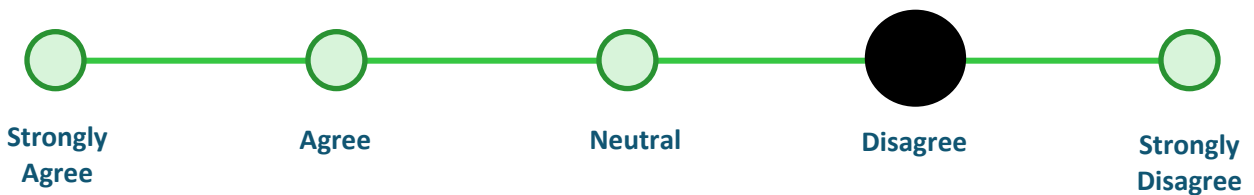
The group agreed but noted, "Be sure that added bus lines actually connect to communities in need." Additionally, if new bus routes are added, planners need to be sure that sidewalks exist in that area so that users can safely access the stops.

3. Enhance and expand greenway / multi-use trail connections within the park.



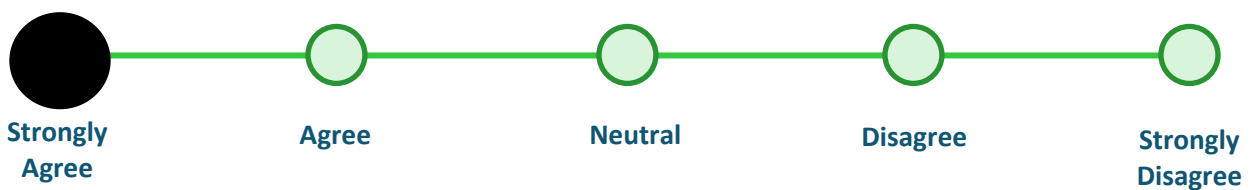
The group emphasized that the greenway expansion should be sure to create connections to the existing greenway system where connections are lacking.

4. Recognize that providing access to parking at the park is an issue of equity and key to the park welcoming visitors from across the city, the region and the state



The group disagreed with this statement. Access to the park is heavily encouraged but access to parking is not.

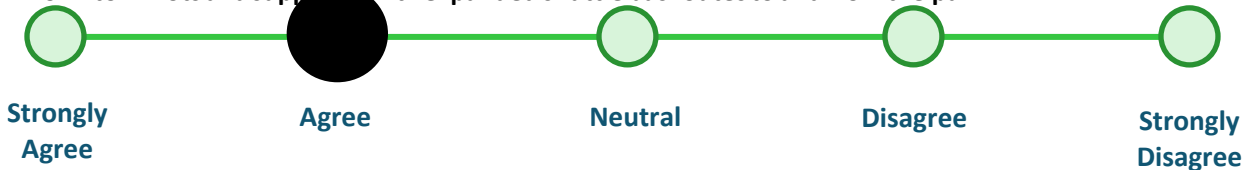
5. Organize vehicle routes within the park into "staples" that enter and exit the park along the same perimeter road. This prevents private vehicles from using the park as a "cut-through".



The group strongly agreed.

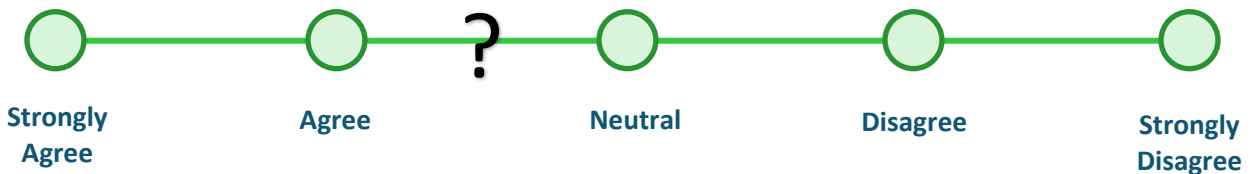
6. For everyday park use, design parking areas (not lots!) that are shaded, diversely planted, and multi-

purpose. For large events, organize parking off-site by making use of weekend availability at NC State and Downtown lots and support it with expanded shuttle bus routes to and from the park.



The group agreed this is key to success. They also noted that the Dreamville Festival will be a good indicator of off-site park-and-ride feasibility.

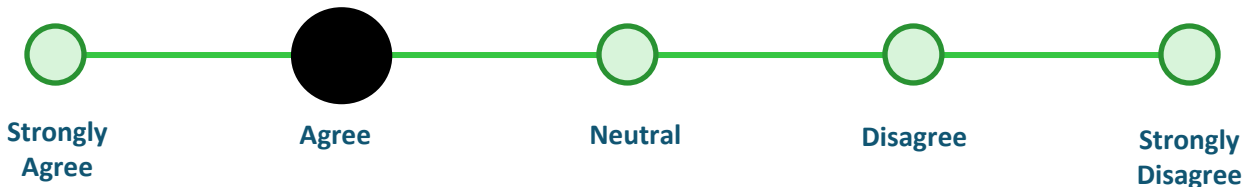
7. Manage transit and vehicular access around the site, the loop and road staples dynamically to balance access and demand from large events to low use times.



The committee agreed that this is a very confusing statement and should be reworded.

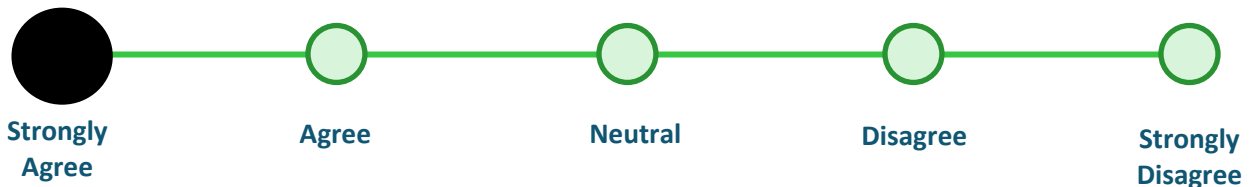
Edges and Urban Design

1. Create clear, easy to understand park edges defined [explicitly] by roads and paths.



The group agreed but questioned if we really need roads and paths to define the edges. "We mainly need roads and paths to define the entrances." These should also support/compliment the specific park are purpose.

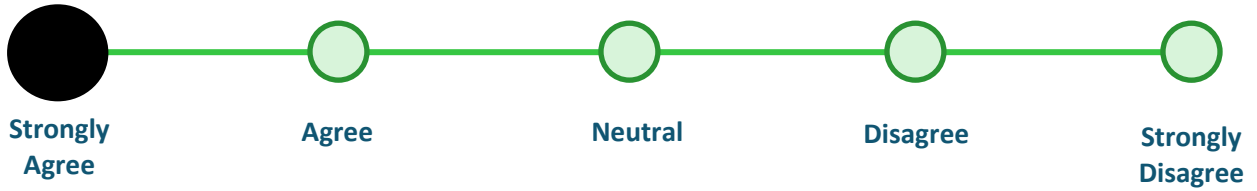
2. Create permeable park edges - visually and for pedestrians and bicyclists.



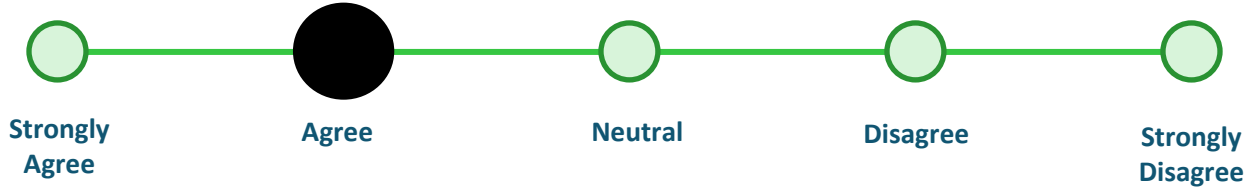
Agreed, but it should also be visually permeable to motorists so that everyone can see inside the park and understand that it is there.

"Right now, if you are driving on any of the surrounding roads, it is hard to know that the park exists."

3. Extend the character and welcome of the heart of Dix Park all the way to edge.

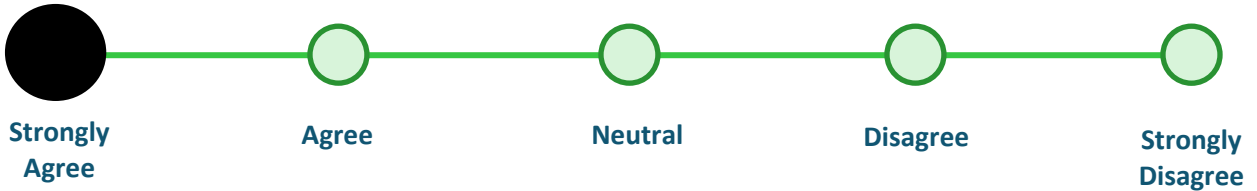


4. Having neighborhood activity - dense and diverse - taking place throughout the day and year at the park edge is essential for park safety and is to be encouraged.



Agreed in concept, but they stated that it needs some revision.
"The core of this principle seems to focus on informal surveillance. Also, we need to have a community conversation about the Fuller Heights neighborhood."

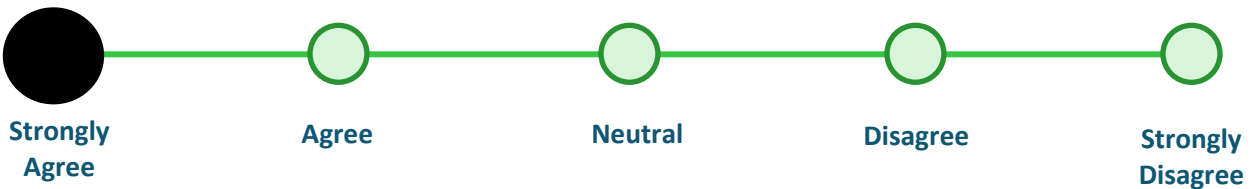
5. Design new buildings to maximize their interface with the park edge and to have ground floor development that supports the life of the park and the city. [Discourage ground floor parking.]



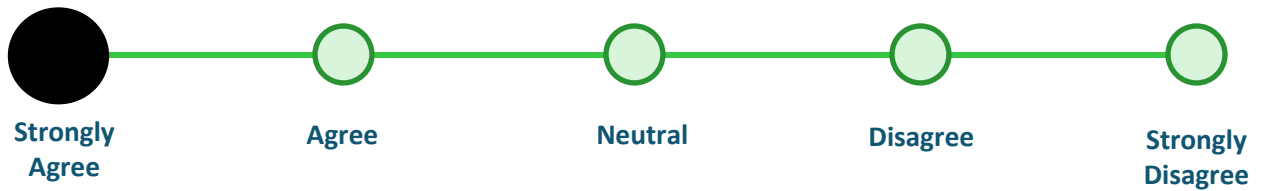
The group stated that this seems to counteract the concept of edge permeability.
"Wouldn't new buildings cut off the edge neighborhoods?"

Buildings

1. Honor A. J. Davis's positioning of the historic hospital at the top of Dix Hill and its orientation downtown Raleigh.

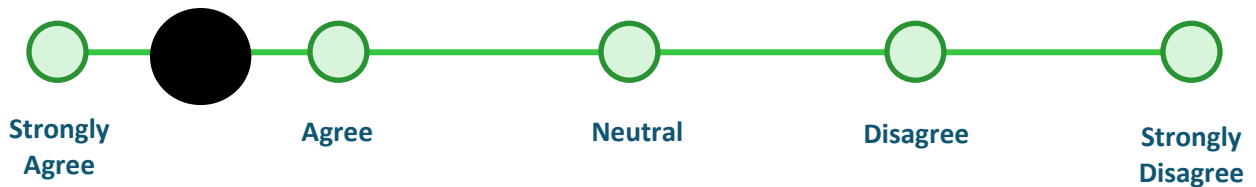


2. Understand that "rehabilitation" is the most appropriate treatment of the site's building historic resources given the site's change of use from a hospital to a park.

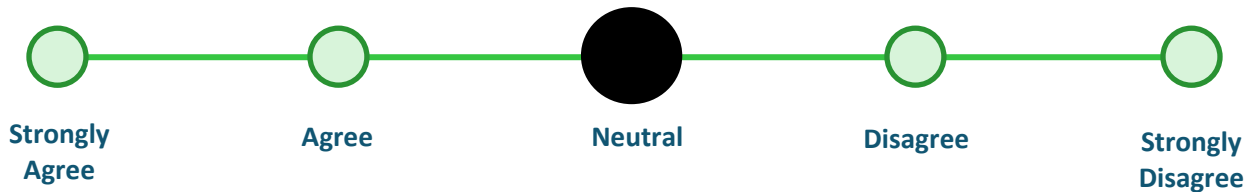


The group agreed and understood that this statement is referencing the difference between *restoration* and *rehabilitation*. Restoration being like the Mordecai House where the building was returned to its original state and function. Rehabilitation being like the American Tobacco District in Durham where the old tobacco buildings were repurposed and given a new life.

3. **Recognize that much of the hospital's history was as a campus that fostered a healing relationship to the land; enhance that relationship with selective building removal, new building uses, new programs and new landscapes.**



4. **Advocate for buildings and buildings uses in the park that contribute positively to the life of the park.**

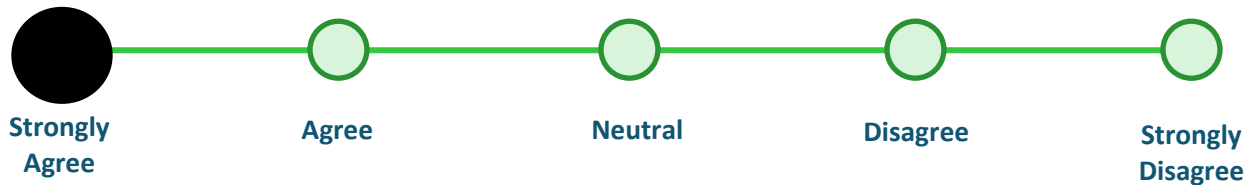


The group strongly agreed about buildings having complementary uses for the park, but was more neutral for what buildings support the financial uses of the park. "We lean more towards the buildings contributing positively to the park than towards [the buildings] making a lot of money."

Partners

1. **The park needs to develop mutually beneficial relationships with businesses, institutions and organizations that support and complement the public life of the park. Do this through...**
 - a. **A partner evaluation process that scores their prior work, stated commitment/positive contributions to Dorothea Dix Park principles, and city of Raleigh standards (MWBE, etc.).**
 - b. **With revenue-generating partners, agree to Community Benefit Agreements and Project Labor Agreements (CBA/PLA) as a condition of public park access. Examples include:**
 - i. **CBA: Ensuring event spaces are available for community and non-profit uses on agreed-to dates and times**

- ii. **CBA: Ensuring ground floor uses of new or rehabilitated buildings maintain public access and amenities (exhibition space for art or site history, bathrooms, food concessions, etc.)**
- iii. **PLA: Ensuring local workforce is invited, trained and utilized for work**
- iv. **opportunities at the park**



The group agreed but pushed on the notion of “what is a partner?” The whole group had different ideas of what a partner is. The term needs a solid structure and definition such as the following types of partners- financial, cultural, institutional, legacy, civic, tenant partners, global partners. “We need to define what type of partners we are talking about and what we are looking for in that relationship. There are different types of and intents for different types of partnership.”

The group also noted that timeframe for partnership is very important. Long-term partners (like the Farmer’s Market) vs. short-term partners (for an event or series of events). This timing should be evaluated in the partnership criteria.

After each group reported out on these comments, the meeting convened. The next meeting will be held on the evening of Wednesday, August 22nd.