

Dorothea Dix Park

Master Plan Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, August 22, 2018
Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm
Location: Walnut Creek Wetland Center

Meeting Agenda

6:00pm: Welcome & Updates

- June Report
- Schedule/Volunteer Opportunities
- Destination Study and TBJ Article

6:30pm: Review & Discussion of Guiding Principles

7:00pm: Program & Site Plan Discussion

7:45pm: Closing Thoughts & Next Meeting

- Draft Master Plan Roll Out
- Sept. 12 Joint Work Session

8:00pm: Meeting Close

Meeting Summary

The meeting began with updates. Kate Pearce announced that the next community meeting will be held at Union Station on October 4th. The committee heard about the plan for Dreamville and how this festival will be a good learning experience for the park design.

The committee then reviewed the Destination Strategic Plan for the future of tourism in Wake County. Dorothea Dix Park is mentioned in recommendation six: “Adding iconic design elements/features and unique visitor experiences to planned future development projects within wake county such as Dorothea Dix Park to draw visitors, not just provide quality of life/place benefits to residents.” The group also discussed recommendation number one that calls for an expansion of the Convention Center. This expansion would require Red Hat Amphitheater to move to a new home, perhaps at Dix Park. The current draft master plan for Dix Park proposes a large amphitheater space. MPAC members noted that if Red Hat moves to Dix Park, it should not be such a hardscaped cement venue.

MPAC members noted that we need to be sure we are communicating to the public that Dorothea Dix Park is aiming to be exceptional, not average. This led to the question of how we balance exceptional with financially feasible.

The committee broke into table group discussion about the question: “What does ‘contribute positively to the life of the park’ mean to you?” The table groups reported back the following:

- Contribute positively to the life of the city. Ex. Non-profits who may need affordable space.

- Broad accessibility and inclusiveness.
- Balance generating the necessary revenue and public space for all.
- Financial and environmental sustainability of the park.
- Contribute to wellness.
- Democratic community spaces
- Accessibility should not only mean ADA, but all incomes, cultures, and backgrounds.
- Allowing for individually.
- Not over programming. Allowing for some pastoral landscape.
- Highlight the strong history because current life of the park needs to be tied to the past life of the land.
- Diversity and inclusivity are key for the park.
- Links to partners, and collaborations with existing community anchors. How can we leverage existing positive influences in the community?
- Something different, or rare, something we can't get anywhere else—Epic or majestic. Keep it a blank canvas. Encourage healthful bodies. Allow for flexibility.
- If we put criteria we are closing options.
- We should be ready to do whatever it takes to achieve the master plan in accordance with the mission of the parks department.
- Having a whole bunch of one thing will not make it a park for all. Have a variety of activities and experiences in the park so that people keep coming back. Have additive things: Things at the park that make you stay beyond what you originally came from.
- Connect back to Dorothea Dix, and legacy of the site.
- Solitude and community.

The group then discussed the second question: "Let's talk about parking. What are the major concerns on the topic of parking?" The committee's comments are below.

- Parking areas on the site should have the ability to evolve if cars and parking become less necessary in the future.
- For peak hours, like event times, the park should share parking areas with its neighbors: Centennial Campus, Downtown, NCSU, The Farmer's Market.
- Some areas of the park should not allow any cars at all.
- The train at Union Station should connect to Dix Park since it goes through the park already.
- Technology could be used to make parking smarter and more efficient. Efficiency could help minimize the need for spots.
- Park and ride decks on the outer edge of the park or completely off-site so there are not any cars in the park.
- Keep parking on the edge of the park.
- Inter-park transit will be key so that people can get from one side of the park to the other. Could be achieved with free electric golf carts, bikes, scooters, a small train through the park.
- Just because its parking in the first five years of the park does not mean that it can't evolve as the park evolve
- Some were against the circular parking space near the big field.

Discussion ended and Kate assigned homework to the committee: Go through the questions in The Park and Its Program packet and share your answers. MPAC members will be sent a google sheet to respond to the questions.