

Morgan Junction Park Public Meeting #2, January 15, 2008
(AKA the Substation Park, Beveridge Place Park and the Monorail Station Park)
Q = a question or comment from a citizen
A = response from Parks staff or the HBD team

Virginia Hassenger, Project Manager, opened the meeting. She says the park has not been officially named, the Morgan Junction Park name is just a working name, the real naming will come after the design phase, as that might help with the naming. She provided a handout with the history of the park and then covered the budget. There is \$236,000 for construction, and with design and planning costs, the total budget is \$367,000.

Tonight we'll be seeing three schematic concepts that were taken from the ideas collected at the first public meeting back in March 2007. The project team for Morgan is HBD Landscape Architects. We will be taking input from tonight's meeting back for the project team and parks staff to finalize the schematic, and then there will be a 3rd public meeting. After that review, the final design documents will be produced (see the handout for the full timeline).

Dean from HBD made some general comments about the site and the process tonight. After going over the 3 schematics, we'll break up into groups and each group will discuss all 3 of the proposals. About the site, it's approximately 25 to 26,000 sq ft. It's currently on a sloped site, draining to the west. There are no overhead wires to deal with, and the site has good southern exposure and good drainage.

Q What about hazardous waste clean up at the site?

A (from Gary Sink, who sold the property to the City) Gary and the city shared the cost of cleanup of the site to remove the contamination. What's there now is clean fill.

Dean began the review of the 3 concepts:

Pianoforte:

It's ADA compliant, buffers the neighbors to the west, has seating in the southwest, big design feature trees in the NE and SE corners, hardscape along California, a sloped path going north/south and a large lawn area banded by concrete. There is lighting in 3 locations.

Q Is there art?

A We don't have that in the current design, but are allocating space, will be able to work this with community groups.

Terrazze

Has buffering and berm on west, lawn masses are on the north and south, with low rise terracing on the north side. Hardscaping fronts California, big tree in NE corner, this one has a 10,000 sq ft plaza that is somewhat off center and elliptical shaped, with bench seating around the edges. The lighting is on a single pole, with 3 fixtures aimed at different parts of the park.

Q The terracing, it looks like it reduces lawn space, especially for kids.

A Yes, it does take up space.

Q What is the material for the central plaza?

A That's open for discussion, maybe concrete, maybe packed gravel.

Q What type of connection is there to the north?

A There is no barrier or fence, it goes right into the asphalt.

Q What's the maintenance plan for the lawn?

A The Parks dept will have to sign off on this.

Q What about porous concrete for the plaza.

A Not sure, that's somewhat an odd material.

Affodante

This design has the largest plaza type space, in the center of the park, about 14,000 sq ft, and the suggested material is gravel or crushed rock, packed hard. There is still buffering on the west side, but now there is also a rain garden feature on the west as well. Big tree in the NE corner, not as much hardscape next to California, it's basically a big ramp leading down to the central area. Boulders are scattered around the central area for seating/playing. The lawn space is minimal in this design. The lighting is from 3 columns, clustered together.

Q What about bathrooms?

A No, no space nor budget.

Q How hard is hard for the central area?

A ADA compacted type so you can push a wheelchair on it.

Then there were some more general questions from the group:

Q What was your thinking behind the different designs.

A We took the record of the first workshop and distilled it down in to different areas of design.

- Looked at security and safety, and a feeling of not being too enclosed, but still open.
- Sustainability, that's where the rain gardens come in.
- Flexible use.
- Mixed options between softscape options (grass) and hardscape options.
- Arbor structures, seating options, different areas for seating, especially along lower walls.
- Furnishings.
- And how do you create useable space with a slope.
- Considerations for what's going on adjacent to the park.

Q I remember gathering place like a plaza for the feel (?)

Q Which one of these designs has considerations to buffer SHA housing to the west?

A All of them have trees and shrubbery to help do that.

Q What's the traffic count on California?

A We don't know that number.

Q What's the dimension on the north side of the park?

A 126 feet.

Q Thinking about the future of the north border and the laundry site, it's hard to plan when you don't know what will replace the laundry.

After asking if there were any more clarifying questions, the room was broken up into 4 working groups. Each group was supposed to go through all 3 designs and each person say what they liked and then didn't like about each of the designs. There would be a volunteer from each table who summarized the comments written on flip charts.

Very rough notes from the verbal report outs:

Group 1

Many "likes" that could be used in all proposals.

More green space/lawn.

Strong buffers to the north and west

Less buffer on the south, because they expect that Beveridge Place Pub would install their own.

More separation from California traffic

The Terrazze design had a good balance of hard and soft features, and was more multi use (for events).

Everyone liked the rocks to sit on.

Liked sustainability in any design, liked the bio swale.

Also: use of color, have a kiosk, use native plants, have a water feature.

Suggested that the Street Ends program could be tapped to help with this, possibly for funding?

Report out was that there was no single overwhelming favorite, but they seemed split between Terrazze and Affodante.

Group 2 (ed note, sorry, this was my group and I forgot to take good notes!)

There was much good discussion, and we morphed several features from the different designs into one we liked best. Mostly came from the Pianoforte and Affodante options, the Terrazze was voted "out"

Group 3

Were split between Pianoforte and Terrazze. Liked the arbors, want more north buffer, liked the trees. They thought the Pianoforte would keep kids separated from the street more. Liked the mix of both hard and soft spaces in all three.

Group 4

Affodante was favored, but mostly it was picked for its low amount of lawn. Some in the group didn't think having wet lawn a good part of the year was very attractive. Liked the boulders, if there were flat enough to be comfortable to sit on. North side might need a flexible border, so it can be adapted to future land use on the north. Liked arbors, would like to add a info kiosk that talks about the history of the area.

Q How are you going to use this data?

A We are going to take all the notes from today, compile all the scribbles and amendments from groups and blend it into a single design that tries to incorporate all. This is a gauge of where everyone's initial reaction was at.

To summarize, staff tried to get all the elements identified that everyone could agree on (I think we got only part way through trying to do this, because more new ideas kept popping up). What was recorded before the meeting had to end:

Diffused lighting

Specimen tree (in the NE corner)

Boulders and mixed seating in the landscape, and in different sizes.

Flexible northern border.

Kiosk

Arbors

A tree in the SE corner.

“C” shaped buffer (along California?)

Rain garden (? Not sure, my notes dissolved here)

There was an attempt to see which designs people favored, each person got 2 votes

Affodante got 21 votes

Pianoforte got 29 votes

Terrazze got 13 votes.