CITY OF GOLDEN
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2013
7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Torsten Lyon
Laura Weinberg
Jerry Hodgden
Emmy Dimitroff
Craig Middleton
Jerry Harcek
Pete Gotseff
Stephanie Sung

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Amber Thill, Parks and Recreation Analyst
Rod Tarullo, Director of Parks, Recreation and Golf
Paul Kuhn, Landscape Architect MIG Winston

PUBLIC: Norman D Park area residents

ROLL CALL:
Jerry Hodgden, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, called the meeting to
order at 7:00p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
The Agenda was approved on a motion by Emmy Dimitroff, seconded by Torsten Lyon, and
carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
The Minutes of March 19, 2013 were approved on a motion by Jerry Harcek, seconded by
Laura Weinberg, and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Jerry Hodgden thanked the public for attending the meeting tonight to give input.

NORMAN D PARK PLAYGROUND DISCUSSION:
Rod Tarullo opened the discussion. He said several attendees are familiar faces and have
come to the meet with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board before; we appreciate your
interest and your time.
We have passed the Norman D Park survey results to Paul Kuhn, a Landscape Architect from MIG Winston. He has put together information as a starting point. We hope to get your responses to some preliminary concepts. On May 7, based on your feedback tonight, we will further refine the concept and get some additional input. We will then be off to the races! We have budgeted about $100,000 for this project. Rod then turned time over to Paul Kuhn.

Paul Kuhn said we don’t have an elaborate presentation; we want you to review the drawings here tonight and give us your input on play elements and overall playground design. The information will also be on the website at www.cityofgolden.net/links/normandpark. Hopefully we have responded to what we heard in the survey. We will have to take into consideration accessibility and safety standards as well. Lastly we have play equipment ideas and examples to show you. We would like people to place dots next to features they like. Place the dots off to the side of the image so that we keep it viewable. We are in the beginning of the design process so you probably won’t see the exact same pieces of equipment; this gives us a general idea of what you might like.

Rod asked if there were questions about the process. A question was asked “What is the goal of this process?” Rod said our budget doesn’t allow for a complete renovation of the park. This process began over a year ago with public requests for upgrades to the playground. The primary goal is just a renovation to the playground. We do not plan to create an ice arena in the park. A question was asked “Will the parking area change?” Rod said that is not the intent. Rod said there have been ideas and suggestions that are beyond the playground and we will keep them in mind should we be in the budgetary position to address them in the future. They may include expanded parking, a basketball court, horse shoes, etc.

Rod said we are very interested in the types of features you like, spatially the design, and surface needs. Some of the other things you might consider are themes and colors. Do you want natural features?. Another element is safety. The safety surface that we put out there is very important. Poured in Play surface like what you see at Lion’s Playground are very accessible for those of all abilities. This surface can be expensive, but we could have some elements that are sand surface as well.

Jerry Hodgden commented he also brought some ideas to the meeting. He has several climbing features in mind that can be discussed tonight. Jerry said we can climb over a rock, between rocks, and sometimes to access another play area. Rod included these features for comment by the public.

*The group took 20 minutes to view the concepts and playground features and vote on what the liked.*

Rod said one thing that is interesting about a public process like this is a lot of perspectives and viewpoints. To recap what we have heard tonight. With regards to the overall park
concept, we are hearing we need a porta potty closer to the play area. There is a desire to expand to the north. There are votes for sand volleyball and lights along the trail. A question was asked “What would lights cost?” Rod said lights are not cheap. Some people like lights and some do not. Generally in Golden have not put lights in the neighborhood play areas. Other comments included more sand, an archery range, nacho bar, several additional requests for lights, and stair to the creek.

Craig Middleton asked about the creek, what was city property. Rod said he needs to go back and look. We had the rock monument that was donated a few years ago; they wanted to do a rock sculpture on the north side of the sidewalk. We received a lot of push back from the storm drainage staff here at the city.

A comment was made that a lot of kids end up at the bus stop by the Norman D parking lot and a lot of them enjoy playing in the culvert. Mountain lions are also in that area. Rod said pushing the park north may not be part of the scope of this project to improve the play area. Rod said some people love to go to the north, not having it developed can sometimes add to the adventure.

A question was asked “Will the City refurbish any of the existing play equipment?” Rod said it would be a replacement; it is actually our oldest play structure at 25 years.

Jerry Hodgden mentioned kids enjoy bicycling into the park. Jerry Harcek said he would like to see some single track trail going through the park to allow a loop around the playground. The public liked that idea.

The playground concept was then discussed. Suggestions included more porta potties, kids swings, a trike path, a half basketball court, no lights, an enclosed loop around the park, and several liked the added benches and picnic table. New slides were requested and several requests for a basketball court. Rod said let’s talk about basketball courts. This park is classified as a neighborhood park in our system; keep in mind what happens to the culture of a park is based on what you put in. A half basketball court would be really fun for teenagers and adults. It would change the culture of this park. It would also likely attract more people to the playground. Rod said we also likely cannot afford it in our budget, they are not inexpensive. Rod said what you can expect when a new structure comes into this park is many people from all over town will likely come to check out the new park. There are groups in Golden that rotate between parks. You can expect more people from outside the neighborhoods, especially if you have awesome and unique features.

A comment was made from a lady who has two teen age boys. She said if you put in a single track trail, basketball courts, etc., the park would be very different. She said she loves the feel of this park but she also wants to keep it for the younger kids and keep it a neighborhood park.
There was a comment that birthday parties get very competitive, if you don’t stake your claim at 8 am in the summer the pavilion is gone. It would be great to have another pavilion closer to the playground. Comments were made suggesting just adding more picnic tables instead of a pavilion could help and be less expensive.

Rod said around the country we are seeing a lot more people put shade around play structures. Do any of you have feelings about additional shade over the play area? We won’t be moving any trees. The group agreed we weren’t going to need a shade structure. Adding trees along the east side of the new trike trail would help shade in the mornings.

Rod said the area of impact is not much bigger, we are leaving the open park area as we have heard it is important.

People liked play elements including rock climbing, more benches, volleyball, and water for the sand. Rod asked who liked primary colors and who wanted natural colors. Most wanted natural colors. There were several requests for big kid swings. A comment was made that the water fountain and bathroom is too far away.

Rod said to determine play features to add for the next concept; we will use the dots you have provided to make some selections. We also had comments on natural climbing features. Rod said if we had to have one or the other, a multiple rock formation connected with ropes versus a modern play structure how many would rather have the rocks? Most votes were rocks; some wanted both a traditional playground and some climbing rocks.

There was a comment that the tunnel is very eroded; if you look at the picture it could be quite a bit higher. A comment was made about replacing the tunnel with a rock feature. The tube is getting muddy and nasty. Perhaps it can be replaced with another element. Replacing the tunnel with a new one was also favored.

A comment was made that the poured in place was cost prohibitive. After it rains the sand is so gross it isn’t used. Rod said from a play purpose we may not want a poured in play surface everywhere. If we have some sand areas we can improve drainage with a renovation and it won’t be as bad. Everyone was comfortable with a mixed sand and poured in play surface. A question was asked about the timing on this project. Rod said our hope is that we can get consensus from everyone at the May 7th Final Concept meeting and get started in order to have improvements complete for the summer. The funding is currently set aside.

Paul Kuhn said most of the climbing structures would be comparable to a large play structure such running around $30,000 or so. Some have a rock and climbing structure connected to a more traditional playground. One of the kids in attendance suggested the single track bike path be on the north side of the creek to keep some division from the play area. The group liked the idea.
Another comment was given about making the playground have character and be unique. Most of the group was okay with a more unique playground even with the increased traffic. There were some comments about not attracting people from outside the neighborhood.

There were several additional comments to try to keep the park a local neighborhood park.

Torsten said he was really glad that Jerry Hodgden brought some additional concepts. We need to be very careful not to create a regional draw in this park. Jerry Hodgden said he agreed but if you want your park unique then there will be some initial increased use.

Jerry Harcek said if we are going around the City improving parks, let’s not replace these structures with the same old play elements.

Torsten said his only other comment would be to complete some research on real rocks versus synthetic rocks. Going back to previous Board discussions, some real rocks that are actually fairly high would address multigenerational play needs.

Craig said the area by the culvert could have more climbing features with a more traditional playground in the existing footprint. Laura said she is not sure people would be happy without some traditional features such as swings, monkey bars, and slides.

Rod said we need to replace what is there; it has had its useful life. Jerry Hodgden said perhaps the snake/balance beam could be saved. Rod said he heard tonight it might be nearing the end of its useful safe life. Paul said it can be recycled, the rubber holding the snake together may not last. We can upgrade it with a new balance beam likely for much less cost.

Peter Gotseff said the City of Golden has Discovery Park in town which is special. Emmy said they use it a lot. Rod said that is a good observation, it is very unique yet minimally used. Emmy said when her kids were smaller they wanted the swings and slide. Now that they are older they like it more. Rod said the high school kids use it as well.

Pete also commented there is an unrepresented group who lives in Mesa Meadows. Do we need reading chairs and quiet places? The fact is there is an aging population and there should be amenities for them as well. The Board agreed.

There was a comment regarding chess tables that could be attractive in a quiet place in this park. Craig said there are Golden Pond residents who use the park. Laura said we talked about quiet spaces in Vanover Park as well. She said maybe we need to talk about it whenever we refurbish a park. Laura said there were comments tonight about more picnic tables. Laura said let’s look at the chess tables. Torsten said the smaller tables don’t attract the birthday parties. Rod said they often are not popular in neighborhood parks. The chess tables will work in more urban areas such as Vanover.
Torsten said he liked Jerry Harcek’s suggestion of a single track trail. It could create a loop and is an inexpensive, attractive idea. Jerry Harcek said the track going across the creek and just connecting to the park would be great. Torsten said it would increase the size of the park.

Emmy said her thought on the culvert or the tunnel would be the cement culvert isn’t supposed to be a piece of the playground which then invites adventure play. It would be a trade-off versus a manufactured tube.

Paul Kuhn said the fabricated rock provides hand holds and features that allow it to be climbable. Torsten said you want to find a rock that is challenging, perhaps one side for an 8 year old and one side for a 28 year old. Rod said we can custom a rock and look for a real rock though it could be challenging to find.

Laura said there were a lot of amenity requests for picnic tables, lights, benches, more trees, etc. What type of balance are we going for?

Craig said one porta potty for a park this size is plenty. Rod said if it’s a neighborhood park there are restrooms available in close proximity to their homes. Laura said the problem is it’s all the way at the front of the park which is a long way to go for a 3 year old. Rod said it has to be serviced by a truck which comes into play.

Rod said the intent is to have an area for 2-5 year olds and an area for older kids. Jerry Hodgden said we need to make a decision as to how we want to divide features. What will be special and which will be traditional. Pete said that’s up to the neighborhood.

Rod said with modern features and new construction accessibility is a high priority.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Rod said Paul Burkholder has been working on play equipment for Vanover Park. He has also been working with Paul Kuhn on an entry sign and table. We are interested in any feedback you have on either of these. Torsten asked if we needed a Vanover sign at all. Laura said she liked the look of the sign, but would rather save budget.

The Board liked the table but not the sign. Rod asked for comments on the park features. The Board was very much in favor of the musical play but not the metal structures. Rod asked what the Board thought about the climbing structures. Everyone liked the climbing structure that looks like a tree.

Craig Middleton asked about the park downtown between 11th and 12th Street. Rod said GURA developed the park. Craig said it would be perfect with a water feature. It doesn’t get used at all.
ADJOURN:
A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Torsten Lyon, seconded by Jerry Harcek, and carried unanimously.