

## City of Concord Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes from March 22, 2018 Special Meeting with Friend of White Park at West Street Ward House

**Committee Members:** Mary Miller - Chair, City Councilor Candace White Bouchard, Nick Kotkowski, Althea Barton, Lauren Flieder, Stacey Brown and Marilyn Frazer

**Staff Members:** David Gill; Parks and Recreation Director, Heather Shank; City Planner and Chris Jacques; Grounds Superintendent

**Guests:** Stacey Brown (hopeful Ward 5 Rep). Friends of White Park Members: Sarah Sadowski, Evan Mulholland, Deodonne Bhattarai, Mose Jones-Yellin (FWP guest) and Sarah Beauregard

Meeting was called to order by Chair Mary Miller

Mary asked for the Friends of White Park to give an overview on the information they are gathering regarding possible Monkey Around Playground replacement.

Sarah S indicated they have been busy gathering information and getting organized.

They have 5 proposals from playground companies

They have asked for plans that are “all inclusive” and not just ADA

Mary asked for folks who do not know what is the difference between ADA and all inclusive playgrounds? Sarah indicated by law all playgrounds need to be ADA however all inclusive is a playground that is fully accessible for everyone. She highlighted some of the drawings provide by the companies.

City Councilor Bouchard asked how detailed concepts are. Evan indicated they received a copy of the square foot area of the playground from Chris and the current area around 14,000 square feet. The handouts of the playgrounds are examples of what might be possible at White Park. Evan indicated their goal is to have another destination playground at White Park

Sarah B gave a History of the Playground and the children of Concord helped with the design of it. Their goal is to have another community build and to make the new playground be all inclusive.

Althea asked will the new playground continue to have hidden spaces as she loved that about Monkey Around – other playgrounds in Concord do not have the same experience. David indicated that will depend on community input however many new playgrounds are not built the same way anymore.

Althea also asked is White Park the best location for an all inclusion playground. Is a park like Terrill Park with its connection to MRGT a better location (maybe have two all-inclusive playgrounds). Sarah S thought Terrill Park is a hard sell as it is not a nice park and not a park that is safe.

Mary asked why the Friends of White Park is asking City Council for support of a \$500,000 playground when the city has not had any public meetings on the playground. Evan indicated based on the proposals they have received and in talking with the playground vendors this is a more reasonable number for an all-inclusive playground and with the pour rubber surfacing.

Stacy commented if we are supporting \$500,000 all-inclusive playground Terrill Park might be a better location for Concord's first all-inclusive playground. More space, better access and connection to future greenway trail.

Mary asked David what the next steps are:

- Friends of White Park are confirming their Tax ID with the State and Feds. The city will need to confirm their nonprofit status is in good standing before possible partnership.
- He indicated once they have everything in place the Friends of White Park would need to work with City Admin and City Council on next steps.
- With the city using tax payers' dollars once they move forward we will have to have posted public meetings before a final plan is presented. Heather also indicated we would have to go to Planning Board with final plan. The final playground concept will also need to be approved by City Council and we will need to show community input and support for final recommendation.

Mary thanked the Friends of White Park members for the information and looks forward to having the group back when they are ready. Even indicated they hope to be back this summer with another update.