

Rosslyn Process Panel (RPP) Subcommittee on Parks + Open Space Meeting Summary

September 22, 2014; 7:00-9:30 pm

2100 Clarendon Blvd., Room 311

Subcommittee Members in Attendance: P. Holland (Chair), K. Elmore, E. Gearin, S. Greene, P. Greenwald, P. Hage, J. Hensley, K. K. Morris, M. Novotny, S. Stein

Staff in Attendance: A. Fusarelli, M. Ladd, E. Kays, E. Beach, L. Aljabar (B. Carlson, E. Rhodeside)

1. Welcome

2. Existing Parks and Open Space Context

- Park's existing analysis doesn't include assessment of urban recreation opportunities, such as yoga, dance classes, and urban recreation;
- One of the challenges to existing spaces is also the lack of sociability, such as adjacent cafes, seating, and programming;

3. Rosslyn Plan Framework Guidance

- The framework map footnote suggests more potential open space at Wilson School than is currently being considered; this may mean we need more active recreation opportunities in central Rosslyn

4. Park Space Types and Identities

- Problem with Dark Star Park is too much traffic around it, hard to enjoy it; would be nice to introduce more activities to it;
- Dark Star Park is an extraordinary artwork, but it is unappealing as a park space;
- Support idea of more seating in Dark Star Park; less expensive than other proposed improvements;
- This reiterates what the BID hears from its stakeholders; a lot is hidden in plain sight today, but not many opportunities to enjoy the parks that are there;
- Gateway Park doesn't feel inviting; it is not a place you would visit other than for organized events;
- Fixing Gateway Park should be the highest priority;
- How do we bring the Potomac River into Rosslyn?
- Important to enhance views of monuments from Freedom Park;
- Graphics should show linkages to green spaces outside study boundary: Iwo Jima, Roosevelt Island, more active recreation (soccer fields);
- Gateway Park needs parking, either through partnering with property owners or provided on-street;
- Esplanade adjacent to Rosslyn Plaza would not have river views or access to river; should not oversell it;
- We need to create opportunities to link to the river from the Esplanade and other parks;
- The focus seems to be on bigger parks; also need to address smaller spaces that come with redevelopment, such as mini-plazas;
- Could opportunities for smaller spaces be identified on a map? They can provide links between the larger parks;
- The current description of the revitalization spaces focuses too much on passive nature; consider editing description to reflect the need for activation of these spaces as well;
- Include more language about multi-use spaces to serve different user groups at different times;

- 18th Street Corridor is treated as secondary in retail map (secondary active uses); should be encouraging restaurants, outdoor dining, and stores in pedestrian-oriented sections; key is to have uses beyond business hours (evenings, weekends);
- Link the transportation and open space sections of the plan together to better explain open space links;
- Gateway Park seems to be the only place to accommodate active uses; need some options on the east side of Rosslyn too;
- Think about residents along Route 50 corridor who will be walking north and south; transportation plan doesn't provide adequate pedestrian network to get you into Central Rosslyn; only 8 feet of clear sidewalk space proposed on Lynn; is this sufficient to promote walkability?
- Would like to see a more concrete idea for improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Fort Myer Drive at Dark Star Park;
- Would like to have more active uses (court and field spaces) to serve the neighborhood;
- What demographics we are expecting will be using parks?
- Whether or not children are expected to be living in Rosslyn, we need to plan recreation facilities for them; children may come to visit grandparents or others who live there;
- Rosslyn will draw people in from all over the County and the region with its amenities and transportation accessibility; need to plan parks that are attractive to visitors;
- Will developers be required to meet some park and recreation needs on-site?
- Is it possible to come up with new landscape design and lighting for Dark Star Park that respects the art?
- Proposed Oak and Clarendon Park: how would it be incorporated into the park network in a way that's meaningful to the community?
- Consider creative/inexpensive ways to activate existing parks; consider streamlined process to improve parks;

5. “Game Changer” Transformative Places

- Gateway Park
 - Rosslyn Circle is designated for a future national memorial, but that could take decades; can we have temporary improvements in the interim? Would need to reconvene talks with NPS and National Capital Planning Commission; if Gateway Park is to have more diverse uses, this site could be an opportunity to have programs that aren't in Gateway;
 - What are the next steps for implementation? After the Sector Plan Update is adopted, County will initiate master planning process; the Sector Plan Update describes the park's character and provides guidance for the master planning process;
 - On-street parking around Gateway Park would provide street calming, parking for park users, and help with retail activity; it could even be off-peak parking;
 - Support for the idea that west block of the park is more active, family recreation; east block is event space;
 - Keep sense of greenery on both sides of the park with extensive tree canopy; provide information on tree canopy goals at next meeting;
- Esplanade
 - Ownership of Rosslyn Plaza is proposing to place Arlington Ridge Road below the Esplanade to allow more open space; don't want to bisect the space with a street;
 - Concern that separating Arlington Ridge Road from the Esplanade will make it feel less like a public space;
 - Provide update on Site Plan Review Committee process for Rosslyn Plaza Phased Development Site Plan application and current thinking of street connections on Arlington Ridge Road;

- Clarify that Slide 72 shows an interim solution for the Esplanade adjacent to the 110 ramp; the ultimate proposal is to elevate the Esplanade;
- Can Esplanade map show connection to bike trail at Iwo Jima Memorial?
- Segment of Esplanade adjacent to Gateway Park only shows 16 feet of space; trees reduce it to 12 feet; consider a wider section since this is adjacent to a park.
- **Rosslyn Plaza Park**
 - Two design concepts presented to the subcommittee;
 - Streets should be labeled on graphics;
 - What are examples of comparable urban parks adjacent to high rise buildings around them?
 - Consider microclimate for the parks in each scenario;
 - Scenario 2 seems more disconnected from the center of Rosslyn; not integrated into urban landscape;
 - Neither scenario has a good connection to 18th Street;
 - Neither scenario reflects what is proposed in the applicant's site plan, which has a larger setback from the Esplanade and the opportunity for a large plaza along Kent Street;
 - Concern that retail won't be viable on the Arlington Ridge Road side in Scenario 2; retail could be focused on 18th Street with other active uses facing the parks;
 - Transportation Subcommittee discussed an opportunity to redesign the Kent Street median, which could provide additional open space along Kent Street;
 - Scenarios are missing an opportunity for 17th and 18th Streets to be pedestrian-only;
 - Want to see building form define the open space; don't want a "Wall of Rosslyn" along the river; more varied building alignments and heights are preferred;
 - Rosslyn needs a town square; Central Place is elevated, but Rosslyn Plaza would be at street level; provides an opportunity for three sided retail; prefer Scenario 1 with better building massing

6. Next Steps

- Second and final subcommittee meeting will be 10/30 at 7:00 pm.