

Project Status Report

January 22, 2002

The first public workshop held in conjunction with the development of a concept plan for Booth Park was held on January 12, 2002 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the DPS Building. Approximately 40 people were in attendance with a good cross-section of business owners, neighbors, City Commissioners, Planning Board and Park Board members and City staff. The purpose of the workshop was to gather input from residents and business owners on the development of a program for Booth Park.

Participants were given a brief presentation of the existing conditions of the site including surrounding land uses, utilities, floodplain boundaries, and amenities. Attendees were then broken up into 4 smaller groups where their objective was to discuss, program and conceptually layout a design for Booth Park and then come together as a whole to present their ideas. Participants were encouraged to design in a preliminary fashion without restricting themselves with permitting issues, cost, feasibility, etc. Time was taken with the group as a whole to answer general questions and ensure everyone's comfort level with proceeding.

A significant number of possible improvements were generated and presented by each group. Major elements/ideas included (this list is not all inclusive):

- Maintaining a balance between active and passive park use and preservation of natural resources.
- Site circulation and connectivity. More pedestrian connections throughout the park including to Old Woodward (Gallery Row), the chip trail and the City Parking lot to the south.
- Natural riverwalk and ability for people to better interact with the natural resources of the site.
- Distinct, formal gateway at the intersection of Old Woodward and Harmon with signage, seating, landscaping, gazebo, or similar structure.
- Incorporate art into the park to complement the nearby art galleries as well as the historical connection to Cranbrook.
- A more formal and secure edge along Old Woodward and Harmon.
- Improved, multi-generation play area with shade, seating, etc.
- Improve parking along Harmon.
- In-line skating area.
- Multi-purpose open green area.
- Interpretive signage regarding history, flora and fauna.

Conceptual alternatives for Booth Park will be developed over the coming weeks and will then be presented to the public at a second workshop scheduled for February 21, 2002 from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm at the DPS Building.



Meeting Summary

Public Workshop
9:00 am to 12:00 pm
Saturday, January 12, 2002
Department of Public Services

The first public workshop on the development of a conceptual plan for Booth Park was held on January 12, 2002 at the DPS Building. Approximately 40 people were in attendance including City Commissioners, Parks and Recreation Board members, City staff, neighborhood representatives, business owners and youth. (See attached sign-in sheets) The purpose of the workshop was to gather input from residents and business owners for a park development program at Booth Park. The primary goal was to seek public comment on a proposal menu of park improvements at the site in order to be able to develop a preliminary concept plan(s) to bring back to the public for further review and refinement.

As attendees came to the meeting, they signed in, were given name tags, an agenda and a color sticker, which denoted which group they would work with during the design portion of the workshop. Bob Fox began the meeting by welcoming all those in attendance and briefly described how we got to this point in the process, referencing the work and input gathered during the development of the city-wide Recreation Master Plan. In addition, Mr. Fox noted the history of the site and the Deed Restrictions that are recorded with the land. He noted that the Booth's were the founders of the Cranbrook Institute. Wade-Trim (WT) then reviewed the agenda for the meeting and the goals for the workshop. WT, aided by graphic illustrations of the site, proceeded with a short description of the existing conditions of the property including surrounding land uses, utilities, and flood plain boundaries. WT then continued to describe a site analysis that was conducted with an associated graphic illustrating the various zones (ie. passive, active) and conditions of the property including natural features, buffers, slopes, noise, congestion and parking.

WT then described the format of the workshop and explained that each of the four groups were going to discuss, program and conceptually layout a design for Booth Park and then come together as a whole to present their ideas. Participants were encouraged to design in a preliminary fashion without restricting themselves with permitting issues, cost, feasibility, etc. Time was taken with the group as a whole to answer general questions and ensure everyone's comfort level with proceeding.

Participants broke up into one of four groups based upon the sticker color they received as they signed in: Red, Purple/Green, Orange, and Yellow/Blue. Each group had approximately one and a half hours to discuss, develop and design a preliminary plan for Booth Park, after which the group as a whole came together to present (but not critique) their outcomes. The following summarizes each groups presentation:

Red Team

The Red Team indicated they thought the park should be programmed with passive uses while protecting and accentuating the natural areas. They prioritized their proposed improvements as follows:

- Turf improvements with grading and possibly irrigation. The group voiced dissatisfaction with how the site was restored after a CSO project in the mid-1990's. They indicated the grass was in terrible condition and limited the ability to use the park efficiently and safely.
- A distinct, formal entryway/gateway at the intersection of Harmon and Old Woodward with seating, art, historical markers, etc. Complement the art gallery district.



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- A formal edge/fence along Harmon and Old Woodward for aesthetic and safety concerns. ie. Wrought iron fencing.
- Natural walkway along the Rouge (may or may not be a hard surface) with bridge connections to Old Woodward and the City Parking Lot to the south. Include benches and ensure that it will connect into the bigger, city-wide and regional greenway/trail network.
- A hard surface trail within the park that is plowed in the winter. Possible health trail that is marked for distance, walking, rollerblading, etc.
- Improve the play area with shade trees, pergola, benches and tables. Make the play area natural, multi-generational and integrate more into the surroundings. Possibly including large swings and a half-court basketball area. Relocate/design ADA accessible walkway.
- Remove the backstop. The existing open space is too small for a functional ball field. Make into a multi-use, small-scale green area possibly for informal activities and tot soccer practice.

Purple/Green Team

The Purple/Green Team initially approached the task by openly brainstorming and documenting ideas from all team members, in no particular order:

- Gazebo
- Skate Park (Teen activities)
- Gateway Entrance
- River Amenities
- Seating/Picnic Dining
- Buffer zone to Old Woodward
- No Dogs or Dog-Friendly
- Gardens to provide variety
- Photo Opportunities
- Art sculpture
- Native species
- Pick-up sports / playing fields
- Designed walkways-safe, variety of surfaces, variety of modes (walking/biking)
- Small kids play
- Event space-community gathering
- Kiosks (seasonal), snacks to support community gatherings)
- Public restrooms
- Parking and drainage are issues

The goal for the site is to create a place that invites community, supports business and respectfully supports the natural/native environment/ecosystem. The purple/green team then presented their design layout which included the following elements:

- Create buffer zones along Harmon and Old Woodward.
- Incorporate art into the park possibly using the Cranbrook connection.
- Maintain a natural feel to the southern portion of the site.
- Stabilize the river bank.
- Visual entry/figurative gateway at corner of Harmon and Old Woodward. Create a show-piece and community gathering space.
- Create additional access points to the park at northwest corner (neighborhood), to Old Woodward, existing chip trail, and city parking structure.
- Design play structures that fit into the park. Artful play structures, maybe utilizing Cranbrook. Have play areas for small children and older children.
- Riverwalk that invites people to interact more with the water. Multi-purpose pressed material, but not asphalt.
- Adjust parking along Harmon to alleviate the turn around problems within the neighborhood that currently exist.
- No restrooms/kiosks.





Orange Team

The Orange Team presented the following elements for the development of Booth Park:

- Coordinated signage and entry point gateway. Historical connection to the Booth Family. Should include comfortable seating, gazebo area, eating area, art, etc.
- Interpretive signage along a trail system including botanical and historical perspective, river history and development. Also need signage regarding park policies including dog policies.
- Southerly connection to Allen House, Maple Road and beyond.
- Riverwalk trail along portion of Rouge that is within the park. Include trash receptacles, signage, etc.
- Permanent picnic tables
- Possible 10-15 metered parking spaces within site in the general area of the existing play structure. Move play area to the east side of the park near the river. Include artwork, signage, seating, etc.
- No restrooms
- No food service
- Public performances in gazebo area

Yellow/Blue Team

The Yellow/Blue Team presented the following elements for the development of Booth Park:

- Utilize open area for ball diamond, soccer and skating (winter flood, summer skate ramps)
- Art Walk
- A gateway, entrance, gathering spot at Old Woodward and Harmon
- Erosion control and bank improvements
- Pedestrian connections to city parking lot and N. Old Woodward deck. (Bridge/stairs)
- Landscaping to define areas of use and improve aesthetic character
- Handicap access
- Drinking fountains (each unique works of art) could connect to history trail
- Sensitive lighting and seating
- History Trail with art as method for story telling of Booth Family, Cranbrook and Historical Use
- Exercise/Fitness Trail within the site
- No parking spaces in park
- No curb improvements on Harmon.

Participants were very enthusiastic and provided great insight into the conceptual development of Booth Park. In conclusion, attendees were told that WT will take what was done and create conceptual alternatives to bring back at the second Public Workshop. The second workshop will be held on a week night to ensure business owner availability and will be held in February, date yet to be determined.

