

MINUTES OF MAY 11, 2015 CENTRAL PARK TASK FORCE MEETING
GLENCOE PARK DISTRICT
999 GREEN BAY ROAD, GLENCOE, ILLINOIS 60022

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and roll was called.

Task Force present: Connie Brandfonbrener, Lisa Brooks, Howard Buckner, Drew Cardonick, Howard Dubnow, Thomas Finke, Cathy Crawford, Kathy Janega, Sharon Tanner, Kraig Owens, Chris Leiner, Lisa Sheppard, Seth Palatnik (Chair), Debbie Jha (arrived prior to the landscape architect's exercise)

Task Force absent: Michael Perlberg

Members of the public in attendance: Hilary Anderson, Brad Ashman, John Byrne, Lisa Cardonick, Pete Clancy, Dan Dorfman, Michelle Figueroa, Hamilton Hill, Bob Ijams, Bill Inman, Alex Kaplan, Sharlene Kutko, Mark Kittnar, Melissa Lee, Alison Lucchesi, Nello Lucchesi, Ryan Mollet, Laurie Muhn, Dennis Nielson, Barb Padiak, Gina Propp-Schmarak, Brad Schmarak, Ronald Schmidt, Nina Schroeder, Steve Schroeder, Peter Taylor, and Matt Walker

Introduction:

Chair Palatnik reviewed the format of the meeting, introduced Bob Ijams and Bill Inman of Hitchcock Design Group, which was followed by Task Force introductions.

Discussion on Central Park:

Executive Director Sheppard reviewed a history of Central Park. Drew Cardonick overviewed the Glencoe Baseball Association program. Bill Inman and Bob Ijams held an exercise, the results of which will go to the Board of Commissioners for review. A summary of the exercise is attached to these minutes.

During the exercise, Task Force members offered the following Central Park ideas for consideration. The results of this exercise will direct Hitchcock Design Group in the next phase of the design process, which will be brought before the Task Force for review.

The Task Force's individual visions included quality (high quality turf and drainage, enhanced ball field, premier/beautiful baseball field), drainage (drainage issue solved, no negative impacts to drainage including school property), safety (safe usable field, no safety risks to surrounding activities, security), good fit (a good fit for neighbors of the park, maintain current neighborhood feel, fit Glencoe culture, small-scale landscaping, maintain existing street-scape, maintain open space sight lines), dugouts (new dugouts and netting, overhead heated dugout, new sod), restrooms (washrooms, renovate teen center with bathrooms), field amenities (new scoreboard, better stands, concessions, PA/music), fence or removable fence, lights, no disruptions to PE classes during the school year, communication (thoughtful process, open dialogue), GYS (maintain space for GYS, new building), maintainable (affordable maintenance, no burden to residents or

baseball families), no lights, and multipurpose use (keep field open for school and general users, multi-sport field).

Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of Hitchcock's first stage exercise in setting up for the next stage of discussion regarding designs, the extent of what the budget may or may not cover, the donor's goal of a nice, safe field with good drainage, possible meeting dates, presentation to the Board in July, community input sessions on design ideas at parks and special events, if meetings should be rescheduled if all voting members are not available, review of what will happen at the next meeting, GBA detailed usage information will be shared with the Task Force prior to the next meeting, and a request to use objective data from the Master Plan for needs as opposed to desires.

Matters from the Public:

John Byrne voiced concern over the preconceived notion that Central Field will be a baseball field and asked for no lights/PA system out of respect to the neighbors. Baseball games can be played in the two hours of daylight available.

Steve Schroeder shared his viewpoint that lights are a safety issue and cutting off a game is a difficult call to make for coaches. He also voiced concern over the public's negative response over a generous donation and how the Park District will come up with the money to create a great park if not received.

Sharlene Kutko shared that not once during their children's baseball games did they think there should be lights. A safe park is a wonderful thing, but amenities will change the park's character and public use.

Nello Lucchesi voiced confusion over the process, in that Lisa's comments last week included that there would not be a large park and now amenities on the table include those of a large park as if it is a done deal.

An unidentified member of the public stated he is there to listen and learn from this process. Additionally, he did not hear Lisa state there would be no lights, she only answered questions from the public.

Ronald Schmidt heard Lisa say no lights and would like to hear it on the recording. He continued that there should not be lights and certainly not on tall poles.

Hamilton Hill confirmed with Executive Director Sheppard that all comments from the public will be shared with Hitchcock Design. He also explained his viewpoint on the cost benefit ratio of each amenity that the exercise today cannot achieve, and to keep in mind that there are amenities which are high benefit to players / low impact to neighbors instead of focusing on amenities like a home run fence that is low benefit to players / high impact on neighbors.

Barb Padiak reviewed a history of her experience on sport fields in Glencoe as proof that it is not necessary to have lights and compared Central Field by homes versus hidden Reinsdorf Field; a much better location for a field with lights.

Sam Tamkin voiced confusion over the process, which will result in costs for research on design without receiving input on what each member has to say about each amenity.

Matt Walker, GBA's VP of Operations, shared that lights are a safety issue, that it is difficult for parents to get back in time for a 5:00pm game, that there are not enough practices before the season, and that a temporary fence is up only 5% of the time due to game schedule changes or lack of Park District staff, so a temporary permanent fence would be better. He added that he lives by Watts, which has 14 standard lights that are on until 10:00pm with a sound system daily during the season, whereas there would be four standard lights at Central Park 30 days out of the year.

Brad Schmarak commented that he agrees that safety and drainage should be improved; the challenge is that when the twenty neighbors bought/built there were no lights. The openness of the park is what people love.

An unidentified member of the public voiced concern over the addition of a fence impacting the school's use of the park and confirmed with Executive Director Sheppard that the designs will include impact on surroundings and use of the park.

Nina Schroeder encouraged everyone to keep an open mind, that this is only first meeting and that lights may be different than those put in years ago.

Gina Propp-Schmarak stated that improving the park is fine, but to add lights and change the neighborhood is a travesty. The gift is wonderful, but the outcome will affect neighbors negatively.

Adjourn: Kathy Janega moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m. Kraig Owens seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Sheppard
Secretary