

Culver West Park Discussion Group

January 21, 2004

Present: Adam Picker (Wade St.), Susan Kirchoff (Wade St.), Josh Picker (Wade St.), KC Mancebo (Neosho Ave.), Julian Forniss (Moore St.), Dean DeMarchi (Kenyon Ave.), Scott Malsin (Nesoho Ave.), Anne Malsin (Neosho Ave.)

Additional comments received from: Maija Beeton (McConnell Blvd)

Major Themes: Improve safety; Increase recreational and social opportunities for broad cross-section of community; Encourage appropriate uses for a small neighborhood park

Current Status:

- Basketball Hoop Locks work, but not always put on
- Walkway on north side of park (adjacent to tennis court) – altercations late at night on a regular basis
- Nothing for 8-12 year old children to do
- Turf maintenance is poor, frequent over watering
- Summer basketball league attracts 100's of people, use of bullhorns is out of line
- Basketball and handball courts attract problems
- Rec Supervisors stay inside too much, don't monitor park adequately
- Drug use/Alcohol consumption noticeable
- Recycling Center creates noise, traffic and encourages transients to utilize the park

Simple improvements:

- Put on hoop locks every night
- Monitor use of basketball court by leagues – crowds are too big for small park with so many homes in close proximity
- Need better signage to indicate permitted uses and behavior
- Close off walkway to Moore St. at night
- Move recycling center. Suggestion: Vons/Rite Aid shopping center
- Get rid of handball courts
- Half-court basketball attracts fewer problems than full court

Other basic issues:

- Sports courts too near homes – park is so small
- Open to Moore St. – tragic accident is inevitable
- Prohibition against dogs in park restricts a potential use by many local residents. Allowing dogs on-leash would benefit security, draw additional visitors.
- Playing field is poorly defined space. Park doesn't use its space in a way that attracts a broad cross-section of community. Dominated by young adult males. Menacing environment to children, women, and seniors.
- Park doesn't serve broad cross-section of neighborhood. No use by seniors, little by local homeowners
- Programs at park don't serve neighborhood well – poor communication due to delivery problems with Culver City Living. Much of neighborhood is in Los Angeles.
- Problem attracting active use of programs since so much of neighborhood is in Los Angeles, doesn't get Culver City Living. Consider other ways to advertise programs or wider distribution of Culver City Living, e.g. goodwill distribution to local LA neighborhoods.
- Too small a park for league sports. Other parks/schools in area are more appropriate for such activities.

Programs:

- Tai Chi

- Life drawing
- Outdoor movie series
- Rotating art exhibition in building
- Distribute schedule to area, not just Culver City residents
- Room fee too high – need to encourage use of park by area residents
- Community (neighborhood) tennis, basketball
- Sanctioned graffiti board (“public art”)
- Give priority to area residents for programs/activities
- School(s) gardening programs

Neighborhood parks which work:

- Douglas Park (Santa Monica)
- Roxbury Park (Beverly Hills)
- La Cienega Park (Los Angeles)

Vision for park:

- Redefine open space (playground and courts serve purposes adequately)
- Landscape w/ berms, walking path (decomposed granite?)
- Low level lighting along path
- Drought tolerant landscaping along/around path (DWP grant?). Like Culver Blvd.
- Seating areas along path
- Open space in middle for ball playing, etc.
- Additional picnicking areas
- Water feature (Douglas Park)
- Par course?
- Bacci?
- Skateboarding/rollerblading path/feature (path, bowl). (Douglas Park in SM)
- Public art
- Community garden (serve Wade St. apartment dwellers. Presence of adults would reduce appeal of park to aggressive young males, drug dealers). Give priority to Wade St. Make living in apartments on street more desirable.
- “Historical Garden”
- Zen Garden/meditation garden. Dedicate to Japanese population which dominated area for decades (Japanese sister city Kaizuka)
- Tai Chi/Martial Arts lessons in zen garden
- Angle-in parking on Moore St. (But do we need to pave more of Los Angeles?)

Funding:

- DWP grant for drought tolerant garden. Demonstration garden? Attract regional interest.
- Use design as project for UCLA Landscaping students, SMC
- Sony – labor
- Sony uses so many plants in film shoots. Ask to donate.
- Smashbox
- Find advisors in local business community
- Encourage “adoption” of park by local businesses
- Encourage UCLA Landscape Architecture Program tie-in

Park needs to change to meet needs of area. Will bring more use of park. Not all current sports uses are appropriate, waste resource of space. Need to make park part of community to change what happens there.

Notes taken by Scott Malsin