

## Kalorama Park & Playground Comments

(via Survey Monkey & DCGov Email Account of Kenneth Diggs)

### **COMMENT #136 (Survey Monkey)**

We like option 3 because it has the widest walkway around the large center field. Wide walkways are excellent for things like strollers, kids on bikes, and adults on rollerblades.

**11/11/2014 10:38 PM**

### **COMMENT #137 (Survey Monkey)**

I do understand the limits that are imposed on the designs by the fact that the basic footprint has fixed elements, the location of the Playground, Rec Center, "Great Lawn", and the downward slope of the park towards the west that cannot be changed. Since that is the case, I like the way there is at least an intent to make the space a little more open and to expand the walkways that will have the brick pavers.

**11/10/2014 10:06 AM**

### **COMMENT #138 (Survey Monkey)**

Is any consideration being given to cleaning up the small portion of the park by the bus stop, on Columbia Road (separated from the rest of the park by the one block of Kalorama Road)? It's pretty nasty.

**11/8/2014 5:55 PM**

### **COMMENT #139 (Survey Monkey)**

I live very close to Kalorama Park and I use it every day (walking my dog). I am absolutely thrilled that the city is renovating Kalorama Park! Although I chose my preferred design, I honestly like all three.

**11/7/2014 7:39 PM**

### **COMMENT #140 (Survey Monkey)**

I like the open plaza in Option 2...it is less complicated than option 1. The open plaza is inviting and paths, especially criss-crossing ones, are unnecessary. Between option 2 and 3 I like the triangle of greenery rather than pavers in the sw corner and it seems like wasted space, at least on paper.

**11/7/2014 5:32 PM**

### **COMMENT #141 (Survey Monkey)**

Don't let a few "original park volunteers" use "seniority" to slow down the will of the masses. Democratic principles etc.. Thanks. VC

**11/7/2014 2:19 PM**

### **COMMENT #142 (Survey Monkey)**

I'll defer to the most popular opinion to keep the project moving forward, but in all honesty, Option 1 looks like the best (at least from an aerial perspective). The flow of pathways makes more sense to me and the reduction of small grass spaces looks like it will make maintenance simpler. And while I'm not against removal of the hedges along the playground fence line, I would really prefer to keep them as a screen against wind. The hedges also mask the chain link fence to soften the appearance. If some parents call the playground "the prison yard" now, just wait until they see it without hedges.

**11/7/2014 12:43 PM**

**COMMENT #143 (Survey Monkey)**

I fully support the renovation of both playgrounds. I would like to see a better use of the space in the larger playground, but please - keep the sandboxes! We use the little playground every week and my son loves the sandbox. I don't support the use of pavers, while they look very nice, they are difficult to navigate with strollers and wheelchairs.

**11/7/2014 11:50 AM**

**COMMENT #144 (Survey Monkey)**

Hello everyone, Strongly suggest keeping the first arc that "delivers" (the arc that continues the oval design and delivers to the playground gates) and "losing" the PART of the arc that doesn't--which is the bottom piece of the second arc that "delivers" onto the flagpole. By losing that "part" of the second arc, you can then open up the lower space in the plaza for the picnic tables to be placed symmetrically (which ought to please opponents) while retaining the graceful curve for the benches at the top of the hill. Also--remember that if the fence line is moved slightly for the "big kid's" playground, you should do the same for the small playground. No controversy there as best I know.

**11/7/2014 8:49 AM**

**COMMENT #145 (Survey Monkey)**

I like the pathway that leads directly to the playground. The playground is most important to me.

**11/7/2014 12:42 AM**

**COMMENT #146 (Survey Monkey)**

I would really like to see the bushes removed so there is more room for the playground, and the boulders remaining in the design.

**11/6/2014 9:15 PM**

**COMMENT #147 (Email)**

Dear Director Shanklin, Mr Hanlon, Mr. Diggs and Mr. Sisco:

Because of restrictions on the design survey set-up, Kalorama Park area residents and users must choose between what many of us consider to be three poor designs, and cannot submit comments without choosing one, it was suggested by Mr Diggs that we email him instead. He has stated his preference for short emails in bullet points. I also take the opportunity to express my dissatisfaction and opposition to this project in its current form.

- Neighborhood residents have either intentionally or unintentionally not been given the full story about why the plaza destruction and redesign "must" happen.
- Residents and park users have not been told complete details, with full disclosure on design limitations, of a permeable surface.
- There is also mystery about why exactly the contracts for the playground and plaza must be bundled.
- Residents have been exhorted to treat each other and DPR/DGS staff with respect, while DGS staff characterize comments as heckling and area residents as "hating change."
- The original 1947 design for Kalorama Park provided for a series of outdoor "rooms" in the upper area of the Park. Those outdoor spaces consisted of the plaza directly in front of, and on the same axis with, the recreation center and three outdoor "rooms" abutting Columbia Road and consisting of a playground for toddlers, a playground for bigger children, and a community

garden (the original plans designated the space that is now the community garden for adult games like horse shoes). The proposed design would compromise the existing design by removing the old and well-established privet hedges between the plaza and the adjacent playground and replace them with new and lower-lying vegetation of an unknown sort that would further blur the existing delineation between the two spaces.

- More hedges along Columbia Road are promised as if to paper-over dissatisfaction with destroying this NPS park design, while not understanding or at least stating the reason the hedges at that location are failing in the first place.
- Similarly, there is a lack of understanding and misdiagnosis of the causes of erosion, which is fundamental to this operation.
- At no point have our objections or suggestions been taken seriously by DGS or DPR including lower-cost common sense measures such as repairing the trench drain, regular grass/lawn aeration and maintenance, and as always the perils of overmulching that goes on to this day, despite numerous warnings made to the Fund. I understand that such common sense measures are not even taken seriously because of the focus on capital improvement over maintenance.

Please put me down as opposed to this project in its current form.

You have solicited feedback and hopefully you will read it.

**November 13, 2014 at 1:28:33 PM EST**

#### **COMMENT #148 (Email)**

Dear Mr. Diggs and Mr. Sisco:

I am submitting the attached comments on the proposed redesign for the plaza area of Kalorama Park for your consideration as the District continues to work through the many issues associated with the planned redesign of Kalorama Park's plaza area. I am submitting these comments in response to your request for feedback from the community at the November 5 planning meeting at the Kalorama Park Recreation Center.

In looking into the issues associated with designing and siting a permeable pavement system, I have tentatively concluded that fitting a permeable pavement system into the Park's plaza area may be roughly akin to squeezing the proverbial square peg into the proverbial round hole.

My sense is that the permeable pavement system, because of its large, gravel-based subsurface, has intrinsic limits and characteristics that, if it is deployed, may make it difficult to preserve or improve the plaza environment. I drew these tentative conclusions based on a review of the District's Stormwater Best Management Practices guidebook, which detail the technical specifications of a properly functioning permeable pavement system like the one proposed for Kalorama Park.

For one thing, it appears to be technically challenging to carve up a space covered by permeable surface into multiple planters or segments (as the plaza is now subdivided under the 1947 National Park Service design). For another thing, the permeable pavement system proposed for the plaza area appears to preclude the planting of trees and shrubs with significant root systems in the area covered by the permeable pavement. In simple terms, these limitations appear to be obstacles to preserving the plaza's historic look and feel or providing meaningful shade and a green feel in the plaza area.

My concerns and questions about the viability of the permeable pavement system for the plaza area are set forth in more detail in my attached comments so I will not go into them in detail here.

If permeable pavement does restrict design and planting options, why not consider another more compatible site in the Park for deploying permeable pavement? Perhaps the larger playground would be a better location for a permeable pavement system as that space is now scheduled to be completely reconstructed and, in contrast to the plaza area, does not include design features on its surface (other than its outside borders) that would be disturbed by installing a permeable pavement system.

This apparent incompatibility between the existing design of the plaza area and a permeable pavement system is at the top of my list of concerns about the planned redesign for the Kalorama Park plaza area. I say this reluctantly as I am a community member who spoke in favor of the possible deployment of permeable pavement at the July 17 community meeting as a possible fix to some of the Park's water run-off issues. At the time, I did not fully understand how limiting permeable pavement systems could be in terms of design and planting options.

I have spelled out a number of additional concerns about other issues that are currently on the table and would hope that you would also consider them as you move through the design process. I thank you in advance for considering my feedback and suggestions and hope that you will consider them in the open and questioning spirit in which they are offered.

**November 12, 2014 at 12:18:02 PM EST**