

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



Monday, March 2, 2015

Dear Kalorama Community,

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Department of General Services (DGS) would like to thank the many residents who have expressed their thoughts on the planned improvements for Kalorama Park, and in particular the area known as "The Plaza."

After giving this matter careful consideration, DPR and DGS have agreed to continue with the renovation as planned, while addressing any additional details with the Commission of Fine Arts.

The community has made its wishes known through a series of public meetings, and starting in May of 2014, through email correspondence to DPR, DGS management and City Councilmembers. In addition, the ANC-1C voted to support the plans for the restoration of Kalorama Park in December of 2014. In January of 2015 the Historic Preservation Review Board voted to support the plans for the restoration of Kalorama Park. DPR/DGS respects the outcomes of these public meetings.

Further design considerations and notes on process are included below:

DESIGN

We heard from many residents that the Plaza space, the area at the center of the Park, is often under-utilized. We confirmed that fact through numerous site visits at varying times of the day during the week and weekend. Long-time residents of the neighborhood told us that this condition has been consistent for many years.

This lack of use makes clear that current conditions, no matter how well intentioned, do not adequately serve the surrounding population.

In addition, interior hedges along the western edge of the Plaza creates safety concerns at night by blocking sight lines, and create a hidden area used by an indigent population as an outdoor restroom and sleeping quarters.

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Residents have made it clear, and we agree, that any removal of interior hedges should be offset by lower profile greenery so the sum of the Park's foliage is maintained or increased.

PROCESS

In June of 2013, the community requested that DPR/DGS remove substandard soil left in the Park by a previous contractor, as recommended in various reports. The community also asked the City to undertake a series of measures to mitigate the Park's storm water run-off and erosion problems, including the installation of permeable pavement.

- In May of 2014, ANC Commissioner Wilson Reynolds alerted the community to the first of eight public meetings regarding this project.
- In September 2014, area parents asked the City to explore the possibility of installing new playgrounds for Kalorama Park.
- On November 5, 2014 DPR/DGS officials appeared before the local ANC-1C.
- On December 3, 2014, DPR/DGS made a presentation to the local ANC-1C. The ANC voted to support the City's plans.
- On January 22, 2015, DPR/DGS made a presentation before the Historical Preservation Review Board. The HPRB voted to support the City's plans.
- On February 19, 2015, DPR/DGS made a presentation before the Commission of Fine Arts. CFA has suggested the City make adjustments to its design and provide technical details of the design. The City looks forward to working constructively with the CFA.
- All community presentations and reports related to the Kalorama project are posted on the DGS website: <http://dgs.dc.gov/page/dgs-kalorama-park-project>

Again, we want to thank the hundreds of residents who have attended public meetings and who have offered their thoughts through emails, surveys, phone calls and petitions.

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We will continue to work together to make Kalorama a more vital and environmentally healthy park for residents and visitors of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

Keith A. Anderson
Interim Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation

Jonathan Kayne
Interim Director of the Department of General Services