

At the November 17<sup>th</sup> Park Board of Commissioners meeting, Lori Veirou, JSD, Inc. (landscape architects) presented two concepts for Muir Park. This was done to help conceptualize what the park can be and to give the board a sense of the development budget required should the land swap be agreed to and park redeveloped. The goal was to get feedback on the two concepts no later than Dec 4. Lori will refine the plan based upon feedback and the board will review one refined plan on Dec 15. Questions were posted in the chat section of the zoom meeting and a few were asked during the meeting. For transparency sake the responses are below:

### **IN THE CHAT SECTION OF ZOOM**

**Samir M: are these options to go along with Lexington or separate options?**

This is separate from the Lexington 69-unit development. Lexington has offered the park district to swap 27,549 square foot (.62345 acre) of land area to build a detention basin. The actual swap is a portion of the Park's current ballfield with a portion to the northeast – should this be agreed to, a portion of the current ball field may be a parking lot belonging to the Park District and maintained by the development's HOA and the other land to the northeast would be a detention basin on park property that the HOA would maintain.

**Melissa PA: do you know anyone that actually plays Pickleball?**

Currently the outdoor tennis courts at Country Gardens Park, 901 N Schoenbeck Rd., has Pickleball lines and the indoor gymnasium at Gary Morava Recreation Center, 110 West Camp McDonald Rd., offers open play for Pickleball several mornings a week. These are used - yes

**Melissa PA: what about trees?**

Due to the proposed re-grading for the new development, it is currently proposed that all onsite, existing trees will need to be removed (pending final engineering). These trees that make up the wooded area and that outline the park are not "heritage" trees; they are considered invasive, messy, weak wooded, and poor cultivars. In addition, the majority on the removal list are in Fair or Poor condition, if not dead. If the redevelopment of Muir Park is approved, it is proposed to add areas of proposed trees which are high quality species, better for the environment, including natives.

**Samir M: can we possibly get these options emailed to us or sent out?**

Yes – [See 05a Muir Park Concept A & 05b Muir Park Concept B documents](#)

**Melissa PA: does this mean that the Lexington proposal has been approved & moving forward??**

The Park District has not accepted the Lexington proposal to swap land or develop Muir Park. This is just being introduced now.

**PG: At what PH board meeting will the land swap be up for a vote? Dec 15th?**

By state law, the public needs notice that the park board is considering the land swap. It needs to be posted three times before actual public meeting. At this point, that public meeting has not been scheduled. Due to holidays, December 15 does not seem likely. Maybe January 26? Again, it will be posted on the park website and in the local newspaper.

**PG: Why not buy the land, have the building demolished, and put in a ball field?**

The Park District and School District 23 discussed acquiring the property for joint use in August 2016. Unfortunately, architects indicated \$8-\$9 million in renovations were required to bring to the facility to school code (JFH was nonprofit private and therefore operated under different code) and it would cost \$10 - \$11 million to build new after purchasing the property for \$700K - \$1.5million. The Park District alone cannot afford to purchase the property outright and knock down the existing facility for open space nor to rebuild a facility on the site. The Park Board's Muir Park subcommittee has been researching options for Muir. Currently the site is 4.5 acres with nearly 3 acres usable due to trees. Should the District agree to the land swap, about 3 acres would remain usable land. [See 05a Muir Park Concept A, 05b Muir Park Concept B documents & Reserve at Muir Park\\_Unusable Park Area](#)

**Jim P: I thought it was going to be an even swap?**

Lexington has offered to swap 27,549 square feet (.62345 acre) of land area to build a detention basin. It is an even swap: 27,549 square feet for 27,549 square feet.

**M & L: But the parking spots alone will diminish the open park space by nearly HALF!**

Lexington is proposing 26 shared parking spaces for unit owners' guests / park district users; there are other options to potentially add more to equal 43 total spaces. There is also no restriction to the additional guest parking provided in the townhomes and street parking will be allowed on one side of the roads leading to the park.

**Jim P: We're going to get less park with this swap?**

In regards to the calculation of the square footage in the park, currently there is over 2.5 acres usable park space due to wooded tree area. The conceptual designs were based on the 2.9 gross acres – one concept used the parking as shown on the exhibit, and one concept provided a revised parking layout. [See 05a Muir Park Concept A, 05b Muir Park Concept B documents & Reserve at Muir Park\\_Unusable Park Area](#)

**DURING PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Paul G:** where is the money coming for these concepts? The park and city claim to have no money.

**Commissioner Vicki Carney:** Estimate of cost for these? Is there a cost range?

The range is \$700K - \$1.2M depending on the amenities chosen for one refined plan; the park may be developed in phases over several years. The costs include removal of current, site grading, drainage, concrete furnishing plus whatever elements we choose. OSLAD grants are a possibility, funds to improve the park may be TIF eligible and continued negotiation with Lexington is required. The park board would like Lexington to cover the entire cost.

**Michael L:** "... urge all to listen to Alderpeople Kathi Quinn and Michelle Cameron's comments at the last City Council meeting as to why this is a irresponsible project."

**Kathleen Q:** Lexington will pay for this?

Lexington has offered \$500,000 for the land swap and \$200,000 for the park redevelopment. This requires negotiation between the park and Lexington.