**Barrett Park Draft Master Improvements Plan**

**Review with Parks and Recreation Staff**

Prepared by Erin McKenna, Associate Planner

February 9, 2022

In attendance:

**Laurie Albano** Superintendent of Recreation

**Ashley Cooke** Marketing Coordinator

**Meg Gearhart** Assistant Superintendent of Recreation

**Scott Kassouf** Assistant Superintendent of Recreation

**Bertrand Oubida** Recreation Supervisor

Notes:

* Scott asked if the **drop-off** in Option 1, Item 26, would result in taking away any park space, or if there was enough depth available from the street/wall area?
* Would the **angled parking** in Option 3, item 15, require a significant chunk of the green space?
* All agreed that the suggested **updates to the baseball field area** are sorely needed. Meg reminded us that this is 1 of only 2 permitted baseball fields in Stamford, and it is therefore used a lot and has not been updated in years. Ideally, they would love a lighted field so that they could schedule night games, although they doubted that adding lighting would be politically feasible because of neighbor objections. We could consider mentioning this at our next meeting to gauge stakeholder opinion on the matter?
* The staff recommended not combining **pickle ball** with basketball, because the basketball court is so constantly used, and there is no enforcement in the park. Laurie said that during the school year, during school hours, pickle ball could work, but it is still too hard to separate the user groups.
* All agreed that a **dog area** is not compatible with the way this small park is used. The camp kids use the in-park dog area (Options 2, Item 11) for 7 weeks in the summer, and the staff noted that lots of other people enjoy walking there as well. They did not think that dogs next to the playground was optimal either for safety reasons.
* With regard to a **splash pad**, they recommended not including it. Scott pointed out that the splash pad area in Scalzi, which has a 50-foot diameter, is packed in the summer. It is so popular, that it makes Scalzi a destination for its use. The staff takes their camp kids there too sometimes. The new playground in Barrett would make it even more of a destination. And attracting a lot more children would inevitably cause conflicts with the kids in their camps. If the splash pad were more minimal, would that work? Probably not – it would still be a very popular attraction with the new playground, and/or people would complain that it is not big enough.
* While the Options do not suggest any improvement to create a **multi-use field**, Laurie liked labeling it as such, because it points out that it could potentially be used for something besides baseball, like youth soccer.
* Staff uses the **pavilion** all day long during summer camp. And we know that it is permitted, and that many other stakeholders use it as well. It is a hang out at night for people drinking, and is constantly vandalized as a result. Laurie wondered about installing cameras, which are currently not allowed in parks. But the issue could be raised with the Camera Review Committee. Or how about security lighting?
* I told the staff that I saw lots of dissatisfaction about the **bathrooms** in the surveys, even though they have been recently renovated. Did they have an insight into that? They said that they are open continuously and get vandalized a lot. Maybe maintenance is more the issue, because of the drunken night access.
* With regard to the **playground** options. They all agreed that they liked the unstructured play and adventure play elements.
* **Adult fitness stations** - Laurie thinks a few like at Scalzi is probably ok, but again cautions about trying to make this park too multi-purpose in such a small footprint and amount of acreage.
* **Bike racks** – Scott pointed out that a lot of kids ride their bikes to the park. Staff recommended siting bike racks at the Burdick St. entrance, near the basketball court.
* **Garbage and recycling containers** – Currently there are 3 sets of black Victor Stanley benches/trash/recycling, but plastic toters elsewhere in the park. It would be nice to have more of the Victor Stanley set-ups, especially at the playground and the basketball court.