

Petitioner's Supporting Information Item #11 - Application

This portion of the residential area of Belvidere is currently under-served by a neighborhood park. This neighborhood park includes playground equipment designed for children in the 2-5 year age group and for the 5-12 year age group. This neighborhood is predominately Hispanic. Except for an existing single family residence at the southwest corner, the remainder of the block will be utilized for the neighborhood park.

Vicinity Map - Attached

Boundary Map - Attached

Zoning Map - Attached

Flood Boundary Map - Attached

Petitioner's Narrative - Attached

Belvidere Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan identifies this block for residential use. A neighborhood park is a permitted use in the residential zone district and therefore complies with the comprehensive Plan.

Kishwaukee River Brownfield Project - Site Reuse Strategy (attached)

The subject property is identified as "Meadow Street Residential" further supporting the City's intention for residential uses. A neighborhood park supports the residential use.

TIF District

The subject property is not within the TIF district (see attached TIF boundary map).

Enterprise Zone

The subject property is within the Enterprise Zone. Development of this property into a neighborhood park however will not require enterprise zone benefits (see attached Enterprise Zone map).

Zone Change from I-1 (Light Industrial) to D-1 (Single Family)

The current zoning of I-1 is not in conformance with the recommended land use of the adopted comprehensive Plan nor Brownfields Strategy. A change in zoning to D-1 brings the property into conformance.

Flood Plain

The northern 1/2 portion of the block which is the subject area for rezoning lies within the Fema designated zone B. Zone B is the non regulated 500 year flood plain. No flood plain permits are necessary for this area. A very small portion of the block (approximately 200 sq. feet) is located within the Fema designated zone A7. Zone A7 is the 100 year regulatory flood plain, however no structures or ground elevation is contemplated for this small area located in the extreme northwest portion of the site.

Funding for park development

The Parks and Conservation Foundation owns the subject property and will conduct a community wide fund drive to develop the property. Funding sought is approximately \$150,000.

Site Development

Site development will be as presented in the attached site plan by John Cook and Associates.

Impact on adjacent properties

This neighborhood park is designed strictly for day time activity. A parking lot is not planned for the site so typical parking lot problems with parked cars and traffic movements will not occur. Parking is on the street. No lights to illuminate night time activities will occur except a light or lights may be placed on the site for safety purposes to enable the police to view night time activity. The park will be closed at dusk. We believe this neighborhood park will be welcomed by the adjacent residential community and provide a needed recreational outlet for the children and young adults.



Conceptual Site Plan
for
Meadow Street Park
Meadow Street @ Warren Avenue
Belvidere, IL
August 17, 2005

**A Cooperative Effort of the
Park and Conservation Foundation**

1. In reviewing and studying the city block, surrounded by Meadow Street, Warren Avenue, Locust Street and Nebraska Avenue, acquired by the Park and Conservation Foundation through Bob Howell's efforts, our initial site studies indicated that the park land at 264' x 235' was a challenging site. This site is too small to accommodate a full-size soccer or softball field as incorporated in other neighborhood parks recently completed in the Belvidere area.
2. Based on that determination, we felt that this park should take on a unique character and quality from the others and be special to this neighborhood. In developing this concept, our first thought was, since there are no good sidewalks existing, to develop a new sidewalk system that is integrated into the park. This sidewalk system takes on a flowing movement along the length of the streets and then comes together at each corner, versus a typical straight 4'-6" city sidewalk on the right-of-way. This walk would flow off and on the right of way into the park and back out again. It is envisioned that this sidewalk would be a 5'-0" wide concrete walk.
3. It is envisioned, since there is a small drop in grade across the site of 2 to 3'-0", (yet to be verified by survey), that we would be able to reshuffle the existing earth to develop a series of gentle berms that would envelop the park site. These berms would be very gentle and would not be more than 2 to 3'-0" high, depending on where they are. The berms would provide a definition for the inner spaces of the park. The berms, though, would not hinder the view into the park from the adjacent streets.
4. The berms would be planted with shade trees, large evergreens and ornamental trees to provide a visual sense of enclosure and invoke a park-like feeling on the outer park perimeter along the four streets.



5. Within the berm-enclosed park, there will be five major components as follows:
 - a. A large, flat grassy area of an irregular shape would allow people to kick soccer balls, play catch, fly kites and do other activities without the ability to play a formal game of soccer, etc. This large, open space is meant for the neighborhood kids and their families to run around and play within that space. This large, informal area would be blended to the outer berms, but be very flat for open field activities
 - b. A large, irregular-shaped blacktopped area would be a colored and textured blacktop to provide an interesting pattern as part of the blacktop surface. Two basketball hoops would be installed, but would be installed in such a manner that they would work for shooting games of Horse and practicing, but not in a manner that one could play basketball games across the blacktop space.
 - c. The corner of Locust Street and Warren Avenue would become the major thrust of the park's activities. This corner would include the playgrounds: one area for children in the 2-5 year range and a second area for children in the range of 5-12 years. These playgrounds were selected by the Foundation as designed by NuToys Leisure Products using Landscape Structures Inc. playground equipment. There would also be a separate swing area with six seats adjacent to the playground, as well as a sand area.
 - d. As part of the corner area, there would be the standard restrooms (future), drinking fountains, benches, trash receptacles, etc. This area would be at the highest point in the park and would look down onto the large, grassy playfield and playgrounds. One would walk down a grassy slope onto that flat, grassy playing area and would look across to the southwest to the colorful blacktop area surface. Both of those would be approximately 3'-5'-0" lower than the grade at the corner.
 - e. The portions of playgrounds and the swing area at the corner would be covered by an area which would have a large fabric structure, and which would be very open and lose with bright and mobile colors. This structure would be supported by major posts that would match the playground colors. These fabrics would provide shade in the way they would be connected. The fabric structure would provide areas where people could sit in the shade or in the sun.
6. In addition, this corner would be heavily planted in shrubs, flowers and perennials to give more of a garden effect around this area of the park versus the other areas, which would be strictly grassy berms with trees and large evergreens planted on the berms.

7. If, at some point, the southeast corner lot is acquired, the large, grassy berm could be extended up into that space, continuing the play concept. As another option, there could be a smaller grassy playfield developed, but not as large as the original one proposed on the plan. This concept would allow for more separate park user groups to be active without infringing on the others' space.
8. In discussions with the City, it would be hoped that the City would take the corners and extend the curb line out to the driving lanes and then end up with parking along all four sides of the park for users, although this park is intended for neighborhood users only and thus parking would not be an issue. This concept is noted at the southwest corner of the concept plan.
9. With this concept, we would be able to park approximately 28-30 cars around the edge of the park and not be infringing upon the neighbors' street parking.
10. It is envisioned that this project would have to be completed in phases, as the Foundation is able to raise the funds. The first phase would be at the northeast corner, with the construction of the playground, the swingsets, the seating area and possibly, the fabric structure.
11. This park is made possible by the hard work and efforts of Bob Howells, who worked diligently to help with the acquisition of this land by the Foundation. The Foundation now provides the vehicle to build this park facility in an area of Belvidere that is very underserved by parks and recreation space.

The attached park plan and this written commentary were approved and endorsed by the Park and Conservation Foundation on August 16, 2005.

Commentary prepared by

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in conjunction with the Park and Conservation Foundation.

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