



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of December 15, 2007**

SUBJECT: Park Master Plan for Herndon & 13th Park located along 13th Street between N. Hartford and N. Herndon Streets.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the general location and approximate size of the park elements as shown on the attached Herndon & 13th Park Master Plan.

ISSUES:

- 1) Some community residents are interested in reducing the size of the community canine area and increasing the size of the lawn area.
- 2) Some community residents recommend changing the location of the proposed access points to the community canine area to provide direct access from N. Herndon Street and N. Hartford Street.

SUMMARY: Following an eight-month community planning process, a park master plan has been developed for the Herndon & 13th Street Park (Attachment A). The Master Plan depicts the general location and approximate size of various features proposed for the park. These features include a community canine area (CCA) that occupies approximately 50% of the park, and additional non-CCA amenities that occupy the remaining 50%. Non-CCA amenities consist of native demonstration gardens for stormwater mitigation and to educate visitors on native plants appropriate for urban environments; a plaza terrace with benches, picnic tables and a water feature; walkways; and a small lawn area flanked by seating and picnic tables. Additional features include improvements to N. Hartford and N. Herndon Street sidewalks consistent with the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Streetscape Guidelines, and a planted fence to separate the park from the neighboring Hartford Building property. The park master plan represents staff's best efforts to incorporate and balance a number of factors influencing the plan, including the various concerns and desires of stakeholders that emerged in the planning process in addition to the requirements of the Clarendon Sector Plan, which guides the size of the CCA; the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Streetscape Guidelines; and the Americans with Disabilities Act. For this reason, staff recommends approval of the Herndon & 13th Street Park Master Plan.

BACKGROUND: Herndon & 13th Park is a small park located along 13th Street between N. Hartford and N. Herndon Streets at the interface of the Clarendon-Courthouse and Lyon Village neighborhoods. Nearby parks include Lyon Village Park, Clarendon Central Park, 11th &

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Scott McPartlin, DPRCR, Park Development Division
M. Valerie Mosley, DPRCR, Park Development Division
Randolph Randall, DPRCR, Parks and Natural Resources Division

Danville Street Park, Francis Scott Key School playground, and the Market Common playground. Herndon & 13th Street Park contains the only community canine area located within the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor. The nearest community canine area is located at Towers Park on Columbia Pike. The CCA at Herndon & 13th Street receives continuous heavy use by area residents. Approximately 75% (27,000-sf) of the existing park contains a fenced off-leash dog exercise area, while the remaining area consists of an unused, recently acquired parcel of land.

Previously, the park was part of a three part process which included Central Park and the Clarendon Metro canopy. Since that time, the canopy has been constructed, and the Arlington Department of Environmental Services (DES) is working on improvements to Central Park between the Metro elevators and N. Highland Street.

The Clarendon Sector Plan (CSP), which was adopted on December 9, 2006, was used to guide the planning process for this park. The CSP determined through its planning process that “approximately one half of the space should be improved for use as a community canine area and the other half improved to support passive use by neighborhood residents and visitors.”

In January 2007 staff developed three conceptual drawings based on community and staff input collected during the previous planning process for the park. Four key design considerations guided the development of these drawings: 1) delineate a location within the park for a community canine area that will occupy approximately 50% of the park (per Clarendon Section Plan, adopted December 9, 2006); 2) provide one or two additional uses that would occupy the other fifty percent of the park; 3) provide design elements that mitigate acoustic impacts to adjacent residences and pedestrians; and 4) improve sidewalks along N. Herndon and N. Hartford Streets. Improvements for street trees, sidewalk and on-street parking on N. 13th Street were recently completed by DES through a separate project.

From March 2007 through November 2007 staff from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources worked closely with the Lyon Village community, the Hartford Building residents, Clarendon Dogs, the Clarendon Alliance, and other interested residents to develop a master plan for the park. The community’s insight and feedback was sought through two community-wide forums, additional meetings, and comment forms handed out at the April 2007 and September 2007 public forums. An online comment form was also made available to the community following both public forums. Further, staff developed a project website providing community access to project information, contact information, public forum summaries, all plans presented, community comments, the results of the acoustical analysis, and additional resources. Embracing a fully transparent approach to the website, all comments were posted directly as they were submitted, allowing the community to view the public input on the project.

A community-wide public forum was held on April 17, 2007 to present three conceptual plans. The three conceptual plans presented a variety of approaches to the master plan and were designed to gain direction from the community on how to proceed with the program for the Park. The first conceptual plan illustrated a CCA sized at 50% of the park, while the other two plans showed smaller CCA’s. The plans presented a number of ideas for non-CCA amenities, including but not limited to a fitness circuit, picnic & game tables, bocce court, and putting green. Staff asked attendees to provide their thoughts on the proposed amenities, their

approximate sizes, and locations. Staff recorded all verbal comments and written comments from this meeting and invited the community to submit additional comments via phone, email, letter, or the online comment form. An impressive amount of feedback (approximately 120 individual comments) was received in response to the conceptual plans presented at the April public forum. These comments provided staff with clear directions on how to proceed with the park master plan in both regards to the size of the CCA (make consistent with the Clarendon Sector Plan) and to the preferred non-CCA amenities. Per these comments the following additional amenities were the most frequently cited for inclusion in the Park Master Plan: picnic & game tables, demonstration gardens, water feature, seating areas, shade (structures & trees), and a lawn area.

As one of the guiding principals is to provide design elements that mitigate acoustic impacts to adjacent residences and pedestrians, Acoustical Design Collaborative, LTD was contracted in May 2007 to conduct an acoustical analysis and provide recommendations for possible design solutions to reduce the noise emanating from the site. Based on the results of this analysis, hard paved surfaces should be minimized in the new design to prevent increasing current noise levels. Further, construction of a six-foot barrier wall is the only feasible design option that would achieve noise reduction. Per the acoustic analysis, the recommended park master plan incorporates the six-foot barrier wall and minimizes hard, paved surfaces. Hard pavements (ie. concrete, stone, etc.) are limited to the plaza terrace area and the walkways that provide access to the other park amenities.

The Lyon Village Civic Association invited staff to discuss this project at their meeting on June 11, 2007. Staff provided a brief overview of the project and attendees shared their comments, questions, and concerns with staff.

Using feedback from the April public meeting as well as the findings of the acoustical study, staff developed a Preliminary Park Master Plan and presented this to the community at a public forum on September 25, 2007. The total park area is 0.71-acres (30,898-sf), consisting of the space within the three sidewalks and the Hartford Building property line that border the park. Guided by the Clarendon Sector Plan, the Preliminary Park Master Plan illustrates a CCA occupying approximately 50% of the park, or 15,500-sf. Additionally the plan includes in the remaining 50% of park space all of the most frequently requested non-CCA amenities (picnic & game tables, demonstration gardens, water feature, seating areas, shade, and a lawn area).

The park master plan represents staff's best efforts to incorporate and balance a number of factors influencing the park plan, including the various concerns and desires of stakeholders that emerged in the planning process in addition to the requirements of the Clarendon Sector Plan and the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Streetscape Guidelines. The recommended plan is fully accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and is mindful of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) recommendations, ensuring visibility into and out of the park. The plan also seeks to enhance our urban ecosystem by devoting almost one third of the site to demonstration gardens that will feature native plant communities and provide a much needed supplement to Arlington's urban tree canopy. The park's existing tree canopy is minimal, covering about 1,400-sf. The park master plan proposes increasing the tree canopy by more than eight times to provide about 11,300-sf of tree cover at 20-years, which could cover almost 40% of the park area.

The community response was favorable and supportive overall of the Master Plan presented in September. However as noted previously, a few issues have been raised by some residents of the community expressing a desire to reduce the size of the Community Canine Area (CCA) thereby increasing the size of the lawn area, and to relocate the entrances into the CCA. The approved Clarendon Sector Plan guides the size of the CCA and states that it should be approximately 50% of the park. For this reason staff recommends approving the Park Master Plan with the lawn and CCA as currently shown. Master plan elements such as entrances are typically fine-tuned during the park Design Phase. Staff recommends addressing the CCA entrances at that time.

The Master Plan was presented to the Park and Recreation Commission at their November 13, 2007 meeting. A letter from the Commission is included as Attachment B. The Urban Forestry Commission has also provided a letter, see Attachment C.

DISCUSSION: The purpose of this master plan is to create a safe, inclusive public space that folds responsibly into the County's urban ecology and innovatively serves both Arlington's canine population and the larger community while respecting the neighborhood fabric in which it is situated.

This Plan can be achieved in two phases to take advantage of funding resources as they may become available:

Phase 1: Construction of a fence around the new CCA area as well as standard community canine area amenities including but not limited to: drainage improvements, dog/human drinking fountain and message board, site furnishings, site accessibility, trees and landscaping pursuant to the Public Spaces Master Plan. Other Phase I improvements include fencing and plantings between the Hartford Condominium building and the CCA.

Phase 2: Construction of the remaining walkways, plaza terrace, water feature, demonstration gardens, grass area, and other park amenities.

Below is a description of the primary issues raised during the master planning process. Staff's proposed solutions follow each issue.

- 1) Some in the community would be interested in reducing the size of the community canine area and increasing the size of the lawn area within the park.

Through five years of public meetings associated with the Clarendon Sector Planning process, interested parties and decision makers have recommended in the Plan that approximately one half of the space in this park be improved for use as a community canine area. In addition, the majority of attendees at our April and September public forums supported the community canine area occupying at least fifty percent of the site, which at 15,500-sf translates to a significant reduction of 43% from the existing 27,000-sf dog area. Staff supports the approval of the Herndon & 13th Park Master Plan as currently presented. As displayed in Table I, the proposed CCA at 15,500 square feet would be significantly smaller than all but two CCA's in the County.

Table I: Community Canine Areas and their Sizes (from largest to smallest)

CCA	Shirlington Park	Towers Park	Fort Bernard Park	Benjamin Banneker Park	Fort Ethan Allen Park	Proposed Herndon & 13th Street Park	Glencarlynn Park	Utah Park
Size (SF)	109,500	25,500	22,800	22,600	22,000	15,500	14,000	12,500

- 2) Some area residents recommend changing the location of the proposed access points to the community canine area from their proposed location to direct access to and from N. Herndon Street and N. Hartford Street.

The exact location will be addressed during the design phase for this project.

FISCAL IMPACT: Implementation of this Park Master Plan will require an estimated \$1.7 million in expenditures that do not have a source of funding identified. The only funds that have been specifically identified for this project is \$195,000 available in the FY 2008 PAYG budget for the construction of the fence surrounding the community canine area.

The proposed Master Plan identifies two phases for the construction of the park area. Phase I would include the removal of the existing site fence, construction of the new CCA fence, surfacing and drainage improvements at the new CCA, accessible walks, some landscaping, and standard community canine area amenities. Phase I is projected to cost \$800,000 (current dollars). Phase II would include construction of the remaining walkways, plaza terrace, water feature, demonstration gardens, grass area, and remaining park amenities. Phase II is projected to cost \$900,000 (current dollars).

Options for funding this project include FY 2009 PAYG and inclusion in the FY 2009 – FY 2014 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Funding for the construction of this Master Plan project is not included in the current CIP (FY 2007 – FY 2012) and will have to compete against other projects in the next CIP funding process.

In addition, the Hartford Condominium Association is seeking funding in the current Park Enhancement Grant round to pay for general landscaping; however, these funds are not expected to exceed \$12,000. If these funds are awarded they would go toward Phase I improvements.

CONCLUSION: The park master plan for Herndon & 13th Park has been developed in collaboration with the community to provide a balance of community canine area and other park amenities including demonstration gardens, a plaza, and a lawn area. The master plan, which shows the general location and approximate size of the various park elements, will be the guiding document for the implementation of the park features.

Attachment A Herndon & 13th Park Master Plan with Cross Section
 Attachment B Letter from Park and Recreation Commission
 Attachment C Letter from Urban Forestry Commission

LAWN AREA

Lawn With Bench Seating,
Picnic & Game Tables
At Edges

ACCESS & CIRCULATION

Paved, Accessible Walkways
CCA Access Points From
N. Herndon Street &
13th Street N. Sidewalks

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

N. Herndon Street & N. Hartford St.
Consistent With Rosslyn-Ballston
Corridor Streetscape
Standards

PARK DEFINITION

Fence With Vegetative Screening
Between Park & Adjacent
Condominium Building



DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

Woody & Herbaceous
Native Plant Materials
Chesapeake Bay & Wildlife Friendly
Identification Signage

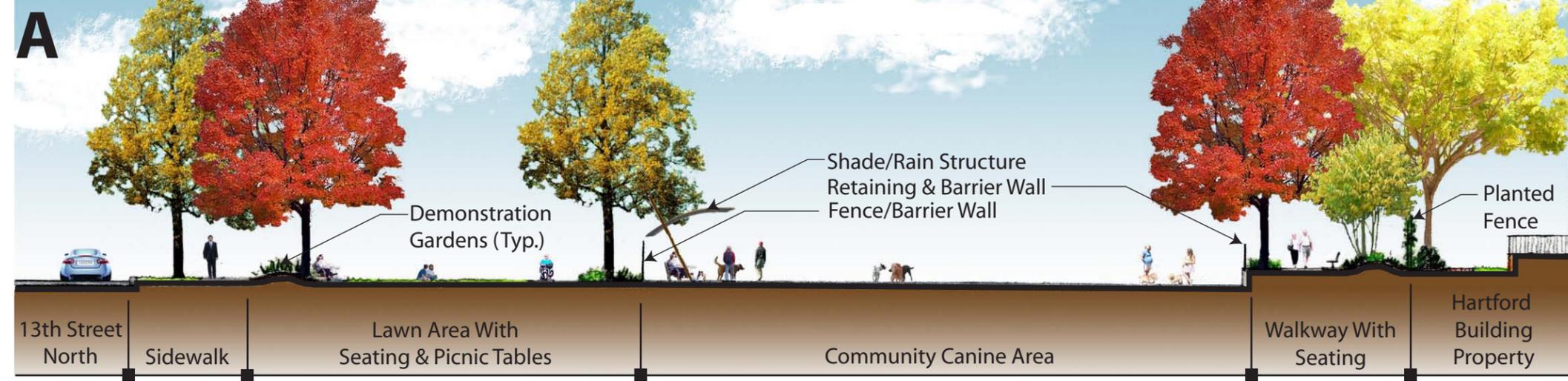
COMMUNITY CANINE AREA (CCA)

"Soft" Area Surface
Standard CCA Amenities Per
Public Spaces Master Plan
(Benches, Water, Etc.)
Orientation Supports Long Runs
(205' x 76')
Partially Recessed
Edge Definition:
Fence/Walls

PLAZA TERRACE

Bench Seating
Picnic & Game Tables
Shade Structures
Walkway Access Through Park
Water Feature

Cross Section



PLAN Scale: 1" = 30'-0"
(on 11" x 17" paper)



CROSS SECTION A Scale: 1" = 20'-0"
(on 11" x 17" paper)

Board Report Attachment A

Herndon & 13th Street Park Master Plan

ATTACHMENT B



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

#1 COURTHOUSE PLAZA
SUITE 414
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22201



December 3, 2007

The Honorable Paul Ferguson
Chairman
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 300
Arlington
VA 22201

Dear Chairman Ferguson:

On behalf of the Park and Recreation Commission, I write to convey our recommendations relating to the N. 13th and Herndon Street Park master plan being put forward by the County staff for your consideration.

The Park and Recreation Commission reviewed and discussed the proposed master plan for the N. 13th and Herndon Street Park at our meeting held on Tuesday, November 13th. After listening to a presentation on the proposed master plan from County staff, taking public comments from a small number of citizens from the Lyon Village Civic Association and other nearby neighbors to the park, and holding an extended discussion among commission members, we agreed upon the following recommendations concerning changes we would suggest County staff make during the design phase of planning for this park. In making these recommendations, we want to recognize that the County staff had a tough challenge to meet multiple needs and desires of the community in a limited space and the Commission commends them for their efforts to develop a master plan that is responsive to these multiple interests.

- 1) **Provide for additional open green space and seating area on the northwest corner of the park** - In response to an interest expressed by members of the Lyon Village Civic Association at our meeting that additional lawn area and seating areas to be provided on the 13th and North Hartford street corner of the park, the Commission recommends that staff reposition, reconfigure and/or truncate the northwest corner of the proposed community canine area in the final park design. While we support trying to accommodate the Lyon Village Civic Association's interest in providing additional lawn area and park seating on the northwest park corner, it is our recommendation that that the proposed size of the canine community area (CCA) in the park not be reduced by any more than 1500 square

feet from the 15,500 CCA area contained in the plan as presented to the Commission by County staff. We have concerns that a CCA area that is less than 14,000 square feet will not adequately meet the expected CCA demand and usage given that this is the only CCA located in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor and serving the Lyon Village Community, both areas where there are a considerable number of dog owners. If the County staff is able to reconfigure the CCA to achieve additional passive parkland space as requested by the Lyon Village Community with out reducing the size of the CCA, that too would be acceptable to the Commission.

- 2) **Relocate CCA entrances** - In the final design of the park, we would encourage the staff to reconfigure the entrances to the CCA area such that they come directly off from N. Herndon and N. Hartford streets. Currently, the plan calls for an entrance to the CCA off of N. 13th street. We feel that repositioning this entrance to N. Harford Street can help to accommodate the interest expressed to the Commission for more lawn area on the northwest corner of the park.
- 3) **Maintain tree canopy and relocate some trees and shrubs currently planned outside of the fenced CCA area to within this area** – The Commission would urge that there be no net reduction in the planned number of trees and shrubs for the park. To accommodate the interest expressed by the Lyon Village Civic Association for providing additional lawn area surrounding the CCA, we would urge that staff consider placing trees and shrubs currently planned to be located outside of the CCA to be relocated inside and along the edges of the CCA area. This will help to provide more lawn area surrounding the CCA area while still maintaining buffers and square footage inside the CCA. The Commission would also strongly recommend that a few trees be added to the center of the CCA that will eventually grow to a size that will provide a significant tree canopy and shade within the CCA itself.

The Commission would note that since our meeting, we have heard from several interested members of Clarendon and Arlington Dogs expressing concerns that their views were not represented at the commission meeting; that had they attended and spoken at the meeting it might have changed that Commission's ultimate recommendations on this matter.

The Commission certainly appreciates and welcomes the additional perspectives we have received on this matter since our meeting. I would note, however, that we were kept well apprised of these interests by Commissioner Suzanne Bolton, our designated representative on the CCA matters and our designated representative to the 13th and Herndon Street Park master planning process. Throughout the planning process, Suzanne did a superb job of informing the Commission of all the various perspectives and views that were expressed at the public planning sessions. Moreover, she tempered her own interests in this matter responsibly so as to ensure that she did not present a biased perspective or unbalance view to us on this matter.

At the time of our discussion and our decision on this matter, the members of the Park and Recreation Commission were well aware of the countervailing perspective held by many in

the Clarendon and Arlington dogs organization which maintained that 15,500 square feet should be designated to adhere to the language in the Clarendon Sector plan that states that “approximately one half of the space should be improved for use as a community canine area and the other half improved to support passive use by neighborhood residents and visitors.” This, of course, is the same view that was represented at our meeting by County staff. We would note, however, that our recommendation suggests trying to do the best to accommodate multiple interests of the community and is very much in keeping with the fact that that the Clarendon Sector plan suggests an “approximate” 50-50 split between the total area designated for the CCA and other areas of the park designated for additional uses. Moreover, we are encouraging staff to look at design changes that will both help to accommodate the neighborhood’s interest in providing for more lawn area, while minimizing the need to reduce that overall square footage of the CCA that is recommended by the County staff.

The contentious debate over how 1500-3500 square feet within the park should be subdivided to address the multiple open space needs of the surrounding community is symptomatic of the fact that we have not provided for a plan to ensure adequate open space in Clarendon and throughout the R-B corridor in the first place. Ensuring adequate open space in areas of the County where significant additional density is being planned such as the R-B corridor and in Crystal City continues to be a major concern for our Commission. It was, in fact, an issue we highlighted during the Board’s consideration of the final Clarendon Sector Plan. The sad reality is that by trying to ensure the equitable distribution of these small open space crumbs in the R-B corridor, everybody – dog owners and non-dog owners alike -- will be forced to go hungry and wanting for something more. We would hope that controversies such as this highlight the fact that significant increases in density should also be accompanied by reasonable increases in usable open space for a range of park users and activities.

As always, the Commission appreciates having the opportunity to express our views to you. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions concerning our recommendations above.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tobin L. Smith", is centered on a light gray dotted background.

Tobin L. Smith
Chairman, Park and Recreation Commission

cc: Members, Arlington County Board
Ron Carlee, Arlington County Manager
Lisa Grandle, Division Chief, PRCR, PDD

ATTACHMENT C



**ARLINGTON COUNTY
URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**



2700 South Taylor Street
Arlington, VA 22206

December 3, 2007

Hon. Paul Ferguson, Chairman
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Ferguson,

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) supports the Preliminary Park Master Plan for the Herndon & 13th Street Park. The proposed design provides a very attractive way to divide space in this small park between the Community Canine Area (CCA) and green space for other uses.

Although no planting list has been prepared, the preliminary plan calls for 24 canopy trees (not counting street trees) and 22 smaller trees to be planted in the park. In addition, there will be other native plants in demonstration gardens around the periphery of the CCA and the park. Over time as the trees mature they will provide significant tree canopy in the park, which will be a great improvement over the present situation.

There has been some discussion of reallocating space between the CCA and other uses. Whether or not such changes are made, the Urban Forestry Commission strongly recommends that there should be no reduction in the number of trees planted. It is important to take advantage of any opportunity to increase tree canopy in Clarendon.

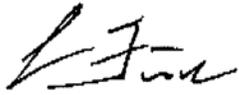
The preliminary plan does not show any trees in the CCA, and we understand that surface materials being considered for that area would not provide a healthy environment for tree roots. Perhaps some trees could be planted inside the perimeter of the CCA, with soil for their roots and protection against soil compaction. We suggest that this option be considered in the design phase as the design plan is being prepared.

Because of challenges presented by planting in the CCA and because parts of the park will be shaded by the Hartford Condominium Building, species of trees for planting in the park should be carefully selected. The UFC would appreciate an opportunity to review the draft planting list when it is available.

Finally, we note that the preliminary master plan calls for two sidewalks within the boundaries of the park. Reducing impervious surface in the park would provide a better

environment for the roots of nearby trees and also reduce stormwater runoff. The Urban Forestry Commission urges that options for reducing the amount of impervious surface in the park be examined in the design phase.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Finch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and a stylized "Finch".

Larry Finch
Chair, Urban Forestry Commission