

From: Dick Young
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2014 9:51 PM
To: 'Green, Jeff - PR Administration Division'
Cc: 'Gilmore, Scott M - PR Parks and Planning - PP'
Subject: RE: The Loop Project Planned for City Park

Jeff, I read your below e-mail and the attachments. As I requested, you sent me copies of all the news releases your Parks and Recreation Department sent out over the past two years about replacing the current Dustin Redd playground at City Park. But there was no indication of to whom these news releases were sent. You yourself admit that no article has ever appeared in the Denver Post, except one on December 7, 2013, which was about of the December public meeting where there was a major outcry about putting this huge project into a park already crowded with the Zoo, the Museum, summer concerts and weekly runs. Parking is a huge problem. The plan for this huge new addition calls for only “street parking.” No wonder all surrounding neighbors are so up in arms.

Interestingly the major story run in December 2013 in Westward, which does have wide circulation, certainly carried much information that never before had been revealed by you. I have the two articles which appeared in the Greater Park Hill News in October of 2011, and April 2012. I believe there was also a later article which you do not mention,

In the very first paragraph of your quite long March 2, 2012 news release. you talk about replacing the current Dustin Redd Playground with “an innovative new playground...**at the site of the current Dustin Redd playground.**”

And who could argue with that, particularly the many who have tried to use the fixtures and playthings there at the site. The definition of “site” means a place where something is. Right? Your Department is well aware that it has permitted this existing playground to deteriorate to the extent that it is unusable and not safe, with always the excuse that Parks and Recreation does not have even enough money to repair it so it would be safe and usable.

But there can be no question that what Parks and Recreation was announcing was that it was going to replace those items there “at the site” with new, innovative playground equipment.

The only other news release you sent was an undated one but announcing the presentations of the three finalists for their ideas to “**reshape the beloved playground at Denver’s City Park.**” Again, this makes clear to any reader that this whole effort was about replacing the equipment at the Dustin Redd playground with innovative new equipment. Only in the last paragraph would a person who had access to this entire news release read that the proposed project was now projected to “to be in the general vicinity of the existing Dustin Redd on City Park’s west side.” But this information was never publicized. This is a drastic change from being built **at the site of the current Dustin Redd playground.**

So, to me, it is obvious, based on your own few news releases that were put out and were not covered in our local main media, that your (Parks and Recreation) constant reiterations that you publicized all of this so all of Denver would know, is simply an untrue statement. Constantly repeating it as you and other Parks and Recreation people do. does not bring it any closer to the truth.

Your below e-mail indicates you were in attendance at the first public meeting in December where massive concerns were raised about this huge, below the radar, five million dollar project which would

take over most of the western side of City Park. Many there, in fact to a person, stated unequivocally this project should not be built at City Park. Yes, some pointed out that there was no parking available for it. Yes, some pointed out its size was outlandish and would take over much of the cherished green grass and trees that make a park a park. Yes, some stated they did not want to see a bunch of aluminum or other material being used to build the “loop.” Yes, some stated that if Parks and Recreation cannot even maintain the little Dustin Redd playground,. how can anyone expect it to maintain a huge 5 million dollar project. I could go on and on, but anyone who claims people there were suggesting that by changing the color or using different material, or reducing the size just a little, would make it acceptable, simply wasn't listening and are now trying to put lipstick on a pig to make it beautiful.

And the same thing happened at the very disorganized meeting at Bogey's which you stated was only for stakeholders. No others could speak. No others could even eat the food provided. This appears, at least to many of us, to be a term that Parks and Recreation uses to say the Stakeholders have approved such and such. But I have asked for a list of the names and addresses of the Stakeholders, and Parks and Recreation cannot provide one. No minutes are kept; no votes taken at the Bogey's meeting. A number of people were allowed to speak who were not stakeholders; some spoke who did not identify themselves. These people who represent various neighborhoods are very dedicated to keeping our parks as parks. They put in much volunteer time to try to accomplish this. They attend meetings and study various proposals. And again, to almost a person, all that spoke at the March 2, 2012 meeting, where supposedly only stakeholders were allowed to speak, said over and over, this project should not be built at City Park.

Now, what is very obvious is that Parks and Recreation is attempting to once again not have input from the people who will be most affected by this regional 5 million dollar effort, by (1) cancelling the previously announced meeting that was to be last week (without notice to the public, a number showed up for the meeting); and (2) by not announcing the replacement meeting to the public, but rather letting only a select few know of the meeting, and holding the meeting in the zoo (which means going through a gate with a ticket, and trying to find out where this closed meeting is being held . This clearly means you (Parks and Recreation) want to keep those people most affected by this proposal from even attending this meeting.

That is shameful. Political pressure is building in all the neighborhoods around City Park about you attempting to force this project down the throats of so many people. I can almost bet there will be political consequences to our City officials because of these blatant attempts of people on our city's payroll to push this through, and by your actions which say: full speed ahead; to hell with the voters.

Richard E. Young

Denver, Colorado

From: Green, Jeff - PR Administration Division [<mailto:Jeff.Green@denvergov.org>]
Sent: Thursday, March 06, 2014 4:57 PM
To: Dick Young
Cc: Gilmore, Scott M - PR Parks and Planning - PP
Subject: RE: The Loop Project Planned for City Park

Good afternoon, Mr. Young,

Thanks for your note. We are, indeed, looking at other locations around the city that might be suitable for the City Loop project as it is currently designed. Lauri and Scott have been in different parts of the city evaluating parks for that reason, but at this point their work is just that – an evaluation. City Park is our first choice for this project as we know that the existing Dustin Redd playground will need to be replaced in the very near future. We are currently doing some work to fix it and improve certain parts right now, but that work is not sustainable over the long term. Our goal with the stakeholder meetings, beginning with the discussion from the 26th and continuing now on the 22nd of March, is to determine if the current design can be altered enough – based on feedback from the group – to potentially be considered as a favorable replacement to the existing playground.

We certainly realize that, at the end of two or three meetings, if the consensus from the neighborhoods is that even an altered design that is smaller and less intrusive to the park is still not a preferred alternative, then we will not build the project at City Park. Lauri has stated this a number of times, including first at the December 6 meeting in the Whittier neighborhood.

You are right – at the December 6th meeting the location of the project was certainly a concern, but I would disagree that it was the only concern. We heard a number of comments in that meeting about the size of the design, the materials it would use, how it would be maintained, what it would do to the park in terms of traffic flow and parking and that the colors represented in the drawings at that time were too gaudy and did not belong or fit into the historical design of the park.

The money for the design competition that has led us to this point was provided via a grant for \$75,000 from the Colorado Health Foundation.

At the next meeting, we will make a better effort to have those participating introduce themselves and to state who they are representing. The stakeholder committee was set up by us asking all RNOs within a mile of City Park to provide two representatives for the group. We did not hear back from every RNO we contacted, but many of them did provide two names each and, in some cases, an alternate who will attend if one of their two choices cannot attend.

Please be aware that the next meeting will no longer be at Bogey's on the 12th. That meeting has been postponed until the 22nd (Saturday) and will be at the Denver Zoo, starting at 10 a.m.

Attached, please find several documents related to our outreach for the Re-imagine Play design competition and selection.

Regards,

Jeff Green

From: Dick Young

Sent: Tuesday, March 04, 2014 8:19 PM

To: Gilmore, Scott M - PR Parks and Planning - PP

Subject: The Loop Project Planned for City Park

Dear Scott, thanks for promising to send me all of the news releases your Parks and Recreation put out over the past year or two describing to the public what the project was all about. Those in the Parks and Recreation Department keep claiming that the project was very well publicized, but as so many of us who regularly read the Denver Post, our neighborhood newspapers, Westward, as well as listen to our radio stations newscasts and TV local newscasts, don't remember ever hearing about a \$5 million dollar project being described and planned for City Park. Those news releases announcing this major project that you put out, and to whom, should tell us both whether it was the news media themselves that did not run the stories, or whether we all simply missed them.

Many are also asking where did the money (and how much) come from to fund the study. At the meetings I have been at, that has never been mentioned. Please make sure at the upcoming follow-up meeting at Bogeys on Wednesday, March 12, this is explained up front.

And the most perplexing problem I and others had with the February 26 meeting, was that your Moderator stated quite clearly at the start that the only thing to be discussed was how the project at City Park could be made better (and I specifically asked her afterwards if that was what she meant to say, and she replied yes; that was the directions she was given). She also represented and asserted that on the five boards placed up front listed the five major issues that came out of the December meeting at the Library. But none of those Boards were about location. And as you well know, location was the only issue that was discussed at that meeting. You and I were both there. You know that to be true. So how could those running the meeting who were there at that December meeting not state the truth: that it was the major -the only - issue that came out of that December meeting.

Lastly, as you know at the last meeting you held on February 26 at Bogey's, many of us could not hear many of the speakers; some never introduced themselves; never identified what neighborhood group they "represented," some local neighborhood groups had more speakers than others. Hopefully you will correct this for the next meeting at Bogeys.

Look forward to getting what you promised to get to me before this next meeting. And I thank you for doing that.

My Best,

Dick Young