

Green2015 Community Meeting Facilitation Notes

Date: Monday, June 14, 2010

Location: Germantown Friends School, 31 W. Coulter Street, 19144

GROUP #1 Kayte/Lisa

Question #1: What role does green space play in your community or neighborhood?

If green space is missing in a neighborhood or community, what impact does that lack have on your neighborhood or community?

- Meeting place for building community
- Takes you away from the city
- Put “your hands in the dirt” – relax
- Children enjoying nature
- Art exhibits
- Wildlife sanctuaries
- Plant museums
- Wildlife corridor – bring animals into the neighborhood
- Little parks at Septa stations function as meeting places for multiple species
- Shooting gallery after bars close (drugs)
- Prostitution
- Squatters in parks – no toilets
 - Interferes with children’s educational opportunities
- Uncontrolled open space (for those not seeking to add more)
- Number of acres not as important as diversity of uses
- Pastoral “controls”
- Alternative uses: commercial, agricultural, etc.
- Place to escape adults; “adventures with a garter snake”
- Climate cooling
- Public space for music – like the Mann

Question #2: What role *could* open space play in your community? How would having *some/more* green space affect your neighborhood or community?

- Volunteers or school kids work
- Use for people to meet/discussions/music
 - More gatherings bring civility
- Lots of experiences – more art shows, etc.
- More community gardens – grow your own food
- Reduce carbon footprint
- Connecting kids to experiences
- Base for community action

- More recreational use
- Connect green trails/corridors through neighborhoods
- More rain water gardens
- Retro-fitting water system
- Urban farming zoning issues need to be reconsidered
 - Could be more/balanced food security with city density
- Composting in controlled areas for urban mulching
- Divert food waste; cooperative farming
- De-stigmatize working related to gardening
- Reward getting dirty
- Penal systems rethinking/reform for positive outcomes with children
- Better educational opportunities for children
- Laws reflect animal co-existence with people
- More trees
- More trails/more labels/better signage
- More volunteers to clean up
- More incentives

Question #3: Given what we've said so far, **what values, priorities, or principles should guide** the Commissioner and his staff in the Department of Parks and Recreation in their **decision-making regarding new or additional green spaces?**

- Respect the neighborhood
- Universal neighborhood opportunities/specific to that area
- Providing the community gardening opportunities can change the mindset
- Provides alternatives for criminal behaviors
- Being intentional with positive empowerment
- Recognize healing in "greening"
- Occupied garden is safe, "in control"; some set of standards
- Diversity of uses/users; impact and clarity
- Want maintenance
- Responsibility to do something in a park
- Permission to follow nature and be peaceful
- Human presence brings positive behaviors/experiences
- "Sensitive" design – ask the community members how, why and where
- Gradation of spaces – some to remain remote for natural habitat
- Diversity of spaces, uses, users
- There's a window of opportunity for climate change

Question #4: Given these examples, what **"values-based principles"** emerge from the work we've done so far? *(ranked in order with number of votes next to)*

- (8) Conservation – global warming and climate conservation
- (5) Individual empowerment/local, community building
- (5) Diversity – size, use and cross species
- (3) Accessibility – trails, natural
- (3) Education – success stories/growth
- (2) Responsibility as citizens and government and others to maintenance
- (1) Safety
- Qualified, healthy, localized vision for community and their projects

GROUP #2 Carole/Ben

Question #1: What role does green space play in your community or neighborhood?

If green space is missing in a neighborhood or community, what impact does that lack have on your neighborhood or community?

- Recreation/variety of activities
- Wildlife – bird watching
- Drugs
- Closed off
 - Not accessible
 - Dark/blocked off
 - Bryant Park in New York City
- Disrepair/isolation
- Place for dogs
- Relaxation/disconnect/unplug
- A place for organized groups
 - Picnics/BBQs
 - Reunions
- Concerts/culture
- Gardening
- Community building
- Destination

Question #2: What role *could* open space play in your community? How would having *some/more* green space affect your neighborhood or community?

- Technology – get connected (Wifi)
- More gardening
- More restaurants in parks
- Connect neighborhoods with green railways

- Native plants could create wildlife corridors
- Neighborhood control over greened brownfields
- Fitness opportunities
 - Walking
 - Off-road biking
- More arts and culture – performances
- Educational – environmental education for youth
- Easy to get to
- More inviting and better maintained
- More tree cover

Question #3: Given what we’ve said so far, **what values, priorities, or principles should guide the Commissioner and his staff in the Department of Parks and Recreation in their decision-making regarding new or additional green spaces?** *(ranked in order with number of votes next to)*

- (6) Cut bureaucracy – increase access for community development of green spaces – city coordinates
- (5) Create wildlife corridors
- (4) Safety: lighting, open design
- (3) Community engagement
 - Increase recreational options
 - Input from community – initially – in design
- (3) Build on those spaces that have meaning
- (3) Prevent developers from access to waterfront
- Sustainability for long term – storm water design, green materials – low maintenance
- Place for communities to gather and to build community; connect communities; connection to all constituencies
- Equity in access – within a few blocks
- Contribute to sense of place
- Welcoming

Question #4: Given these examples, what “values-based principles” emerge from the work we’ve done so far?

- Community engagement:
 - City government liaison/community leaders to empower people
 - Cut bureaucracy
 - Manage green space
 - Design green space
- Design
 - Well-maintained
 - Sustainable materials
 - Safety

- Openness
- Wildlife – optimizing to enhance
- Sense of place – meaning – build on that
- Equity of access
- Communities gather and connect other communities
- Prevent developers from access to waterfront

GROUP #3 Linda/Erin

Question #1: What role does green space play in your community or neighborhood?

If green space is missing in a neighborhood or community, what impact does that lack have on your neighborhood or community?

- Community identity
 - Move/live where can have access to park
 - Amenity
- Cooling the city
- Bringing people together
 - Acting as a meeting space
- Recreation – walking, fishing, biking
- Wildlife habitat location – birds, frogs, etc.
- Economic benefit – management
 - Free services from open space

Question #2: What role *could* open space play in your community? How would having *some/more* green space affect your neighborhood or community?

- Multi-purpose
 - Recycle/reuse center
 - Dog park
- Less maintenance of greenery – no herbicide
- Use public lands more “greenly” e.g. parking, SEPTA properties
- Convenience and connection – trails/bike lanes
 - East/west and north/south
- Education - act as model of how to be green at home
- Act as buffer for rainwater – establish filter
- Incentives to conserve greenspaces
- Vacant lots as green spaces
- Getting neighborhoods involved so that there is stewardship of space
- Connect the vacant lots to make parks or use as community gardens
- Ecological restoration
- Start small with neighborhoods and grow from there

- Food access
- Public water fountains
- Easier access to green space

Question #3: Given what we've said so far, **what values, priorities, or principles should guide the Commissioner and his staff in the Department of Parks and Recreation in their decision-making regarding new or additional green spaces?** *(ranked in order with number of votes next to)*

- (5) Acquire land to support active recreation and urban agriculture and use existing as habitat
 - Need passive and active greenspace - no sacrificing passive
- (5) Healthy greenspace
 - Recreation/cooling/meeting/wildlife
- (5) Growing parks/growing community
 - Interdependence and effort
- (3) Soften edges – develop blurring between city edge and park space
- (3) Preservation and restoration of habitat
- (3) Make green space a priority and policy
- (2) Pay attention to good practices from other park spaces (national and international)
- (1) Multiplicity of uses; sizes and scales

Question #4: Given these examples, what “values-based principles” emerge from the work we've done so far?

GROUP #4 Amanda/Bridget

Question #1: What role does green space play in your community or neighborhood?
If green space is missing in a neighborhood or community, what impact does that lack have on your neighborhood or community?

- Events: introduce kids and families to park
- Beautiful open space
- Parks help me make social connections
- Trees, etc. – helps make my community healthier, more livable
- Education – learning activities happen in parks
- Parks are areas where people can gain job training, parks can also help create jobs
- Stress release; psychological; escape
- Kids walk to parks
- Parks are well-used, organized activities (i.e. sports) happen in parks
 - People congregate in parks
- We can easily walk to many parks – so we walk through out community – meet one another
- Park spaces create a great shared space – Communitarian

- Activities: church services, events, arts and culture
- Culture of green – my whole block gardens
 - Real appreciation of green space, knowing it is there and available
- Promotes and fosters community
- Keeps real estate values favorable – economic development

Question #2: What role *could* open space play in your community? How would having *some/more* green space affect your neighborhood or community?

- Add more community gardens
- Educational; connect education, programming and training
- Social programs; jobs and training
- Economic development agenda could play a more important role in this process and in parks generally
- More tourism
- Pay more attention to historic aspect of parks as resources
- Could be capacity building around existing open/green spaces
- Community could get more involved/invested – this could be improved
 - People will become more invested with more awareness
- More political will needed
- Parks could be a revenue stream for the city
- More green/open space could make city feel less dense
- Connect schools – parks – use parks as outdoor classrooms

Question #3: Given what we've said so far, **what values, priorities, or principles should guide the Commissioner and his staff in the Department of Parks and Recreation in their **decision-making regarding new or additional green spaces?****

- We need to emphasize a spirit of cooperation
 - General shared rules – shared responsibilities
- Allocate resources to help support cooperation around parkland – resources for activities, maintenance, etc.
- Parks are a gift – there is/must be shared responsibility
 - This will help develop ownership/stewardship
- Parks can't be built in isolation
 - Listen to the communities/neighborhoods
 - Parks are neighborhood specific/dependant on the community
 - Relationships will help parks be maintained, grow, be safe places, etc.
- Respect for uses and users in park
 - We all do different things in parks; each thing is valuable
- Parks management is hard; park building is easy
- Equity of resources – communities have uneven access to them

- Context – physical
 - Be aware of and respect community culture
- Nurture community capacity building
- Safety
- Education – information sharing
 - Do it creatively
 - Do it constantly
- Get the City to think about communities and parks more holistically
 - Break down silos between departments so all are working together towards shared goals

Question #4: Given these examples, what “values-based principles” emerge from the work we’ve done so far?

- (10) Talk, involve, and respect the community
- (6.5) City agencies/institutions must work together; remove silos, use integrated approach
- (6.5) Education will lead to stewardship building
- (1) Equity in resource allocation, not necessarily in acreage