**Parks Committee Meeting**

**Minutes**

**(03-06-24)**

**Board Committee Members Present:**

Raquel Keating, Bernice McCallum, Ted Reich, Rosie De Los Santos, Frank Fernandez, Roberto Caballero, and William Ramírez.

**Manager**: Mitch Magidson.

**Parks Committee Agenda:**

Introduction of Board Members & Manager.

Background on the reconstruction of the park.

Briefly bringing everyone up to date.

Inform everyone of what the Board is proposing to do.

Seek input from shareholders.

**Bernice McCallum:**

“The Board of Director’s number one priority is park safety for all of its users: kids, seniors and the disabled.”

**What will remain in the park:**

* The sprinkler, the blue foamedarea, and the curb cut around the sprinkler.
* The asphalt walkways.
* The original play equipment “maze bright colored walls”.

**Ideas with how to surface the 5 remaining areas.**

* Cementing the entire park. - Sotera Ramos
* Asphalting the entire park. - Elizabeth Diaz, Maria Garey, Raquel Keating, Bernice McCallum, etc.
* Using (1) of the (5) unfinished parts as a dog park. - Maria Golod.
* Hybrid model meaning a combination of grass, shrubs, trees and the southern (3) parts of the park and asphalting the (2) northern parts. - Ted Reich, Ruth Rhambuf, Marek Kruszelnicki and Claudia Bernstein.

**Beyond the surfacing of the park:**

Installing play equipment, benches, table, and seatings with or without umbrellas, ping-pong, and picnic tables, etc.

**Manager’s Statement:**

The Manager commented that it would be a tremendous expense to remove the existing asphalt. He continued that the grounds area is a moving depression meaning that areas would eventually sink and would require regular maintenance.

The park has a drainage issue. There are existing drains on the southern and northern end of the park, with a third drain which is situated underneath the sprinkler. A Con Edison Sewer Drain is also located in the northern end of the park near the maze.

**Hybrid Model:**

The Manager passed out a drawing indicating the location of the sprinkler area, the maze and the 5 unfinished Parts.

The drawing recommended asphalting the 2 northern unfinished parts while greening the (3) remaining unfinished parts where items like: benches, tables, etc. could be permanently mounted.

You also had shareholders who spoke in opposition to the Hybrid Model and felt that the entire park should be returned as a play area for the kids. Elizabeth Diaz, Maria Garey, etc.

And other shareholders stated that asphalting the entire area would allow for a multi-purpose use of the park.

Landscape Architects from City College have surveyed the park on more than one occasion and have interviewed members of the Board of Directors as well as the Manager so they can possibly incorporate their ideas into the designs. This survey is being done at no cost to Masaryk Towers.

**The Dog Park:** A shareholder recommended that (1) of the (5) unfinished parts be converted into a dog park. The same shareholder further stated that **200** shareholders have already signed a petition urging the Board of Directors to create a dog park. - Maria Golod.

**Survey** – two different shareholders recommended that we consider conducting a Survey of all the shareholders. One shareholder stated that she had already conducted a survey on the Facebook Page, and she received 15 responses. She didn’t indicate what the actual responses were. - Kristen Quiles.

**Park Budget, Design & Cost:**

* One shareholder asked if there’s a budget for the completion of the park. – Karen.

**Response:** We have the necessary funds to cover the cost of completing the park. – Manager.

* Who approved the park design? – Karen.

**Response:** According to the Manager, the Engineers recommended that we go ahead and restore the entire sprinkler area and construct (4) asphalt walkways leading from each park entrance to the sprinkler and leaving the remaining (5) unfinished parts for the Board of Directors to decide what will happen with them.

* Did the Board of Directors approve the design? – Karen.

**Response:** from the Park Committee Chairperson. “I wasn’t part of the Board of Directors when all this came about?”

* Did the Board of Directors approved this design and go ahead? - Karen.

**Response:** The Manager stated that the Board approved the design and go ahead. Please note that no Board Member who was present at this meeting disputed or challenged the Manager’s Statement. Furthermore, there was no official recorded vote in the minutes regarding this issue.

* When will the park be opened? – Karen.

**Response: “**It will be open this summer. - Raquel Keating.

The Manager clarified and stated that it will not be opened by the Summer.

It’s impossible to open the park by the summer. “We should not be giving anyone false expectations.” – Darius.

* How much was already spent on the park to get to this point? - Karen

**Response:** Approximately **$54,000.00**.

* What would it take to complete the Park?

**Response:** We currently have estimates ranging from **$85,000.00** to over **$100,000.00**. Ifwe exceed **$100,000.00** dollars, we will need the approval of HPD.

* Why can’t we bid out the entire job to one contractor? - Maria Golod.

**Response:** The Manager stated that if we did that, it would increase the cost of the project by at least 10% to 20%.