

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor

Chris Cook
Interim
Commissioner

COMMUNITY MEETING NOTICE
You are invited to a meeting for renovations to
2014 AUG -5 P 12:40

BOSTON, MA
McLaughlin Playground
Upper Terrace



For more information, please see the reverse side or call Allison Perlman at the Boston Parks and Recreation Department (617) 961-3035 or email Allison.Perlman@boston.gov

BOSTON
PARKS AND
RECREATION

Tuesday, September 23rd 6:30-8:30 pm
New England Baptist Hospital, Potter Conference Rm.
125 Parker Hill Ave, Boston



McLaughlin Playground Upper Terrace

THE PROJECT:

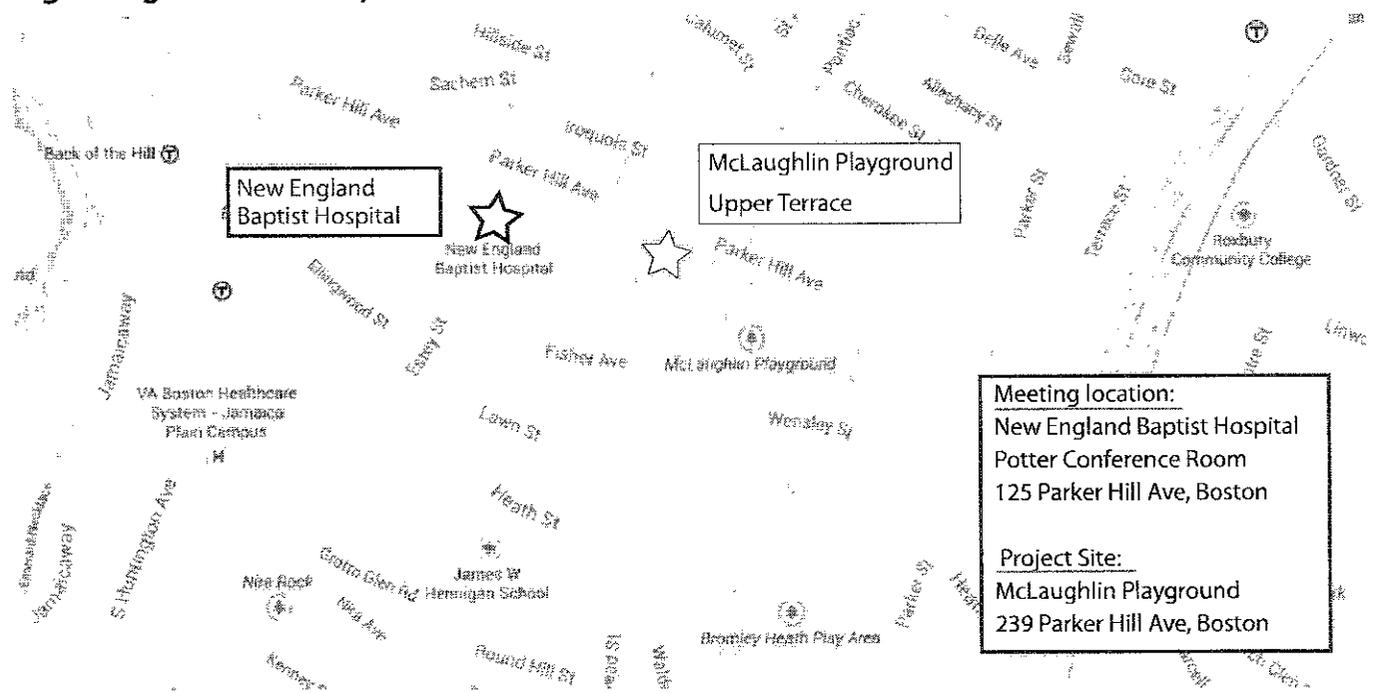
As part of the Boston Parks and Recreation Departments continuing efforts to provide quality open space and recreation areas for use and enjoyment by all residents of the city, efforts are underway to make improvements to McLaughlin Playground Upper Terrace.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We are looking for interested community members to help us in determining how McLaughlin Upper Terrace will look and function in the future. **The third meeting will have a presentation of the preferred park design and detailed information about the design elements.**

WHAT TO EXPECT:

The Parks Department is very interested in what the community has to contribute to the design process. Representatives from CBA Landscape Architects will facilitate the meeting, supported by a Parks Department official. The presentation will discuss project scope and the preferred design plan based on community input received from the first and second meetings. **Following the presentation, community members will be invited to offer input regarding the material presented.**



SURVEY:

Please take a minute to give us your opinions for McLaughlin Upper Terrace by filling out the survey using the link below....

<http://www.surveymoz.com/s3/1732650/McLaughlin-Playground-Survey>

**McLaughlin Park Upper Terrace Renovation
Community Meeting #2
Date: May 28, 2014**

Attending: Allison Perlman, BPRD Project Manager (AP)
Marchelle Jacques-Yarde, BPRD Community Outreach Coordinator
D.J. Chagnon, CBA Landscape Architects LLC (DJC)
Megan Tomkins, CBA Landscape Architects LLC (MT)
Christine Dwyer, NE Baptist Hospital Community Relations
Many abutters & neighbors - see sign in sheet

1. The meeting started off with AP introducing the project and the time line: this is the 2nd community design meeting of 3 this spring (3rd meeting date TBD, depending on final receipt of grant funding).
2. DJC reviewed the site & its context, existing uses, and project goals. DJC outlined what design elements are required for the grant and what other elements are desired by the community. DJ reviewed some options for programming, such as the overlook, interpretive/wayfinding signage & seating options.
3. MT presented 3 plans showing different treatment options for several different design elements.
4. Many community members offered feedback on park and the plan options.
 - o **Rules/Enforcement Issues - Observations** - One attendee expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of collapsible bollards as a replacement for the metal swing gate at the emergency vehicle entry. People park near the rustic steps near Ben's Tower to hang out on steps/at tower. Groups use the upper terrace as a spot to BBQ (especially college groups). Dog owners use the upper terrace as an off leash area.
 - o **Rules Signage - Suggestion - Better park rules signage throughout park.** This suggestion addresses the above observations. Signage may also include a note about the nearest dog park being at nearby Kevin Fitzgerald Park. Rules signage would be good at all major park entry points.
 - o **Wayfinding Signage** - Community members expressed interest in wayfinding signs mounted flush into the pavement or mounted to rustic boulders along the paths (that could be seen above snow).
 - o **Historic Wall - Suggestion** - One attendee expressed interest in clearing behind the historic wall to restore it to a previous condition of more openness.
 - o **Clearing of Invasives/Overgrowth** - A neighbor in one the fire access road houses expressed her approval of clearing of invasives/brush near the end of the wall in the woods/orchard for sightlines/safety.

- **Orchard Restoration/Clearing of Invasives in Woodland** - There was a discussion of managing volunteer groups to do this work. A better city & community relationship could be established to keep everyone in the loop when work is being done with groups.
 - **Ben's Tower - Observations** - The artist, Mags Harries, stated that the original intent was for Ben's Tower to be an overlook with a 180 degree vista. Judy Beland stated that the local librarian used to have storytime at the tower every week, and another community member noted that NEB hospital staff used to use it as a lunch spot in warm weather. Others noted that the reason it can be used for unsavory activities is its current secludedness.
 - **Ben's Tower - Suggestions** - Mags & the Beland's would like to see Ben's Tower restored to its original condition & it should be the main overlook for the park. This prompted a discussion of who would fund it - the Browne Fund (per the agreement with the Fund at the time of installation), or BPRD funded as part of this project. Per BPRD, the Browne Fund has stated that grant money can be applied for in 2015 to restore the art. BPRD also stated that the Browne Fund is reviewing past projects including Ben's Tower. A preference was stated for the "Scheme A" new stairs connecting the 2 terraces near the ruin, and to generally treat the Tower as the overlook rather than adding a competing space. Another suggestion to improve safety is to keep the hillside near the existing rustic steps & the slope between the tower & the playground clear, perhaps by planting meadow grass (that would get mowed/brush hogged 1x-2x a year).
 - **Lighting - Observations** - Someone stated there there was originally a light at Ben's Tower (can this be verified?).
 - **Lighting - Suggestions** - Some suggestions to improve safety around Ben's Tower would be to add a light on the existing pole in the playground area that would shine in toward the tower, possibly a motion detecting light.
 - **Paths - Suggestions** - There were differing opinions on treatment of new paths. Some neighbors did not want new paths at all so as to discourage use of the site. Others wanted to acknowledge the desire lines through the park & a preference was expressed for the more curvy paths. There was discussion of the requirement for accessible paths due to ADAAG (accessibility) requirements, as well as the grant requirement to include some added circulation.
 - **Safety - Suggestion** - Neighbors stated that the park needs more policing. BPRD said they would reach out the local precinct again. A neighbor also noted that there is a Friday-Saturday night police detail that patrols the neighborhood, and they will be asked to check on the park.
4. There was also feedback about other portions/terraces of the park. They are as follows:
- There is a lot of fresh broken glass along the sidewalk between the NEB parking lot on Parker Hill Ave. & the Upper Terrace/Playground entry.

- A park user suggested a designated fenced dog park area - BPRD noted that the city is considering more such areas & encouraged the park user to contact the city with the request.
- A park neighbor noted that there are needles on the ground in the urban wild area & asked how this area could be maintained in a safe way.
- A playground user suggested adding a light at the playground that would be on at the same time as the basketball lights.

Notes prepared by Megan Tomkins for CBA Landscape Architects LLC