



Mayor Mark Farrell
Phil Ginsburg, General Manager

Date: March 7, 2018

To: Recreation and Park Commission
Capital Committee

Through: Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager
Toks Ajike, Interim Director, Capital and Planning Division

From: Charlene Angsuco, Project Manager

Subject: Alice Chalmers Playground Concept Design

Agenda Wording

Discussion and possible action to approve the conceptual design for Alice Chalmers Playground, a Let'sPlaySF! Initiative project. Approval of this proposed action by the Commission is the Approval Action as defined by S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

Strategic Plan

Strategy 1: Inspire Public Space

Objective: Strengthen the quality of existing parks and facilities.

Strategy 2: Inspire Play

Objective: Strengthen and promote the safety, health, and well-being of San Francisco's youth and seniors.

Background

Alice Chalmers Playground is located mid-block on Brunswick between Whittier and Lowell in the Outer Mission neighborhood. It is located in Supervisorial District 11. The existing playground is approximately 3,800 square feet in size.

This project is one of 13 playgrounds that will be renovated across the City as part of the Let's Play SF! Initiative. Let'sPlaySF! is a partnership between San Francisco's Recreation and Parks Department and the San Francisco Parks Alliance to renovate the City's worst playgrounds. These playgrounds serve 20,000 children and were selected for renovation by a Playgrounds Task Force because they contain unhealthy wood or are in low-to moderate-income neighborhoods dense with children.

The renovation of Alice Chalmers Playground, as part of the Let'sPlaySF! Initiative, is driven by the transformative power of play centered around three main ideas:



Wellness: Playgrounds encourage kids to get outside and away from screens. Outdoor play burns calories and helps develop muscle strength, and coordination and can foster a lifelong love of outdoor activities.

Creativity: Playgrounds nurture growing brains by promoting imaginative and cooperative play that can foster advanced cognitive skills in young brains.

Community: Playgrounds bring people together. They allow people to connect across social, economic and age group divides.

Community Process

The Recreation and Park Department (RPD), with support from the San Francisco Parks Alliance and landscape architecture consultant Groundworks Office, has spent the last nine months collecting and integrating extensive input from the community to inform the proposed concept design.

RPD held four community meetings on the following dates:

- June 22, 2017
- September 28, 2017
- December 16, 2017
- February 17, 2018

Other forms of engagement included focus groups with students from Longfellow Elementary, specifically with the Jamestown after-school Program and SF Christian School (SFCS). A unique focus group with local elementary educators was also held. In addition, the project team sought additional feedback from parents and students at SF Shared Schoolyards. Multi-lingual noticing of these community meetings were done through on-site postings, postal mailings in the park's immediate vicinity, door-to-door canvassing, and flyering outside the local elementary schools during after-school pickup hours.

Community meeting announcements were made through online outlets including RPD and Parks Alliance eNews, the Project Blog, and the project's growing email stakeholder list. The meetings were announced on social media including NextDoor, the Supervisor's Facebook, and Longfellow Elementary PTA's Facebook. The project's growing stakeholder list includes contacts from the Supervisor's Office, Parks Alliance, previous meetings attendees, EventBrite RSVPs, and online survey respondents. At present, this list includes approximately 275 individuals.

For those unable to attend the in-person meetings and events, RPD made meeting materials available on its project page, and collected feedback through two online design preference surveys.

Through these various in-person and online forums, the project team presented three design alternatives: The Hills, The Coast, and The Fort each with its own unique style of play. After obtaining feedback from 150+ community members, it was clear that The Coast and The Fort were equally preferred. The concept designs resulted in the hybridization of two preferred themes, which resulted in the proposed concept design.

Proposed Playground Renovation Program

The design approach for Alice Chalmers Playground references the rocky coastline of California and gives kids a tactile and active play experience. The playground culminates in a large fort structure that will offer commanding views, and foster a creative and imaginary type of play experience (Exhibit A).

The overall scope of the project includes:

- Renovation of the children’s play area with new play equipment for tot and school age children
- New safety surfacing
- Improvements to the main entrance to create an accessible, inviting, and welcoming park experience
- Improvements to the surrounding playground pathways and restrooms to make them compliant with current accessibility codes and standards
- Tree wells with integrated platform seating to serve as a respite from the dense urban setting
- New landscaping and vegetation to soften the site
- New picnic tables and flexible seating

Sources and Uses of Funding

Sources

2012 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond	\$2,697,013
Private Grant, San Francisco Parks Alliance	\$402,987
Total Sources	\$3,100,000

Uses

Construction / hard costs	\$2,110,993
Softs costs	\$989,007
Total Uses	\$3,100,000

Project Schedule

Planning	Summer 2017 – Winter 2018
Design	Winter 2018 – Fall 2018
Bid/Award	Fall 2018 –Spring 2019
Construction	Spring 2019 – Fall 2019
Close-Out	Fall 2019 – Winter 2019

Environmental Review

The project has been reviewed by the Planning Department (Case No. 2017-014589ENV) and was issued a Categorical Exemption under Class 1 – Existing Facilities and Class 4 – Minor Alterations to Land.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the conceptual design to renovate the Alice Chalmers Playground. Approval of this proposed action by the Commission is the Approval Action as defined by S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

Supported By

Supervisor Safai
San Francisco Christian School
San Francisco Parks Alliance
Calvary Baptist Church
Community meeting attendees and survey respondents
Linda D'Avirro
Joelle Kenealy
Sacha Madayag

Opposed By

None known

Attachments

Exhibit A. Conceptual Design Graphics for Alice Chalmers Playground
Exhibit B. Letters of Support
Exhibit C. CEQA Determination