

ON: JULY 25, 2019

RE: Windsor Square Association Pilot Playground Project

TO: Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council  
Land Use Committee  
July 25, 2019

BY: Email to LUC Chair: melrose@greaterwilshire.org

I would ask that the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee please

*Recommend that the Board of the GWNC support the Windsor Square Association's Larchmont Playground Pilot Project and send a letter documenting that support to the Council District 4 and Councilmember David Ryu and the Department of Recreation and Parks and its designers - noting support for my attached comments and asking that the exact design details be worked out among the Department of Recreation and Parks, representative of the Windsor Square Association and the Larchmont Boulevard Association.*

*[The letter of support should attach the comments below on the designs submitted to, and reviewed by, GWNC to be directed to the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) and its playground designers]*

1. Wall and Fence.

- a. The front (east) wall appears to be located too far east - it should sit back of the Bellacures bay window.
- b. The wall and fence construction / height should be discussed. Perhaps the fence should be taller so that it cannot be climbed easily. Similarly,
  - (1) the fence should probably be designed of a material that cannot easily be scaled (such as wrought iron pickets).

(2) "Traffic-rated fence / wall" provides parents a sense of safety from vehicles.

(3) K-Rail for this low wall and fence base should be reconsidered because:

- (i) Lower starting point for fence on top gives more visibility through fence above the K-Rail.
- (ii) Lower labor cost for installation than building a foundation and wall from scratch.
- (iii) Obvious message to parents about traffic rating (since it's K-Rail).
- (iv) Implied message about "pilot" (not permanent) nature of the playground.
- (v) Implied message about possibility of cost-effective future expansion of playground into a possible park (without costs and money waste involved in demolishing custom-constructed low wall).

2. Gate(s).

The gate from the sidewalk will be one where, in addition to Park Rangers, the local LBA/SSA/BID can unlock/lock. If there is any building code requirement for a back gate, it will be an emergency exit only, and the push bar for that exit will be adult height to prevent accidental child opening. If there is such a back gate, there also should be a padlock for Ranger/LBA/SSA/BID locking and unlocking of that extra gate at the same time that the front gate is locked / unlocked. Otherwise, the push bar could be used to open the playground during the night.

3. Landscape and Amenities.

a. The landscape at the entrance must be coordinated with the existing sidewalk-adjacent planting next to the parking lot to the north.

b. Shrubs and landscape details should be discussed with stakeholders later, after hardscape details are agreed. Plantings should be coordinated with the existing sidewalk-adjacent plantings (maintained by the LBA).

c. The southern tree within the playground is probably not viable in that location, shaded by the building and too close to the building. WSA and LBA should have landscape professionals weigh in.

d. Take into account the existing planters in front, the types of gates, and the gate swing (of all gates if there actually is an extra emergency exit).

e. "Removable Bollards" shown at the sidewalk entrance in the rendering: Not necessary? (Especially not with K-Rail construction and an appropriate gate.)

f. There is a question of the efficiency / efficacy of a trash can within the playground.

4. Seating, Occupancy and Signage.

a. It seems best to have just straight benches; the curved ones around the trees may encourage climbing and may be expensive.

b. Benches should be utilitarian so they may be unbolted from the ground and reused later, should the community grow to love the idea of expanding the playground pilot into an actual, larger-area "park" on Larchmont.

c. This is a playground for children, not a seating place for unaccompanied adults to eat their purchases from nearby vendors. All renderings should remove the images of adults unaccompanied by children inside the playground boundaries.

d. The allowed occupancy probably should be 49 people or fewer. Aside from that being a reasonable number, it also might mean there could be no requirement for a secondary means of egress (assuming there even is such a requirement for a fenced outdoor space that has access only to the public right-of-way and no access into a building).

e. At about 1,200 square feet, the net sq. ft. per person for 49 people in the playground would be about 24 sq. ft.

f. There should be signage at the entrance forbidding use by adults unaccompanied by children. (The signage will also post hours of occupancy, such as 8 a.m. to dusk, or the like).

g. Signage should be tasteful and properly located and mounted with community input.

5. Remaining Parking Lot.

a. The parking plan has been confirmed and approved by the city's Department of Transportation (DOT). Note that DOT has determined it is best that the spaces behind (west of) the playground pilot become a loading zone, allowing the city lot to be a 25-space lot. Also, the loading zone will help the local businesses and reduce some traffic on the boulevard as well as leave that space open for the Sunday farmer's market.

b. A potential community benefit idea for the wall-side edge of the new loading area . . . is to install a community and GWNC Notice Board there as part of the playground pilot project:

