

Dufferin Grove Wading Pool Reconstruction
Public Consultation Meeting
11 July 2007 – located beside the wading pool
Attended by approximately 40 people

1) Councillor Giambrone introduced the meeting and the City staff:

- Peter Didiano, Parks Capital Projects Coordinator
- Peter Leiss, Parks Supervisor
- Tino DeCastro, Recreation Supervisor
- Chris Gallop, Councillor's Constituency Assistant

2) Parks Capital Projects staff, Peter Didiano, presented the project proposal to the community:

- Project was triggered by a 2005 audit, funding for wading pool repairs across the City was entered in the City's capital plan. Dufferin Grove got to the top of the list based on the engineering assessment that it needed the work most urgently of all the pools in the city.
- Focus of the work will mainly be on replacing the plumbing, with some other features included
- This is considered a state-of-good-repair project
- The preliminary concept design was shown to attendees
- Staff explained the City policy of promoting accessibility in all our new designs and so wanted to do asphalt paths to connect to the wading pool
- Wading pool proposed to be surrounded by semi-permeable hard surfacing
 - To help keep sand out of the pumps
 - To better integrate the wading pool with the playground
- Propose to use limestone blocks around the north side of the pool to frame it, help keep sand out, and double as informal seating
- Explained that it was possible to have an artistic pattern in certain allowed colours built right into the concrete---better than paint, which won't last long

3) Meeting was opened up to comments and questions from the community:

Q: Will there be any sharp edges that a child might fall and injure themselves on?

A: There will be no edging, all hard surfacing will be flush with the ground.

Q: Is there a way to reduce the flooding in the area south of the sand pit by improving drainage and reducing erosion?

A: Yes, we can look at seeing if something to help with this can be included in the project.

Comment: Audit was done 2-3 years ago, there was no involvement of the recreation staff, the people who actually operate the pool on a day to day basis.

Comment: Grading needs to be looked at, no materials should ever flow into the pool

Comment from City staff: The new pool would work similar to the current one and would dump water after use, due to sanitary reasons. It will not be a system that recirculates the water.

Comment: Work on the drainage. We need to keep sand from getting into the pool.

Q: Can there be a foot washing station?

A: We will look into this.

Q: Any way to heat up the water a little for the kids, e.g. solar panel heating system?

A: Solar expensive and not sure it would work for the pool due to all the shade it gets. Also can't use black surfaces for the pool to absorb the heat due to safety reasons, staff and parents need to be able to see the bottom of the pool

Q: Can you explain the plumping work you will be doing?

A: The valve chamber and the pipe connections need to be replaced. This would connect to the existing line coming into the park, we are not planning to replace this line because it was worked on relatively recently.

Q: Is there a new drinking fountain being installed? Can it be double-tiered at different heights?

A: Yes there will be a new drinking fountain. It could be double- or triple-tiered.

Q: What kind of benches will be installed?

A: Existing benches would be retained. We have budgeted for one additional standard park bench. Limestone blocks around north side could also double as informal seating.

Several people commented that they don't find limestone block seating very comfortable.

Comment (several people): Why is there so much asphalt? Exactly where it would the paths go? The area north of the cob is heavily used, don't want the asphalt path going through there if it's going to impact how the area is currently used.

Comment by staff: Explained the City's Accessibility standards. Explained that they identified the central north-south path as the main axis through the park and they wanted to connect the wading pool to it. The thinking in our design is that we wanted to accommodate access from both the north and the south. (Staff visually demonstrated where the proposed paths would go by walking the route)

Comment (by several people): An access path heading north-east and connecting to Havelock would be more useful since there is heavy traffic of people accessing the playground from that direction.

Q: Are there any alternative pump options that could be used to make the pool more fun, e.g a splash pad type design?

A: The focus of our project is rebuilding the existing pool. A splash pad would be more expensive and the drainage issues would be much worse.

Q: Any chance of renovating the washrooms at the north end of the park?

A: The mandate of this project is to rebuild the wading pool

Q: What kind of lighting? Will it be LED? Can it be “dark sky” lighting to reduce light pollution?

A: We are still assessing LED lights for parks. We’re not sure they will provide enough lighting to keep things well lit and safe, but we are working on it.

Q: Can you make sure accessibility design works well with WheelTrans operations and their drop off locations, e.g. at Gladstone and Sylvan?

A: Yes, we do work with WheelTrans on these sorts of issues. For Gladstone and Sylvan there is curb cut at the corner which would allow wheel-chair users to access the sidewalk and the park.

Comment (by several people): Concerned that there is too much asphalt and hard surfaces in the proposed design. Concern this will generate heat. Concern that hard surfaces increases severity of injury to kids.

Q: Why asphalt? Are there other material options?

A: asphalt is more practical in general and is less expensive. The park is not comparable to the heat effect in, for example, a parking lot. Any heat increase would be negligible in the park. Proposed asphalt paths 8 ft wide.

Q: Laneway behind houses on Sylvan that connect to Gladstone is often blocked, can we make sure Wheeltrans doesn’t block it as well?

A: Wheeltrans would drop off at the corner by the curb cut ramp.

Q: When would construction take place?

A: Our proposed timeline is to do the work after labour day until the end of the year.

Comment: two asphalt paths is too much, most people arrive from the south.

Comments (by several people): there should be less hard surfaces in general.

Q: Would playground fence stay the same if the limestone blocks go in around the north side of the pool?

A: Existing fence would readjusted.

Q: Can you realign the limestone block and shift them clockwise to align better with the playground?

A: Yes, we can look at readjusting this.

Q: Can you be more specific about the semi-permeable materials you want to use?

A: They would be concrete uni-lock pavers with wide gaps to allow for drainage. Drainage would actually be much better than compacted soil.

Q: If you only do one asphalt connection to the pool, can money be reallocated to put asphalt down on the main north-south path all the way through the park?

A: Maybe, depending on the bids after the project goes to tender and whether we have enough funds left over for this.

Q: Is a splash pad possible if we wait?

A: This is a state of good repair project. If you want to wait for a splash pad there is no guarantee funding would become available. Also, wading pools come with Recreation staff, splash pads do not.

Q: How was this project initiated and how much will it cost? Was Accessibility the main reason behind the project?

A: Parks did a wading pool audit and determined that maintenance was needed at the Dufferin Grove pool, which was ranked as in the worst condition in the city. The main reason behind this project is state of good repair. Once the project is in the capital plan and has funding approved by Council, we then look at new City policies that have been put in place since the last time we built the pool, such as accessibility, and incorporate them into the new design.

Comment: I am concerned that too many delays will mean that we would lose this project. I think overall the design is good and you just need to work on simplifying the asphalt paths and reducing the amount of paving.

Q: What are the changes going to be to the actual wading pool (rather than the area around it)?

A: The pool will be completely replaced, all new concrete and pipes, but would stay in exactly the same footprint at the current pool. The new central chamber would be slightly larger. New drinking fountain would be installed. We'd also do a little bit of framing around the pool in asphalt or other surfacing.

Q (by Rec staff): Can the door to the shed face the pool?

A: Yes

Q: How will removed concrete be disposed of?

A: It would be recycled/

Comment: drainage very important, need to keep water out of the surrounding area, especially the volley ball court.

Comment: Would like to see more cob benches.

4) Wrap up by Councillor Giambrone. Commitment to get revised design out to the community once ready. Meeting adjourned.