

Farring Baybrook Park Master Plan

Baltimore City Department of
Recreation and Parks

Wanda S. Durden, Director

Prepared By: Mahan Rykiel Associates, Inc.

Master Plan Approved By Baltimore City
Planning Commission
March 20, 2008

Report Completed July 2008

City of Baltimore
Recreation & Parks



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PART 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. OVERVIEW, BACKGROUND AND ASSESSMENT

Farring Baybrook Park is located in South Baltimore and was originally the site of the temporary housing for wartime industrial workers at Fairfield. Much of the land was redeveloped as a residential community and the remaining area became a park in the 1970s; therefore, the park physical structure is fragmented resulting in numerous challenges. The Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks retained Mahan Rykiel Associates to prepare a park master plan in response to a recommendation in the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay SNAP. The purpose of this plan is to provide a tool for the City and surrounding communities to use to guide incremental improvements over the next fifteen years and beyond.

The master planning process was grounded in community participation, including interviews with key stakeholders and three public meetings. Stakeholders identified assets, liabilities and opportunities during the first public meeting; reacted to three alternative concept approaches during the second meeting; and provided additional input on the draft plan during the third meeting. During all meetings, the consultants reviewed qualities of successful parks, emphasizing the importance of stakeholder involvement, and reviewed the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Together, the stakeholders and consultants identified a number of assets, liabilities and opportunities for the park to help guide recommendations:

Landmarks and Sub-Zones: Rolling topography and bisecting roadways divide the park into several areas. Some of the resulting areas function well as distinct use areas while other areas are hidden and isolated. Several “landmarks” and important functions are located near or throughout the park. The historic water tower contributes a positive image; the Recreation Center and Myers Soccer Pavilion are important activity generators but could do more to energize the park; some ballfields are heavily used but there are opportunities to improve others and create new ones; the “overlook” is an important focal point but is obscured by vegetation and the adjacent elementary schools offer the potential for a strong school/park relationship that doesn’t currently exist.

Barriers to Connectivity: The wooded stream corridor, several bisecting roads, rolling topography and overgrown vegetation create barriers to the full positive use of the park by limiting visual and physical connections among park areas and between the park and adjacent neighborhoods.

Gateways, Important Views and Vistas: The park is located at some of the highest elevations in South Baltimore, resulting in outstanding views to Baltimore's downtown and Outer Harbor. Because of the fragmented boundary of the park, there are numerous park entrances and gateway areas, some of which are marked but most which are not. As a result, there is uncertainty within the community as to what lands actually belong to the park.

Underutilized Areas: Several areas within the park are underutilized. In some areas this is the result of neglect of existing facilities while in most areas this is because of the large land area of the park and the park's fragmentation.

Appearance and Security: For the most part, Farring Baybrook Park appears to be worn and neglected. Most of the facilities date back to the original construction in the 1970s and have not been fully maintained. In many areas, vegetation is overgrown resulting in hidden areas and obstructed view corridors. The worn appearance, hidden areas and limited positive activity in many parts of the park results in reports of undesirable activity and perceptions that the park is not safe.

Park Boundaries and Development Opportunity Sites: During the master planning process there was discussion regarding the possibility for new development that might occur within the park. This idea originated in the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay SNAP, partly because of the disjointed nature of the park itself. If any new development were to occur in the park, it is important that it be located in an area and designed in such a way as to help activate and improve the park. If any residential areas adjacent to the park are redeveloped in the future, the new design should include modifications to the park boundary to improve connections between the park and the community.

B. MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on community input and consultant assessment, a number of improvements have been identified to enhance Farring Baybrook Park and are shown on the ***Illustrative Master Plan*** at the end of this Executive Summary. The improvement projects address upgrades to existing park features as well as the addition of new park features. The projects can be implemented individually or in combination as funding permits.

Recreation Center Site: Plans to renovate the recreation center building are currently underway. Recommendations to improve the adjacent site are divided between two areas. For the West Grounds, improvements focus on making the site ADA compliant, reducing the overall amount of hard pavement, adding shade trees and adding ADA Bocce Ball courts. For the East

Grounds, improvements focus on enhancing and expanding the picnic grounds, converting the wading pool to a spray pad and adding shade trees in key areas.

Baybrook Elementary and Curtis Bay Elementary Schools: The School District and Department of Recreation and Parks need to work together to enhance physical and programmatic connections between the schools and park. At a minimum, shade trees need to be planted near the existing playgrounds on the school grounds.

Myers Soccer Pavilion: Enhancements to the soccer pavilion focus on making it more prominent and improving physical and visual connections. The plan proposes that the underused courtyard be enclosed for expanded meeting space and designed to take advantage of relationships with Overlook. The existing parking area should be renovated.

Overlook: Improvements focus on removal of overgrown vegetation that obscures the Overlook and related views to downtown; repair of stone wall and pavement surface; additional pathway connections to adjacent areas and the provision of tall canopy trees to provide shade while framing views.

West Bay Avenue Streetscape: improving the streetscape of West Bay Avenue will enhance the overall image of the park. Streetscape improvements include street trees and ornamental pedestrian-scaled lighting.

Water Tower: The water tower is not located within the park; however, it is an important landmark within the community. Wherever possible, views to the water tower need to be preserved and enhanced.

Park Entrances: In general, park entrances will be improved to enhance the park image and identify park boundaries. Improvements include identity and wayfinding signage, landscape enhancements and, in some cases where the gateway functions as a small neighborhood park, benches and gathering areas.

Existing Ball Fields: The existing Upper Fields will be renovated to include new fencing, backstops and benches; a resurfaced parking area and additional shade trees. The existing Lower Fields will be renovated and put into use again. Part of this renovation includes a new parking area to service the fields, an extensive pathway system linking the fields to other areas of the park and new shade tree planting.

Proposed Ball Fields: The master plan identifies five locations where new soccer fields could be developed should the need arise. Most importantly, the additional fields would help to activate areas of the park that are currently underutilized. The most important location for a new field is adjacent to the Myers Soccer Pavilion. A new field would allow extension of the pavilion

activity to the outside where it would be more visible. New trails and tree plantings would help connect the new fields to other use areas within the park.

Bike/Pedestrian Trails: In addition to new trails connecting various use areas of the park, particularly new facilities, the centerpiece of the trail system will be an 8' wide bicycle and pedestrian trail. This trail completes a loop around the stream corridor, linking the eastern and western halves of the park and linking the soccer pavilion area with the recreation center area. Some of this trail would utilize the existing pathway alignment, however, new alignments will be provided where necessary to provide ADA access.

Stage and Festival Space: The existing slope north of the Overlook provides a natural amphitheater that is currently used for concerts and events. The master plan proposes an enhancement to this area that includes electric hookups, additional tree planting and pathway connections.

Stream Corridor and Meadows: Considerable efforts have already been made to remove invasive vegetation and plant new native trees within the stream corridor. These efforts should continue throughout the entire corridor, including reforestation of the lower end of the stream corridor near the northern end of the park. A nature trail connection is proposed along the length of the stream corridor including renovation of the bridge. Two key view corridors across the stream corridor will be provided to allow for stronger visual connections between the different park areas. These corridors will be planted only with native tall canopy trees and low shrubs so that sight lines can be maintained. Meadow grasses will be provided along woodland edges to enhance the park habitat while minimizing mowing efforts.

Site Furnishings and Lighting: A standard family of site furnishings and lighting is proposed for the park and will be implemented incrementally as improvements are made to different areas of the park. New site furnishings include benches, picnic tables, and trash receptacles, bike racks, black vinyl-coated fencing, ornamental fencing, pedestrian-scaled lighting and athletic court lighting.

Signage: Because of the fragmentation of the park, signage will be utilized to link various areas of the park and provide wayfinding for park users.

Landscape Improvements and Guidelines: The master plan identifies specific recommendations related to landscape enhancements. All landscape plans should follow CPTED goals when selecting appropriate plants for specific locations. Native plant materials should be specified whenever possible.

Programming: While much of the master plan focuses on physical improvements, programming by the community is important to introduce more

positive activity into the park and to give the park more exposure. Programming should include both small and large-scale events.

Opportunity Sites: Several sites were identified as possible areas for new development on the park perimeter. This option should only be explored only if it is determined that new development will enhance the park and park use.

C. IMPLEMENTATION

Both the Department of Recreation and Parks and the surrounding communities will be responsible for implementing the master plan. Projects will be completed as public and private funding becomes available. The first implementation projects resulting from this master plan process are renovation of the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center grounds and construction of a new playground at the Curtis Bay Elementary School.

Additional priorities include, in no particular order, enhancing the overlook area, adding a new soccer field adjacent to the soccer pavilion, enhancement and management of the stream corridor, repair of existing pathways and the addition of the new bicycle pathways, renovating park entrances, upgrading general site furnishings, adding new lighting in key areas, installing signage throughout the park, increasing park programming, continuing community participation in the planning process, establishing a “friends group” and promoting the park by celebrating each new success.

PART 2: INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND ASSESSMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Overview

Mahan Rykiel Associates was retained by the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to prepare a long-range master plan for Farring Baybrook Park in response to the recommendation in the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay SNAP, adopted by the Planning Commission in June 2005.

Farring Baybrook Park is located in the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay communities in South Baltimore and abuts the Anne Arundel County line. The area was once home to temporary housing for wartime industrial workers at Fairfield. The land was redeveloped after World War II as a residential neighborhood and the remaining parcels became a park. Consequently, the park has an irregular shape and is fragmented into distinct and poorly connected areas. The park is not well known elsewhere in the City and even to some who reside in the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay communities.

The purpose of the master plan is to provide a tool for Recreation and Parks and the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay communities to protect the park and guide park enhancements over the next fifteen years or longer to realize its full potential as an integral park to Baltimore's park and open space system. Because the master plan is far-reaching, this report identifies individual projects that could be implemented incrementally as funds become available and project "cheerleaders" emerge.

While the master plan should be the foundation upon which any improvements are planned, it is not intended that this document be inflexible. As goals and surrounding influences change over the years, modifications to the master plan may also be necessary. It is important, however, to respect the inherent principles and concepts of the master plan.

2. Process

Identifying the Need: In response to the recommendations in the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay SNAP, the Department of Recreation and Parks retained Mahan Rykiel Associates in Spring 2006 to develop

a master plan for the park. The master plan process included the following:

Park Assessment: The project team began the process by conducting an assessment of the park, visiting it at various times during the day, during the week and during the seasons. In addition to observing how the park is being used, the team analyzed it in terms of environmental and physical characteristics including vegetation, habitat, erosion, lighting and park elements (walks, recreation facilities, furniture, etc.).

Stakeholder Interviews: Concurrent with the park assessment, the project team interviewed a series of stakeholders and leaders within the community. Some of these stakeholders were recognized leaders of official organizations while others were identified as leaders because of their passion and involvement with Farring Baybrook Park and other community issues or because of their proximity to the park (such as with the adjacent schools). A list of stakeholders can be found in ***Appendix B, Stakeholder Input.***

Master Plan Meeting #1: Following stakeholder interviews and park assessment, the project team conducted a public meeting in June 2006. The primary intent of this meeting was to introduce the master plan process and to garner input from the community as to concerns, opportunities and expectations.

Master Plan Meeting #2: Based on the assessment and input from the community in the first meeting, the team prepared an analysis of the park along with alternative scenarios for incorporating ideas. These master plan alternatives were presented at a public meeting in September 2006. The attendees discussed and evaluated the alternatives and identified preferred elements from each concept. Additional ideas, suggestions and concerns were forwarded to the project team via email correspondence and comments from city staff that attended area community meetings to share information about the master plan alternatives.

Master Plan Meeting #3: Based on input following the second meeting, the team prepared a draft plan which incorporated the preferred elements from each concept and presented it in a third public meeting in December, 2006.

Final Report: Following presentation of the final plan, the project team summarized the master plan process, site analysis diagrams and final recommendations of the master plan into this report.

3. Qualities of Successful Parks

While each park is different, there are common qualities found in successful parks. These qualities should be considered in the revitalization of Farring Baybrook Park.

Stakeholders Must be Involved: Truly successful parks have a strong stakeholder base of volunteers and “champions”. Public resources through the Department of Recreation and Parks are limited; park improvements and maintenance are dependant upon a partnership between Recreation and Parks and volunteers.

Parks Must Appeal to Many Different People: Successful urban parks are filled with people throughout the day and year. In order to attract these people, it is critical to appeal to young and old and male and female.

There Should be a Variety of Activities: In order to appeal to many people as identified above, successful parks offer a variety of activities that include active and passive recreation and facilities that can be used at different times of the year. It is also important to program parks with both large and small events throughout the year.

Parks Must Feel Safe and Comfortable: If people don't feel safe or comfortable in a park, they won't want to use it. Users must feel safe as a pedestrian walking to the park as well as inside the park. Park spaces should be highly visible from within the park and from areas outside the park. Similarly, users must feel comfortable in terms of having both sunny and shady areas to recreate and having barrier-free facilities.

Parks Must Have a Good Appearance: Successful parks are attractive, well maintained and inviting to users and passersby.

4. Safe Parks - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

The manner in which people use parks today is quite different than it was earlier in time. Today, safety and the perception of safety are very important considerations in whether or not people feel comfortable using a park. The master plan analysis and recommendations, therefore, take into consideration the principles of CPTED or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

According to the National Crime Prevention Council, the basis of CPTED is that criminal activity and behavior can be controlled through the design of the physical environment. It includes three primary elements:

Territoriality – “People have an innate desire to protect or defend space which they occupy.” This is done by:

- Improving the appearance of the environment
- Subdividing large areas into smaller areas that can be “claimed”
- Personalizing the environment
- Creating, maintaining and programming activity areas
- Designing facilities for various age groups
- Initiating neighborhood watch programs
- Establishing beautification programs

Natural Surveillance – “For people to take action to defend property or to prevent crime, they must be able to see illegal acts taking place.” This is done by:

- Improving lighting
- Removing blind spots and visual obstructions
- Adding windows and front porches to buildings (or taking advantage of views to adjacent windows and porches)
- Locating vulnerable elements near those which are actively used
- Training individuals in crime reporting
- Controlling growth of landscape

Access Control – “Access control helps to increase the risks perceived by offenders by restricting their movement and placing them under surveillance.” This is done by:

- Reducing the number of entrances to private areas
- Fencing-off problem areas
- Locating vulnerable areas near sources of natural surveillance

B. BACKGROUND

The following paragraphs describe existing conditions at and adjacent to Farring Baybrook Park, focusing on the configuration of the park, surrounding land uses, zoning, roads and walkways, bus routes and existing facilities at the park.



Park boundaries are not well defined. In many areas, the park abuts rear yards of surrounding residential development.

1. Study Area

The land that comprises Farring Baybrook Park was once a military housing complex spanning the boundary of the communities of Brooklyn and Curtis Bay. Following demolition of the military buildings, some portions of the large parcel became residential developments while the remaining land became a park. Because each of the surrounding residential areas has a different street pattern, the boundaries of the park are quite irregular and there is no “main” park entrance. The park boundaries are roughly defined by Church Street to the south; Tompkins Street, West Bay Avenue and Curtis Bay Elementary School to the east; 6th Street and the Anne Arundel County line to the west; and Duane Street, Baybrook Elementary School and Brooklyn Homes to the north. Both Virginia Avenue and West Bay Avenue bisect the park along the north/south axis providing significant park frontage along these two roadways. Much of the park boundary, however, does not have roadway frontage and abuts rear yards of residential properties. The study area is identified in *Exhibit 1, Study Area* that shows the park in context of the larger Baltimore community.

2. Surrounding Land Uses - Housing

With the exception of the two elementary schools, Farring Baybrook Park is surrounded by a variety of residential uses, including single-family homes, rowhomes, and apartments. The *Brooklyn and Curtis Bay Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) Baltimore City Planning Department 2005* characterized the housing surrounding Farring Baybrook Park and the full report can be accessed through the Baltimore City Government Web page. Communities surrounding the park include single-family homes both homeownership and rental properties and a public housing complex. The critical characteristic shared by each of these different housing types is their orientation to the park. Instead of facing the park in a neat row across a common street, the vast majority of the residential communities share their rear property boundary with the park. As a result, there are no “community eyes” on the park and the boundary between the private homes and the public park is irregular and often poorly demarcated.



West Bay Avenue is one of many roads that bisect the park.



An existing trail system links some, but not all, areas of the park.

3. Zoning

Zoning classifications for the park and areas immediately adjacent to the park are all residential. The park itself is zoned R-5, while the properties surrounding the park are zoned R-6. Refer to *Exhibit 2, Zoning*. It should be noted that Baltimore City is in the process of adopting a new open space zoning classification that will include park property such as Faring Baybrook

4. Existing Road and Sidewalk Network

Roadways: Church Street is the primary street providing access to the park. Off of Church Street are West Bay Avenue and Virginia Avenue which bisect the park and provide access to the parks primary use areas: The Farring Baybrook Recreation Center, the sports fields and the Myers Soccer Pavilion. The west side of the park is also bisected by 6th Street which provides a direct connection to Anne Arundel County and separates an upper sports field area from a lower one. The east side of the park is bisected by Edwight Street, which connects Brooklyn Homes and Rondo Street with West Bay Avenue. Inner Circle extends partway into the park from Tompkins Street from the east, but does not connect through to West Bay.

Sidewalks and Pathways: An extensive, yet incomplete network of pathways and sidewalks link various areas of Farring Baybrook Park. The most extensive network is located within the area bounded by Church Street, West Bay Avenue, Edwight Street and Virginia Avenue, providing access between the Myers Soccer Pavilion and the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center and from the elementary schools to the park. The connection east-west across the park involves a path through the wooded stream corridor, traversing steep slopes and crossing the stream with a small bridge. Many of the pathways and sidewalks throughout the park are not ADA compliant.

Roadways and sidewalks are illustrated in *Exhibit 3, Existing Road and Sidewalk Network*.

5. Existing Bus Routes

Farring Baybrook Park and the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center are well served by bus. The #16 Route extends up 10th Street to the Baybrook Elementary School and Virginia Avenue and the #64



The Farring Baybrook Recreation Center is the focal point of activity for the western side of the park.

Route extends across Church Street to Virginia Avenue and 10th Street. These bus routes are also illustrated on Exhibit 3.

6. Farring Baybrook Recreation Center

The Farring Baybrook Recreation Center is the focal point of the western side of the park and is home to a variety of activities including youth and adult recreation programming by the Therapeutic Recreation division of the Department of Recreation and Parks.



7. William J. Myers Soccer Pavilion

The Myers Soccer Pavilion is the focal point of the east side of the park and is a well-utilized indoor soccer facility for all of Baltimore City offering league and informal indoor soccer for youth and adults.

The Myers Soccer Pavilion is the focal point of activity for the eastern side of the park.

8. Active and Passive Recreation



Much of the park is comprised of large open spaces suitable for passive recreation.

In addition to the recreation facilities provided by the soccer pavilion and recreation center, there are numerous other recreation opportunities located throughout the park. Four baseball fields are located along the eastern perimeter of the park and two softball fields are located north of 6th Street. Just outside of the recreation center, there is a swimming pool, wheelchair basketball courts, and a bocce court and picnic pavilion. There is also a picnic area at the site of the old overlook tower, north of the soccer pavilion. This area offers dramatic views of the Baltimore skyline. The remainder of the park is primarily passive with large open fields and walkways. The open field/slope beyond the overlook serves as an informal amphitheater and festival space.



9. Natural Habitat

A wooded stream corridor is the central focus of the park and divides the park into distinct areas. Several native trees were recently planted within this corridor.

A minor stream valley bisects the area between West Bay Avenue and Virginia Avenue. For the most part, the stream valley is wooded and runs the length of the park. Over the years, the stream valley has suffered from a significant number of invasive plants, however, recent efforts on the part of the Department of Recreation and Parks and volunteers have placed emphasis on removing invasive plants and replacing them with native trees, shrubs and

groundcovers. This is particularly evident along the stream valley from the pedestrian bridge crossing southward.

10. Programming

Programming of the park includes year-round scheduled indoor events at the soccer pavilion, and at the recreation center as well as summer camp at both locations. There are limited events and festivals at the park, with the most important being the Lead Sled Festival. The location for this festival is on the open field/slope surrounding the overlook area and adjacent to West Bay Avenue.

While the Baybrook and Curtis Bay Elementary Schools are immediately adjacent to the park, there are limited activities programmed in the park specifically for these school children.

C. ASSESSMENT

The following assessment analyzes the existing park conditions, described above, and evaluates the park in terms of assets and constraints. In addition, the assessment considers community and stakeholder input, balanced with the professional observations of Mahan Rykiel Associates.

1. Landmarks and Sub-Zones

The park's fragmentation resulting from the surrounding road network, limited road frontage and rolling terrain, naturally divides Farring Baybrook into three primary areas which are, in turn, further subdivided. While this is positive in the sense that it creates a variety of districts and use areas, it is a constraint because, when coupled with other factors, it results in a disconnected park. In fact, several residents within the Brooklyn/Curtis Bay neighborhoods were unsure of the actual boundaries of the park. As the park is enhanced, special emphasis should be given to reinforcing sub zones to enhance the variety of uses within the park and to improving connections among the different areas. These connections can be both physical, in the form of pathways, and visual in the form of views.

There are also a number of landmarks within and adjacent to Farring Baybrook Park. These landmarks should help guide renovation of the park. Specific landmarks are described below and



The Overlook offers tremendous views of the Baltimore skyline and harbor area.



Important views to the Overlook are obscured by inappropriate vegetation and overgrowth.

these landmarks, along with the sub-zones are identified in *Exhibit, 4, Landmarks and Sub-Zones.*

Duane Street Neighborhood Park: This neighborhood park establishes one of the gateways to Farring Baybrook. There is a strong sense of space here, with mature trees and a good relationship with adjacent houses that front, rather than back, onto the park. The park facilities near Duane St. were installed in the 1970's. They are worn out and the area is need of renovation. There is a significant opportunity in this area and other "gateway" areas, to establish active and attractive "mini parks" that relate to their immediate surroundings.

Upper Ball fields: Both Baltimore City and Anne Arundel County residents heavily use the Upper Ball fields. Because of their location, they are very visible. There is some concern that these fields are used more by people from outside the immediate community than from within, however, this highly visible activity is important in making the park safe and energizing it.

Lower Ball fields: The Lower Ball fields are seldom used. They are set low in a valley and are not very accessible or visible. Consideration should be given to providing better access to these fields and improving them in the future as demand increases for additional active recreation facilities.

Farring Baybrook Recreation Center: The recreation center is heavily used. It's visibility from Virginia Avenue and its proximity to Baybrook Elementary School and the Upper Ball Fields make it an important feature of the park. The recreation center is scheduled for renovation in 2008; therefore, consideration should be given to improving the site area immediately adjacent to it. The site area includes a playground, swings, basketball courts, benches, a swimming pool, a bocce ball court and picnic areas.

William J. Myers Soccer Pavilion: The soccer pavilion is the focal point for the eastern portion of the park. While this facility is well-regarded and heavily used, the activity all occurs indoors so there is little "spin-off" benefit to the outdoors. Future improvements to the park should consider creating related activities adjacent to the pavilion so that activities will help energize this side of the park.

Overlook: The overlook area, and site of the former overlook tower, is one of the most exciting, yet underutilized areas of the park. Views of the Downtown Baltimore skyline are dramatic and the overlook area is well defined by a low stone wall and paved



While it is not located within the park, the historic water tower is an important landmark for the park and surrounding communities.

area. The pavement is deteriorating, however, but more importantly, the overlook area is blocked by overgrown and untended vegetation. From the Meyer Soccer Pavilion parking lot, visibility to the overlook and to the downtown skyline is completely cut off. As park improvements occur, special attention should be given to making the overlook area more visible and useable.

Water Tower: The historic water tower is outside of the park boundary, along Filbert Street; however, its presence is quite prominent throughout the park and Brooklyn/Curtis Bay. The water tower dates back to the 1930's and incorporates ornamental brickwork and is architecturally quite attractive. Special emphasis should be given to opening up and framing views to the water tower from different vantage points throughout the park.

Curtis Bay Elementary School: Curtis Bay Elementary School is located to the east of the park across West Bay Avenue. While this master plan is not intended to address adjacent properties, it should be noted that the school and school yard is, in essence, an extension of the park. As the school district makes improvements to the school, consideration should be given to providing better pedestrian linkages and crosswalks to the park and providing coordinated tree planting to emphasize the schoolyard as an extension of the park. In particular, the school district should provide large canopy shade trees near the playground. During a hot day in the spring, no students were playing on the play equipment; rather they were clustered in the shade of a large tree a few hundred feet away. Any new landscaping for the schoolyard should emphasize high-canopied shade trees that will help to define spaces and provide shade while allowing for views to and from the schoolyard.

Baybrook Elementary School: Similarly, Baybrook Elementary School has the potential to appear as an extension of the park. Unfortunately, pedestrian connection between it and the park, particularly the recreation center, is unpaved and in the form of dirt paths. The grounds themselves are sunny and hot, with no shade available near the playground or the sidewalk connection to 10th Street along which most of the students walk. As the school district contemplates improvements to this school, consideration should be given to providing better pedestrian access between the school and park and to providing a significant number of shade trees, particularly adjacent to the playground.

Ben Franklin Middle School: Ben Franklin Middle School is just outside the northern-most point of the park, adjacent to the West Bay "gateway" to the park. While this area functions as a loosely



While it is an important environmental feature, the wooded stream corridor creates a visual and physical barrier that separates two main sections of the park.



In some areas, the paths are in poor condition and are not ADA compliant.

defined pedestrian gateway, traffic is one-way out of the park so it does not function as a vehicular gateway. Currently, the school system is evaluating the facility for conversion to a high school. If this program change is implemented, Farring Baybrook Park may become the “home field” for the school sports teams. With proper investment, underutilized portions of the park can be improved to accommodate many high school sports.

2. Barriers to Connectivity

In order to provide better connections among park sub-zones, some of the barriers to connectivity will need to be removed or addressed. Primary barriers are described below and identified in *Exhibit 5, Barriers to Connectivity*.

Problem Zones: There are a number of “problem zones” that affect the image of the park, people’s desire to use the park and people’s desire to get from one part of the park to another. The “problem zones” tend to be areas of the park that are isolated from easy monitoring by the public because of overgrown vegetation, views blocked by hills, or dead end/infrequently used paths. Such isolated areas are favorite spots for illegal trash dumping, vandalism, loitering and other illegal activities. Invasive vegetation located at the north gateway, near the entrance to the park along West Bay Avenue, near Jeffrey Street creates a problem area. Because Jeffrey does not connect to West Bay and because of existing vegetation, this area attracts undesirable activity. Another problem zone is adjacent to the ruins of a former maintenance facility. Again, overgrown vegetation and limited traffic on Edwight Street make this a location for undesirable activities. There are also small hidden areas near the elementary schools. A significant “problem area” is along the stream valley. This area is overgrown with invasive vegetation and sight lines are cut off from one side of the woodland to another. While the wooded stream valley is important ecologically, consideration should be given to creating view corridors through the woodland, particularly along pathways, to make it less attractive for illicit activity.

Steep Pathway Grades and worn out paths: While there are many pathway connections throughout the park, several of these are not ADA compliant. In particular, the pathway that crosses from the East Park to the Central Park is very steep. Consideration should be given to providing ADA access between the two park areas. Much of the park path system was installed in the 1970s. Cracks and uneven settlement are unattractive and can contribute to



The primary entrance to the park is at West Bay Avenue and Church Street.

accidents. The entire park path system should be evaluated and renovated as needed.

Roadways: several roadways bisect the park, which has some affect on pedestrian connectivity. The roadways do provide important frontage for “visual connectivity” to the park. In addition, drivers on the roadways provide “eyes on the street” and help to make the park feel safer. As park improvements are implemented, consideration should be made to providing additional connections such as between Inner Circle and Edwight Street and to providing better-marked pedestrian crosswalks across these roads.

Other Barriers: In addition to those described above, there are other barriers such as existing development and topography. Existing development often creates a barrier between important streets (such as Church Street and the park). While this master plan is not suggesting that existing development be removed, it is suggesting that landscaping between this development and the park be such that it does not obscure views into and out of the park, creating hidden areas. Visibility should be opened up (using lawn and tall canopy trees) to take advantage of this development. There are also several areas where topography creates a barrier. In the case of the Lower Field area, topography makes it difficult to connect the lower fields to the upper fields. In other areas, such as along Pascal Street, the park topography obstructs views into the park from this residential neighborhood.

3. Gateways, Important Views and Vistas

Gateways: Because Farring Baybrook Park is so fragmented; it has multiple gateways and entrances. The main gateway is at Church Street and West Bay Avenue where the park is clearly identified with a monument sign and landscaped median. Another important gateway is at the entrance to the Recreation Center where signage clearly identifies the recreation center but not the park. In addition to these two gateways, there are several other areas that function as gateways but are not marked. As improvements to the park are made, consideration should be given to providing identity signage in all of these locations to give the park more visibility and prominence. These gateway locations include the northern end of West Bay Avenue at Ben Franklin Middle School, Filbert Street near the water tower, Cross Street at the western perimeter of the park, 10th Street at Virginia Avenue, Edwight Street at the western perimeter of the park and Virginia Avenue at Duane Street.



Views such as this to Baltimore's Outer Harbor should be protected and enhanced.

Views and Vistas: In addition to the gateways, there are several outstanding and important views that should be protected and enhanced. These views make the park unique from other parks in Baltimore City and enhance the experience of park users. These include the views to the Baltimore skyline from the overlook area, from the hill adjacent to Curtis Bay Elementary School, and from the hill near the picnic pavilion at the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center. Other views that are less dramatic but important to maintain are those from the homes located along Charleston Street and Virginia Avenue and from the apartments along West Bay Court. Keeping view corridors open to and from the park in these areas will enhance the safety of the park and the comfort of those using it.

Significant gateways, views and vistas are identified in *Exhibit 6, Gateways, Important Views and Vistas*.



Much of the land adjacent to the Myers Soccer Pavilion is underutilized for programming.

4. Under-Utilized Areas

The rolling topography, fragmented park boundary, abandoned facilities and dispersed road network results in many areas of the park being underutilized. As the park is revitalized, special attention should be given to programming these areas either in the short-term or long-term as needs dictate. The most prominent underutilized areas include the abandoned volleyball court near the recreation center, the area around the picnic pavilion, the large open space (“Myers Field”) to the south side of the Myers Soccer Pavilion, the area adjacent to the stream crossing, the overlook area, the Duane Street gateway area/neighborhood park, the Lower Sports Fields, the large lawn areas on each side of upper West Bay Avenue (East Lawn and West Lawn) and the West Bay gateway area near Ben Franklin Middle School. These areas are identified in *Exhibit 7, Under-Utilized Areas*.

5. Appearance and Security

Appearance and sense of security are often the two most important factors in determining whether or not people are comfortable using a park. Farring Baybrook Park, in spite of its many outstanding features, appears to be worn and neglected. The park was constructed in the early 1970s and most park features are worn out and require renovation or replacement. Many light posts are missing or in poor repair, many facilities are in need of repair, some areas are over-grown, many trees are in poor condition, many

pathways are deteriorating and are not ADA compliant and the park is not well-signed. Fortunately, the park has a good overall structure and many assets (views, variety of facilities, etc.) so addressing some of the park's shortcomings will have a significant impact on the overall appeal to users.

6. Development Opportunity Sites

During the master planning process there was discussion regarding the possibility for new built program elements within the park if they provided a use that was complementary to the park and the surrounding community. (The idea for new development in or adjacent to the park originated in the 2005 Brooklyn-Curtis Bay SNAP. This idea originated partly because of the disjointed nature of the park itself). Uses might include a recreation facility, community center, senior housing or other compatible program element. Regardless of the use, if any program element were to be constructed in the park, it should be located in an area and developed in such a way as to help activate and improve the park.

In addition to opportunities for new development that could benefit the park, there are some boundaries of the park that should be considered for modification *if* changes occur to the surrounding residential areas in the future. Areas include the western perimeter adjacent to the public housing along West Bay Court and the northeastern perimeter along Tompkins Street. Consideration should be given to park boundary reconfigurations that allow residential development to face the park and allow the park to reach into the community. Park boundaries could be reconfigured in conjunction with adjacent redevelopment to result in attractive residential areas with new park access points, greater visibility into the park and more positive use of parkland.

Refer to Exhibit 8, Development Opportunity Sites

The ultimate goal for any development (public or private) to be approved is that it has a positive relationship with the park. When evaluating the concept of new development for Farring Baybrook Park, as well as specific proposals for projects in any of these locations, the following guidelines must be met:

- The new development's program elements are complimentary to the park and will enhance park use.
- Any development (or sale of park land) should be located on the fringes of the park, be minimal in scope and be in sites not essential to the major recreational components of the park.
- View corridors should be respected so that buildings do not block important vistas into or out of the park.
- Buildings must be designed with high quality "4 sided" architecture that relates to the adjacent street as well as the park. It is important that facades facing the park have many windows to provide "eyes on the park" and to make it safer.
- Parking should not be located between the building and the park.
- The building grounds should be designed in a way that there is a seamless transition to park grounds.
- Program elements should include outdoor gathering areas that face onto and connect to the park.
- Pedestrian pathways, ADA compliant, should connect the building with the park.

PART 3: MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

A. OVERVIEW

Outlined in the following paragraphs are a number of improvements that should be considered for Farring Baybrook Park. The projects address the need for upgrades to existing park features and the addition of new park features, including an improved park circulation system and improved park landscaping. The projects can be implemented individually or in combination as funding permits. Each of the suggested park improvements will contribute to generating more positive activity within the park and encourage more park stakeholders from the surrounding communities.

B. MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

Following is an outline of the specific improvements recommended as part of the master plan for Farring Baybrook Park. They are not listed in any particular order, however, the following section addresses phasing. Some of the master plan elements described below could be a separate project, such as the Recreation Center Site, while others could be either a complete project or implemented in phases as parts of other projects, such as Bike/Pedestrian trails. *Refer to Exhibit 9, Illustrative Master Plan.*

1. Recreation Center Site

Renovations and improvements to the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center are currently being designed, as are improvements to the surrounding grounds, west of the center and construction is expected to be completed in 2008. Improvements to grounds east of the center are suggested in this master plan and should be considered as part of a future project. These improvements are described below.

West Grounds: Improvements include ADA ramps and access to building; paved pedestrian walkway connection to Baybrook Elementary School; reduction of overall hard surface paving; flexible lawn space; picnic grove including ADA compliant picnic tables; three ADA compliant Bocce Ball courts; resurfacing of paved areas to remain; resurfacing of basketball courts; pedestrian scaled lighting; ADA compliant raised garden planter; shade tree planting and ornamental fence enclosure around the perimeter of the active use areas.

East Grounds: Improvements should include renovation of the existing picnic pavilion, conversion of the existing wading pool to a spray pad, and renovation of all existing sidewalks. In addition, as fencing is replaced near the courts, it should be replaced with black vinyl-coated chain link fencing that is visually more attractive.

The area to the north of the swimming pool and to the east of Baybrook Elementary School is identified as a picnic area. This area is close to the existing picnic pavilion and recreation center facilities and is also close to the stream corridor and associated pathways. In addition, it sets high and offers outstanding views of the downtown skyline. In order for this area to be successful for picnicking, additional tall-canopied shade trees should be planted to provide user comfort. Picnic tables can be located among the trees.

2. Baybrook Elementary School

While not part of the park, the grounds of Baybrook Elementary School should be considered an extension of the park. The School District and Department of Recreation and Parks should work together to improve the school grounds and its connectivity to the park. Improvements should at the very least include new large canopied shade trees planted around the playground and along the walkway/entrance drive connecting the school to 10th Street. Other improvements should include pathway connections to the park and a potential recreation field that spans the boundary between the school and the park

3. Myers Soccer Pavilion

The master plan recommends that the Myers Soccer Pavilion be made more prominent by creating better pedestrian and visual connections to it, by opening up the parking area and by considering future uses that might help activate the surrounding area. Specifically, crosswalks should be added across West Bay Avenue to create safer pedestrian access between the Soccer Pavilion and Curtis Bay Elementary School and overgrown vegetation that obscures visibility should be removed from the parking area and replaced with high canopied shade trees that allow sight lines underneath the canopies. In addition, shade trees should be planted near the pavilion on all sides to help integrate the facility into its park surrounding.

The existing courtyard on the northeast corner of the pavilion is seldom used. Consideration should be given to enclosing it for additional meeting or activity space. However, the enclosure should incorporate a significant amount of window area to take advantage of the sweeping views to the Baltimore skyline and to provide “eyes on the park”. A second option would be to utilize this area for some kind of refreshment area that would have access from both the inside and outside. A terrace could be created adjacent to it with tables so that park and pavilion users could get refreshments. Being associated with the pavilion, it would be easier to manage and maintain. The purpose of this feature would be to help activate this area of the park and provide comfort for park users.

4. Overlook

The overlook is one of the most outstanding features of the park, but appears to be neglected. In conjunction with the improvements for the soccer pavilion, the overgrown vegetation between the overlook and parking area should be removed to improve visibility and sense of safety. The paving surface and stone walls should be repaired and consideration should be given to providing larger shade trees on the southern side of the pavilion and/or the provision of a shade structure. This would increase its desirability for use during the hot summer months and during events. Consideration should also be given to providing electric and water hook ups.

5. Curtis Bay Elementary School

As with Baybrook Elementary School, Curtis Bay Elementary is not part of the park, however, it should be considered an extension of the park. The School District and the Department of Recreation and Parks should consider a partnership to improve the grounds of the school and better access between the school and park. Improvements should include the planting of shade trees throughout the grounds, particularly near the playground where there is no shade; additional sidewalk connections to the park and to the crosswalks and clearing of overgrown vegetation along the school’s property line to open up views and improve the sense of safety. The school should also explore ways to incorporate the park into its programming to help increase the level of activity within the park. Programs could include the soccer pavilion and the natural area along the stream corridor for interpretation.

6. West Bay Avenue Streetscape

While lighting is not generally provided within parks so that nighttime use is not encouraged, pedestrian-scaled street lighting should be provided along West Bay Avenue. The lighting will make access to the soccer pavilion and elementary schools safer and will greatly improve the image of the park.

In addition to street lighting, street trees should be planted along West Bay Avenue to improve the park image and to help provide better definition of the open spaces on each side of the street. Street trees could occur in a formal pattern, with regularly spaced trees of the same species or they could occur in naturalized groupings utilizing a variety of species. The emphasis should be on large canopied shade trees as opposed to small ornamental trees and evergreens, which block views.

7. Water Tower

The water tower is not located within the park; however, it is an important landmark within the Brooklyn Curtis Bay community. Wherever possible, views to the water tower should be preserved and enhanced.

8. Park Entrances

Park entrances and gateways play an important role in identifying park boundaries, defining a park's image, integrating the park within the community and creating a sense of "welcome". Because of Farring Baybrook's road network and fragmented boundary, there are multiple park entrances that should be enhanced. Enhancements should include identity signage, information signage and seasonal color. In some instances, park entrances and gateways may include a neighborhood gateway park. The following locations identified below should all be considered park entrances with enhancements. Refer to Section 15 following in this report for the discussion on general park signage since most enhancements call for new signage.

Church Street/West Bay Avenue: This is the main entrance to the East and Central Park and is already very positive. Improvements might include a new identification sign and wayfinding signage

(once park sign system standard is developed for the City), and seasonal planting if there are volunteer groups able to maintain it.

Virginia Avenue at Recreation Center: This functions more as an entrance to the recreation center but can also be considered an entrance to the park. The western portion of the recreation site is currently being enhanced, however, new signage has not been incorporated into this effort. Once the City develops its sign system standard, this entrance should be enhanced with a new identity sign (park and recreation center), information sign for pedestrians and seasonal planting.

Cross Street at Western Park Perimeter: This is a minor gateway to the park. Nonetheless, there should be some minor identification signage that announces that one is entering a park. In addition, wayfinding signage should be provided directing visitors to the ball fields, recreation center, Myers Soccer Pavilion and other resources. Additional tall shade trees should be provided to enhance the park-like image.

Virginia Avenue at 10th Street: If parking is developed as part of the Lower Fields (as described later in this report), then park identification signage should be provided at this location. Until that time, enhancements should include large shade trees that frame views into the park and low seasonal planting if volunteer groups are able to maintain and sponsor it. Wayfinding signage will be important in this location, directing visitors to facilities within the park.

Duane Street: This is an important neighborhood gateway. The corner of Duane and Virginia Avenue should be renovated. A significant amount of the existing pavement should be removed as part of the new design. Design emphasis should be placed on maintaining views into and out of the park space, providing pedestrian connections to other areas of the park, particularly once they become programmed, and creating areas that are flexible and could accommodate a variety of activities for the surrounding neighborhood.

West Bay Avenue at Jeffrey Street (near Ben Franklin Middle School): Because of one-way traffic patterns once West Bay Avenue transitions into St. Margaret's Street, this area does not really function as a major vehicular gateway, however, it should be enhanced as a pedestrian gateway. Jeffrey Street will remain disconnected to West Bay Avenue, however, a better pedestrian connection should be provided, views opened up, additional tall

canopied tree planting and signage should occur to create an attractive pedestrian gateway rather than a “no-man’s land” that it currently is.

Thomkins and Pascal: There is an opportunity for this area to be treated as a neighborhood gateway. Unfortunately, the natural slope along this edge limits views into the park. Improvements might consider re-grading the hill at the intersection of these streets to create a more welcoming physical connection and pedestrian entrance into the park. Minor identity signage and pedestrian directional signage should be provided, along with pedestrian connections to the other areas of the park.

9. Existing Baseball/Softball Fields

The existing ball fields (Upper Fields) at Farring Baybrook are well used and a valuable resource, bringing much-needed activity to the park. These fields could be enhanced with the additional planting of large shade trees to help define this section of the park from the street and to provide shade and comfort to players and spectators. In addition, as fencing is replaced, it should be replaced with black vinyl-coated chain link fencing that is visually more attractive. The parking area should also be improved with new paving.

In addition to the Upper Fields, there are Lower Fields that are currently unused. These fields sit in a valley that creates natural viewing areas for spectators. Consideration should be given to reestablishing these fields for practice and games. To accommodate this, the park area near 10th Street could be developed as a parking resource to service these fields. As these fields are developed, the plans should include tree planting on the slopes separating the playing fields as well as pathway connections to the Duane Street Neighborhood Park (discussed earlier), and to the Upper Fields and surrounding road network.

10. Proposed Athletic Fields

The park is in a good position as there are considerable land resources to expand the number of sports fields within its boundaries. This will generate more positive activity in underutilized areas of the park where undesirable activities tend to occur. Creation of new athletic fields will be needed to meet increased demands as the school system implements proposals for expansion of the two elementary schools to include middle school

classes and the local middle school is adapted for high school programs. The plan identifies up to five potential locations for new athletic (soccer/football/lacrosse) fields in addition to reestablishing the Lower Baseball Fields. As new fields are developed in each area, related improvements can also occur.

Field #1: This is the most important location for a soccer field, adjacent to the Myers Soccer Pavilion. A field here would be highly visible, accessible from West Bay Avenue and would bring some of the activity of the soccer pavilion outdoors. This is a sloped area and would require some grading. The grading, however, would provide a natural pedestrian viewing area on a slope adjacent to West Bay Avenue. The slope on the west side of the field may impact the wooded stream area and require some mitigation or expansion to the stream woodland in other areas.

Field #2: This location is also accessible from West Bay Avenue and would help to activate this highly underutilized area of the park. A small parking resource could also be provided off of Edwight Street. As this athletic field is developed, a loop trail system should also be developed around its perimeter, linking back to the overall park trail system. Tree planting should be provided to reinforce this area as a space, “The East Lawn” and provide shade for participants and spectators.

Field #3: This location is suitable for an undersized athletic field and would require a partnership between the School District and Recreation and Parks as it straddles the boundary between the school and park. As the field is developed, pathway connections should be provided linking it to other pathways on the school grounds and within the parks. Tree planting should reinforce the space and provide shade, and grading should try to accommodate a sloped area to serve as a natural spectator area.

Field #4: This location for a soccer field would also help to activate an underutilized area of the park and reinforce a “West Lawn”. Improvements should include a loop pathway system that ties into the overall park path system, additional shade tree planting to reinforce the space and preservation of a slope adjacent to the school to accommodate spectators on the 4th of July.

Field #5: This location is highly visible at the park’s main entrance and could also supplement the Myers Soccer Pavilion. If developed as an athletic field, pedestrian connections should be provided to other park areas.



The sloped area to the north of the Overlook functions as an informal amphitheater during events.



Events such as the Lead Sled Festival bring positive activity and exposure to the park.

11. Bike/Pedestrian Trails

Farring Baybrook Park already has a considerable pathway system, however, it only serves portions of the park and is not ADA compliant in many areas. Families in the area would benefit from a path system that stretched across the park to link the two elementary schools with the middle school so children could easily walk between the schools.

The master plan illustrates an extensive pathway system, which can be implemented over time and included in the work scopes of other adjacent projects, such as the new fields as described above. The primary goals for the pathway system are to provide options for both bicycles and pedestrians clearly connect resources throughout the park and provide a hierarchy of “loops” so that users can enjoy a variety of experiences and durations of walks/runs. Pathways designed for both bicycles and pedestrians should be a minimum of 8’ in width. The master plan illustrates a major “loop” that can accommodate bicycles which extends along the south side of Edwight Street, along the west side of the wooded stream valley to the recreation center, along the southern border of the park, along West Bay Avenue to the soccer pavilion, along the rear of the soccer pavilion, adjacent to the overlook area and back to Edwight Street. This loop is approximately 4700 linear feet in length. The remaining pedestrian trails should be a minimum of 5’ in width. The bike and pedestrian paths are illustrated in *Exhibit 10, Proposed Bike and Pedestrian Paths*.

A new bridge crossing is proposed across the stream valley, and the pathways getting down to the bridge should be graded at a maximum of 5% to accommodate ADA. This will require the paths to “hairpin” along the slopes in some areas.

12. Stage and Festival Space

The existing slope between the overlook and Edwight Street is a natural amphitheater and already functions in this capacity during festivals such as the Lead Sled Festival. The master plan reinforces this use and recommends that additional tree planting be provided toward the top of the slope to provide shade for spectators (and located so that they don’t block views from the overlook). In addition, trees should be provided along the edges of West Bay Avenue and Edwight Street to provide some backdrop to the stage. The far northwestern corner at Edwight Street and the stream



This example from a park in Howard County illustrates how periodic view corridors could be established across the stream corridor to better engage separate areas of the park.

corridor currently functions as a location for a stage. While this works well for large events, it appears far away during smaller events, especially if activities and food are concentrated around the overlook. Consideration should be given to placing a stage further up the hill for smaller events. Consideration should also be given to providing electric hookups in the stage areas. Pathway connections are also proposed to link the overlook with other areas of the park.

13. Stream Corridor

The wooded stream corridor provides a natural divide between the western and eastern portions of the park. Considerable efforts have already been made by Recreation and Parks and volunteers to begin clearing invasive vegetation and replacing it with native vegetation. Still, the stream corridor functions as a barrier between the two park halves. Following are specific recommendations to enhance the stream corridor while minimizing its impact as a barrier.

Native Plantings: Invasive plants should continue to be removed and replaced by appropriate native species. A management strategy needs to be developed to accomplish this. Specifically, replacement plants need to be planted and maintained immediately after removal of the invasive plants; otherwise, exposure to additional sunshine will foster faster growth of invasive plants. A recommended list of native plants is provided in ***Appendix C, Native Plant List.***

Enhanced Vistas: While it is critical to improve and enhance the wooded stream corridor, it is equally important to improve view corridors and pedestrian access through the stream valley to provide a greater sense of security and to link the disparate parts of the park. The master plan illustrates two areas where enhanced view corridors are recommended.

The first view corridor is along the route of the existing pathway and bridge crossing. As this pathway is improved, a broader corridor should be opened up along the pathway to allow pedestrians to see more of their destination and eliminate dark corners and “blind spots”. This is not to say that this corridor should be devoid of vegetation. Rather, low native groundcovers, low shrubs and high-canopied trees should be utilized to allow sight lines at eye level to remain open. Evergreen trees, low ornamental trees and tall shrubs should be eliminated from this area as they tend to block views.



Large expanses of mowed lawn could be converted to meadow to enhance the wildlife habitat and minimize mowing requirements.

The second view corridor is located toward the top of the stream valley between the existing tennis courts and proposed Field #3. Activities at each of these locations being visible from the other will help to connect these two areas of the park.

14. Meadows:

In addition to enhancing the tree cover, the stream valley edges can be enhanced with meadow plantings before transitioning to the mowed lawns. Meadow areas should be defined for those areas that do not need to be mowed on a regular basis, allowing maintenance efforts to be focused elsewhere in the park. The meadows would be planted with native grasses and would be mowed once or twice a year to keep woody plants (shrubs and trees) from establishing. The meadow area could also be used for interpretation and could contain “mow paths” to provide access through these areas.

15. General Site Furnishings and Lighting

As improvements are made to the park, a standard site furniture design should be used throughout the park. A preferred product has been specified with the renovation of the west grounds of the recreation center and this product should be used throughout the park: The specifications include:

Benches: Victor Stanley Steelsites RB Series Backless Bench (RB-12) and Bench with Back (RB-28) or approved equal - Color: Black powdercoat

Picnic Tables: Barco Products City Wheelchair Accessible Picnic Table-Two End, Model # PUP238H-V8, or approved equal - Color: Black powdercoat

Trash Receptacles: Victor Stanley Steelsites Series, NSDC-36, or approved equal – Color: Black powdercoat

Bike Racks: Victor Stanley T Series BKR-35, or approved equal – Color: Black powdercoat

Chain Link Fencing: Black vinyl-coated

Ornamental Fencing: Decorative metallic steel coated by Ameristar Fence Products; AEGIS II Majestic 48” height 3 rail fence or approved equal. Color: Black

Athletic Field Lighting: Dept. of Recreation and Parks standard

Pedestrian Lighting: Dept. of Recreation and Parks standard

The exact specifications for the park elements outlined above may vary, depending upon those selected for the first implementation project. As a framework, the specification for the site elements selected for the first implementation project should become the standard throughout the park.

16. General Signage

A signage program has not been established for Farring Baybrook Park, pending the development of a standard for Recreation and Parks. As standards are established, new signage should be provided at Farring Baybrook Park. Directional and wayfinding signage should be provided as part of one project to help direct visitors to the park and its facilities. Other signage could be implemented as improvements are made to various areas of the park. Following are the sign types that should be considered:

Major Identity Signs: These signs would identify the major park entrances.

Minor Identity Signs: These signs would identify secondary park entrances and facilities within the park.

Directional Signs: These signs would provide way finding for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. These are particularly important because the park is fragmented into different areas.

Vehicular- Scaled Information Signs: These signs could provide information about events or facilities within the park.

Pedestrian – Scaled Information Signs: These signs could take the form of kiosks and include park maps. They would be located at heavily used facilities throughout the park.

Regulatory Signs: These signs would be located throughout the park describing rules and regulations for use of the park.



The use of tall canopied shade trees is important to help define spaces and provide maximum amounts of shade while allowing for important views and visibility.

17. General Landscape Improvements and Guidelines

In addition to the renovation of existing features and creation of new facilities throughout the park, landscape improvements will play a significant role in the renovation of the park. Landscape improvements are specific to each park area and facility; however, following is a brief outline of the primary strategies that should be used when providing additional landscaping throughout the entire park. Preferred species for the majority of new plantings are listed in *Appendix C, Native Plant List*.

Use of Native Species: The majority of new planting should utilize plants native to the region. Exceptions would include areas where special design characteristics are required, particularly, in heavily used and highly visible areas.

Use of Large Canopied Shade Trees: The general rule of thumb for new planting should be that if there is room for a tall canopy tree, use a tall canopy tree. Larger trees help to define spaces, provide the maximum amount of cooling shade and, more importantly, their canopies are well above important sightlines. This is particularly important when considering the principles of CPTED and designing for safety.

Use of Evergreen Trees: Evergreen trees are important to provide winter interest, screen undesirable views and define spaces. Care should be given to making sure they are not used in places where they could create “hiding” places or obstruct important vistas. In addition, evergreen trees should generally be planted in groupings rather than as individual specimens and they should generally be planted at the edges of spaces as opposed in the center of spaces.

Use of Flowering/Under-Story Trees: Flowering and under-story trees should be restricted to the appropriate locations. These locations include park entrance areas, near buildings and building courtyard spaces, within woodlands and along woodland edges and where maintaining sightlines is not critical. A massing of many flowering trees may also be considered as a focal planting near the edge of a large space. Smaller trees should not be used where larger trees would be more appropriate in defining a space, a path or a roadway or where maintaining sight lines is critical.

Use of Shrubs and Groundcovers: Shrubs and groundcovers should be used sparingly as they can be expensive when considering the number needed to make an impact. In addition, taller shrubs can create hiding places and block important views.



Programming of periodic large events and regularly scheduled small events is important for giving the park positive exposure and building the stakeholder base.

Shrubs and groundcovers also require a higher level of maintenance. An exception to the above is in the stream corridor where native shrubs and groundcovers should be used to create the appropriate under-story and create habitat for wildlife. In other areas of the park, shrubs and groundcovers should only be used at park entrances, near building entrances or in other areas where they can be effective in reinforcing the function of a particular space. In addition, planting beds consisting of only a few varieties of shrubs and groundcover are much more effective than planting beds that contain a large variety of plant types and characteristics.

Use of Seasonal Color: Seasonal color, particularly in the form of annual flowers and perennials can be effective in presenting a positive image of the park. Because flower planting can be expensive and require a high level of maintenance, it should be restricted to high visibility areas such as park entrances, building entrances, where people gather on a regular basis and where they can be easily maintained by volunteers within the community.

18. Programming

Programming the park is an important component of the revitalization of any park. As described in the Site Assessment of this report, Many areas of Farring Baybrook Park are underutilized and the park in general is “off the radar” of most people within the surrounding community and the city as a whole. It is, therefore, important that active groups within the community and Baltimore City utilize the park as a resource for additional programming. Following is a list of programming that should be continued and/or might be considered:

Existing Programming to Continue

Lead Sled Festival: This is a new event that has the potential to draw large numbers of people to the park and give Farring Baybrook Park much needed exposure.

Recreation Center Programming: The programming that occurs in the recreation center is important for the community and the City as a whole. Renovations to the recreation center and surrounding grounds will facilitate the continuation of existing programming and the potential for additional programming.

Athletic Field Programming: primarily groups from outside the neighborhood currently use the athletic fields. This is not a

negative, however, as it brings exposure to the park. Programming of athletic events should continue and should be expanded to include the new recreation fields as recommended in this plan.

Future Programming to Consider

Master Plan Celebration: The completion of the master plan will create a great opportunity for the community and Recreation and Parks to get people excited about the future of the park and to build the stakeholder base. Most likely, a celebration (or celebrations) should be tied in with existing community/park events to draw the most exposure.

Recreation Center Completion Celebration: Similarly, the completion of the recreation center renovations would be a good opportunity to celebrate the future of the park and to give exposure to the park and its resources. This celebration should be a new event that takes place in and around the recreation center. Events could be held on the refurbished basketball courts, in the new picnic area and on the new ADA Bocce courts.

Additional Large Events: Current emphasis should be placed on making the Lead Sled event an annual success; however, consideration should be given to using the park to host additional large events and festivals. The park should be marketed throughout the City as a potential venue for citywide events, not just neighborhood events.

Small Regularly Scheduled Events: Small, regularly scheduled events are important to get people used to coming to the park. These events should be located in areas of the park where they won't feel "lost" if there is low attendance. An ideal area for small events would be in the vicinity of the recreation center. Events could include "Friday Night Movies in the Park", Monthly "pot luck" community picnics or music concerts. This is also a good way to seed larger events; small events that are successful could then grow into larger events at the appropriate time and as demand increases.

19. Opportunity Sites

During the master plan process, it was discussed that there may be areas within the park that would be appropriate for the development of a building use that is compatible with the park. A number of sites were reviewed, each offering advantages and disadvantages.

Following are some guidelines that should be kept in mind for each site if considering developing a use in one of these locations as identified in *Exhibit #8, Development Opportunities*:

Guidelines Applicable to All Sites

- Any sale of parkland should be on the fringes of the park, be minimal in scope and be in locations not essential to the major recreational components of the park.
- View corridors should be respected so that buildings do not block important vistas into or out of the park.
- The use, site plan and building design must be compatible with Farring Baybrook Park.
- The use must be one such that its presence will help to activate the park and complement programming within the park.
- The use must be designed so that its presence enhances safety of the park by having access points and a significant number of windows facing park areas.
- The use must be developed with equal design attention to all four sides of the building. There should not be an obvious “back side” that faces the community or the park.
- Pedestrian connections should be provided from the use to the park.
- Parking areas should be designed in a way that is sensitive to the park and in a way that parking lot users would provide “eyes on the park” as they go to and from their cars.
- Direct pedestrian access should be considered between the development and the park parking area on Virginia Avenue and the “Lower Fields” area.

20. Considerations for Adjacent Development:

While no plans are identified at this time, if any of the surrounding residential neighborhoods are ever planned for redevelopment, redevelopment plans should be looked at in context with the entire park to determine a plan that best works for the neighborhood and the park. Particular attention should be given to how redevelopment can “front” onto the park, rather than “back” onto it. Park boundaries could be reconfigured in conjunction with adjacent redevelopment to result in attractive residential areas with new park access points, greater visibility into the park and more positive use of parkland.

C. PROJECT BUDGETS

<i>Project</i>	<i>Budget Range</i>
1. Recreation Center Site	
▪ Recreation Center Building	N/A
▪ West Grounds	\$685,000
▪ East Grounds	\$299,000-449,000
2. Baybrook Elementary School	N/A
3. Myers Soccer Pavilion	\$708,000-1,061,000
4. Overlook	\$97,000-145,000
5. Curtis Bay Elementary School	N/A
6. West Bay Avenue Streetscape	\$302,000-454,000
7. Water Tower	N/A
8. Park Entrances <i>(Includes gateway parks at three entrances)</i>	\$499,000-749,000
9. Existing Ball Fields	\$384,000-576,000
10. Proposed Ball Fields	\$814,000-1,221,000
11. Bike/Pedestrian Trails	\$228,000-341,000
12. Stage and Festival Space	\$70,000-105,000
13. Stream Corridor	\$156,000-235,000
14. Meadows	\$58,000-86,000
15. General Site Furnishings and Lighting <i>(To be included with each project above)</i>	N/A
16. General Signage <i>(To be included with each project above)</i>	N/A
17. General Landscape Improvements <i>(To be included with each project above)</i>	N/A
18. Programming	N/A
19. Opportunity Sites	N/A
20. Consideration for Adjacent Development	N/A
Total	\$4,300,000-6,107,000

PART 4: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation of the master plan will occur over many years on a project-by-project basis as resources become available. Project priorities will vary depending on available funding and the efforts of project “champions”— the key stakeholders most interested in implementing a particular project. However, some early priorities should be considered, as successful completion of these will help to change perceptions of the park, increase the number of park stakeholders, help maintain momentum for future improvement projects and help build credibility for all of the park support groups. Following is a description of the priority projects. The improvements to the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center Building and West Grounds are the first priority project. Other projects listed are not listed in particular order of priority; however, establishing a “Friends” group should be a fairly high priority within the community.

A. PROJECT PRIORITIES

Critical first steps should focus on improving the most actively used areas of the park, improving the image of the park at park gateways and enhancing the vegetation cover through tree plantings and removal of invasive species. Priorities to consider include the following:

- ***Farring Baybrook Recreation Center Building Improvements*** (Not included as part of this master plan). *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks*
- ***Farring Baybrook Recreation Center Site Improvements “West Grounds”***: In conjunction with the building improvements, prepare construction documents for improvements to the site facilities on the west side of the recreation center building as described in the report. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks*
- ***Farring Baybrook Recreation Center Site Improvements “East Grounds”***: Of the improvements described in the report, the priority enhancements for the east grounds are to provide picnic tables and additional canopy shade trees. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks*
- ***Establishment of “Friends” Group***: Throughout the master plan process, community attendance at meetings and presentations was low and there was a lot of confusion as to what land areas were actually part of the park. One of the biggest challenges facing the park is that is not used as much as it could be, particularly by nearby residents. While many of the capital

improvements will be the responsibility of the Department of Recreation and Parks, there is limited funding available to the Department that needs to be distributed throughout Baltimore's park system. It is, therefore, critical that stakeholders within the community organize as "champions" for the park.

Working with the Department of Recreation and Parks Office of Partnerships, creating a "Friends of Farring Baybrook Park" would be a good way to start. The friends group would be comprised of representatives from all of the communities that surround the park and would be responsible for working with Recreation and Parks to implement the master plan. Primary responsibilities of the Friends group would be to organize events in the park (including "clean-up days"), build and energize the park stakeholder base (including working with the adjacent schools) and raise funds/apply for grants for small projects that do not require construction drawings or major design efforts. Good models in the City include The Friends of Patterson Park and The Friends of Wyman Park Dell. *Primary Responsibility: Community, with assistance by Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks*

- ***Overlook Area:*** The overlook area should be improved since it is one of the most outstanding areas of the park but is completely obscured from the adjacent parking area. Immediate priorities include removal of adjacent vegetation that blocks sightlines between the overlook and parking area and the planting of appropriate canopy trees to provide shade and frame long views. Additional priorities include repair of the paving and existing stone wall. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks. Tree removal and planting could be a community-led effort in partnership with Recreation and Parks.*
- ***Proposed Soccer Fields – Field #1 (Myers Outdoor Soccer Field):*** Adding visible activity to the park is an important component of the master plan. Field #1, just to the south of the Meyers Soccer Pavilion, should be the first new field that is constructed. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks*
- ***Reforestation and Enhanced Stream Corridor (Additional planting and removal of invasive vegetation):*** Removal of invasive plant materials and new plantings and reforestation of the stream corridor should continue to be an on-going priority. Immediate focus areas should be the area around the pedestrian bridge crossing to open up views and make more inviting and toward the northern end to open up a view corridor from the recreation center to the new field (Field #1). *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks with volunteer support provided by Community*

- **Pathway System:** Existing pathways can be repaired and new pathways added as part of adjacent project construction, however, a priority for the pathway system is to complete the overall bike/pedestrian “loop”. This will include upgrades to some portions of the existing pathway system and new sections of pathways. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks*
- **Park Entrances:** The priority for park entrances is to make it clear that one is arriving at Farring Baybrook Park. Because the park is fragmented, signage is an important part of the enhancements to the park entrances. Park entrance improvements should be done in conjunction with the signage program identified below. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks for signage. Community for planting and maintenance of seasonal flowers.*
- **General Site Furnishings and Lighting:** This is an on-going project. As other capital projects are constructed, part of the project should include new site furnishings and lighting (as appropriate). Site furnishings should match those used for the first implementation project if something other than the standards recommended in this master plan are used for the first project. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks. Community could take a lead for areas of the park where applying for grants and sponsorship for new site furniture do not need major capital improvements.*
- **General Signage:** A comprehensive signage program is a priority for the park because of the park’s fragmented character. Once Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks develops sign standards for Baltimore’s park system, new signs should be provided for Farring Baybrook Park. While signs may be phased in over time, priority signs include entrance signs at major entrances and arrival points, as described in the report, and way-finding signs directing motorists to park areas and resources. *Primary Responsibility: Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks*
- **Programming:** Programming events in the park is important for making the park more visible and reacquainting area residents with park resources and amenities. Continuing existing events (such as the Lead Sled Festival) and creating new events is a priority to bring positive activity to the park and to build a strong stakeholder base. Events do not need to be large, rather regularly scheduled events can be more successful and can grow into larger events. Events can also be planned around each new improvement project to celebrate each success. A good place to start would be an event planned around the opening of the renovated recreation center and adjacent grounds once complete. *Primary Responsibility: Community (in coordination with Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks)*

and, once established, The Friends of Farring Baybrook Park as described above.

- ***Participate each year in Baltimore City C.I.P. planning process.*** The purpose of this is to ensure that Farring Baybrook Park projects are included in the fiscal year budget. *Primary Responsibility: Community (in coordination with Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks) and, once established, The Friends of Farring Baybrook Park as described above.*
- ***Public Process for Approving and Guiding Potential Development Project.*** If the City receives proposals for new development in Farring Baybrook Park, each request will be reviewed following the City’s standard public process for sale or development of parkland. Phase one of the review is by the Department of Recreation and Parks Advisory Board and the Department Director. Following a favorable outcome from Phase I, the City’s Planning Commission then reviews the request. If the City approves a proposal, the Department of Planning and Department of Housing and Community Development will identify a process for working with the developer to ensure that the project follows the guidelines identified in this report. *Primary Responsibility: Phase I, Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks. Phase II Departments of Planning and Housing & Community Development.*
- ***Celebrate each success.*** Promotion and visibility of Farring Baybrook Park is extremely important. The completion of each new project, no matter how small, should be publicized and celebrated to continue to change perceptions of the park and to recognize (and energize) those who have worked so hard to implement the project. Events and celebrations could be something as simple as a cookout or something themed to fit the project, such as a “circuit walk” along the pathways, to highlight the completion of a new pathway system. *Primary Responsibility: Community (in coordination with Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks) and, once established, The Friends of Farring Baybrook Park as described above.*

B. DESIGN DOCUMENTS

While some of the improvement projects outlined in this master plan are relatively straightforward and require little additional design, many projects will require detail design and the development of construction documents. Some of these design projects may be initiated by the City’s Department of Recreation and Parks and others may be initiated by a park “Friends” group if established, in partnership with the City. Design documents are critical to the successful implementation of the master plan and should be prepared prior to

the construction of any major project, whether it involves infrastructure (like parking and stormwater drains), built elements (like walks, recreation facilities, or walls) or major planting areas (to ensure a comprehensive approach and consideration of the CPTED principles described in this report).

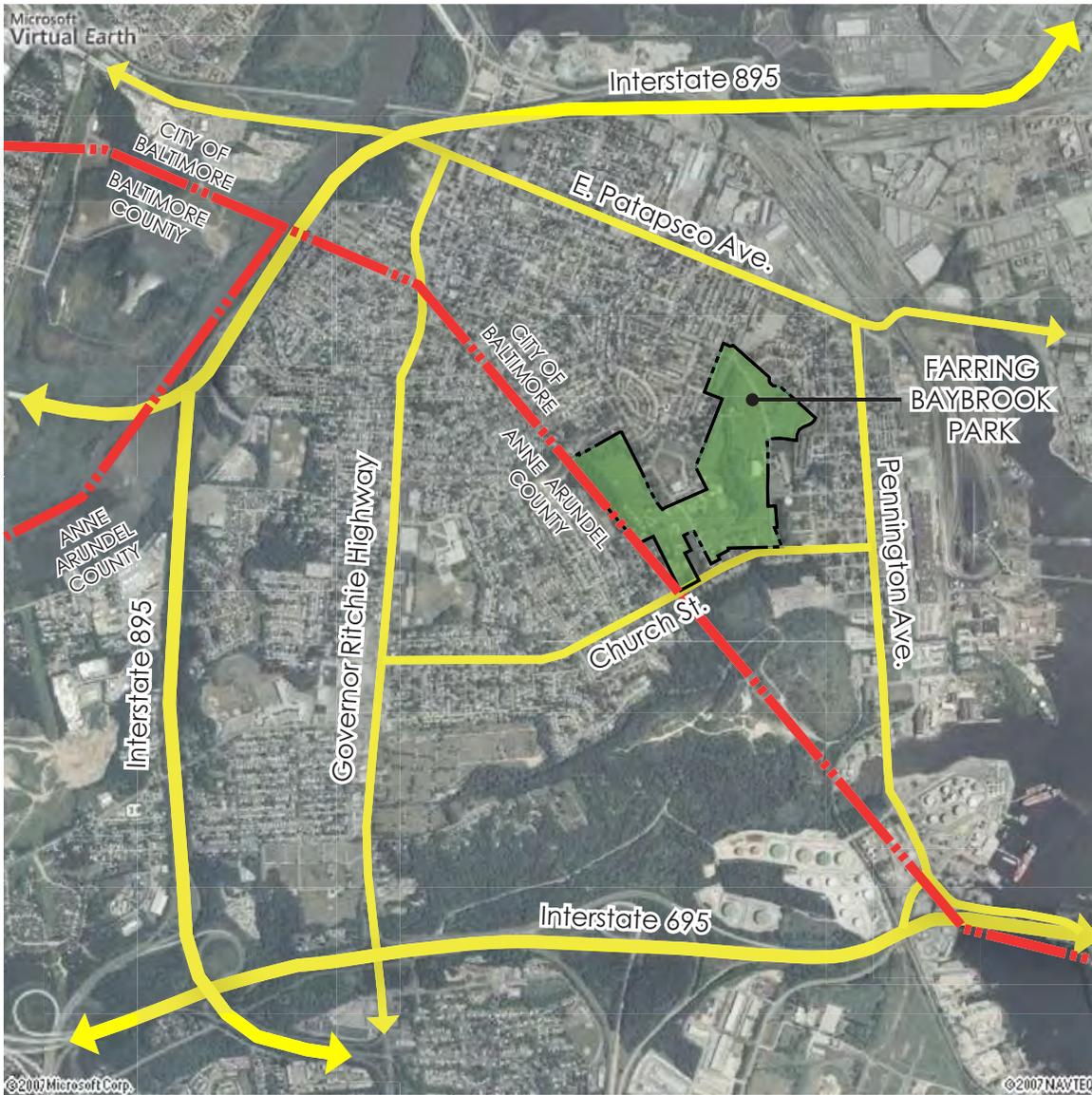
PART 5: APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EXHIBITS

APPENDIX B: STAKEHOLDER INPUT

APPENDIX C: NATIVE PLANT LIST

APPENDIX A: EXHIBITS



STUDY AREA



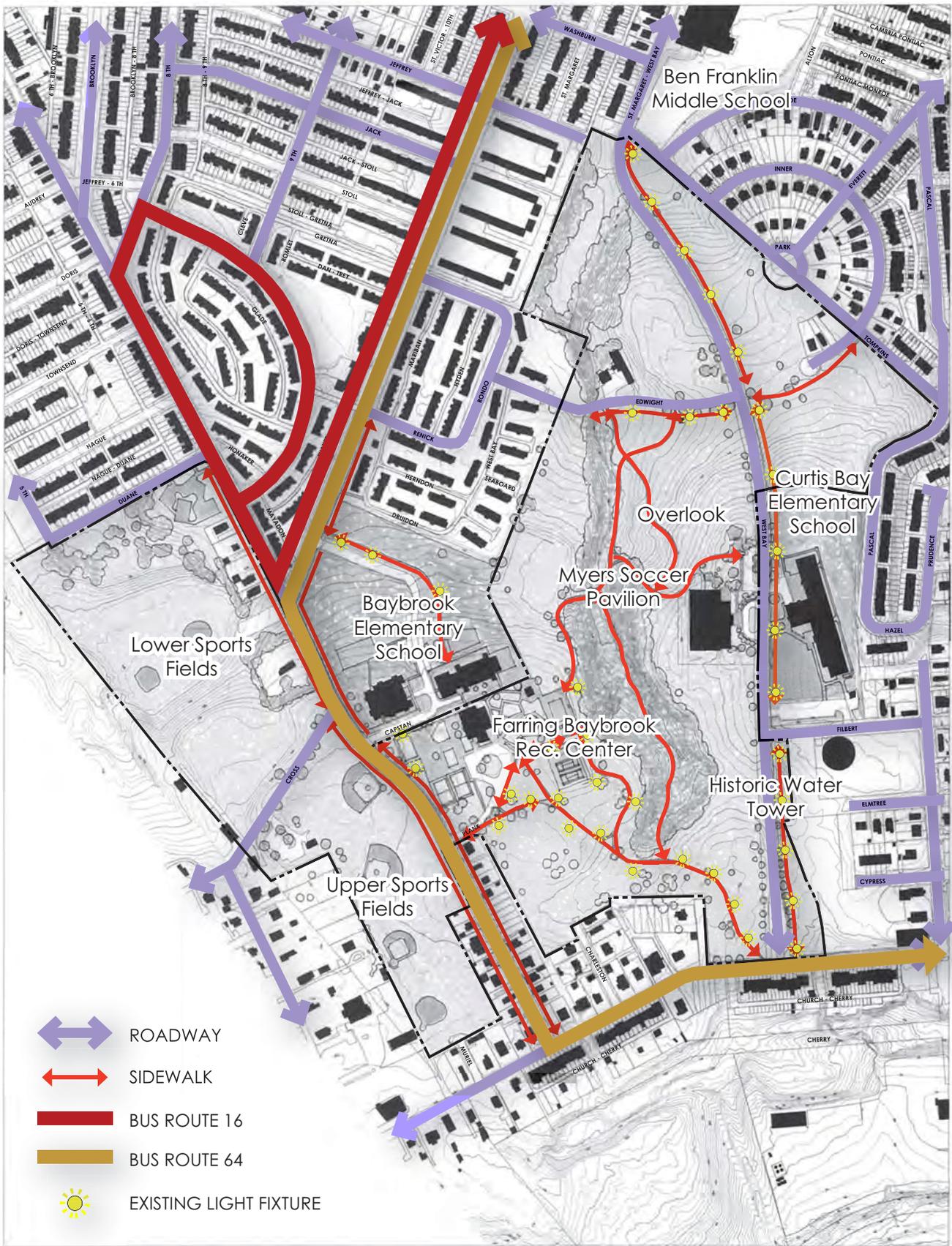
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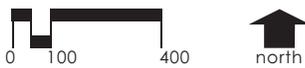
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SITE ANALYSIS

FARRING BAYBROOK PARK



EXISTING ROAD & SIDEWALK NETWORK



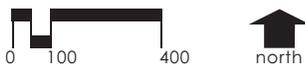
SITE ANALYSIS

FARRING BAYBROOK PARK

-BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS
 -MAHAN RYKIEL ASSOCIATES, INC.

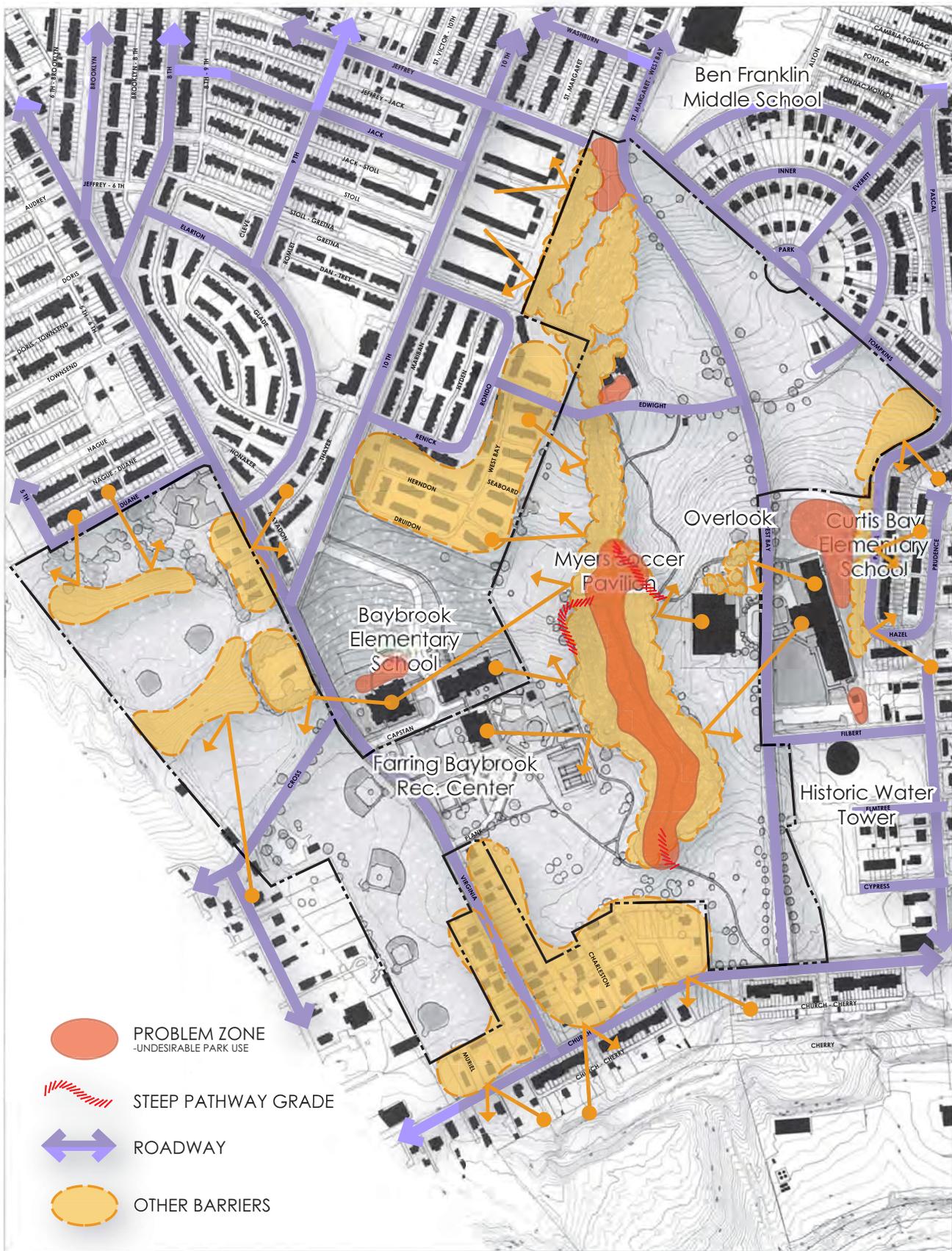
January 2008

EXHIBIT 3

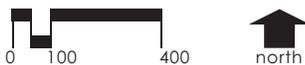


SITE ANALYSIS

FARRING BAYBROOK PARK



BARRIERS TO CONNECTIVITY



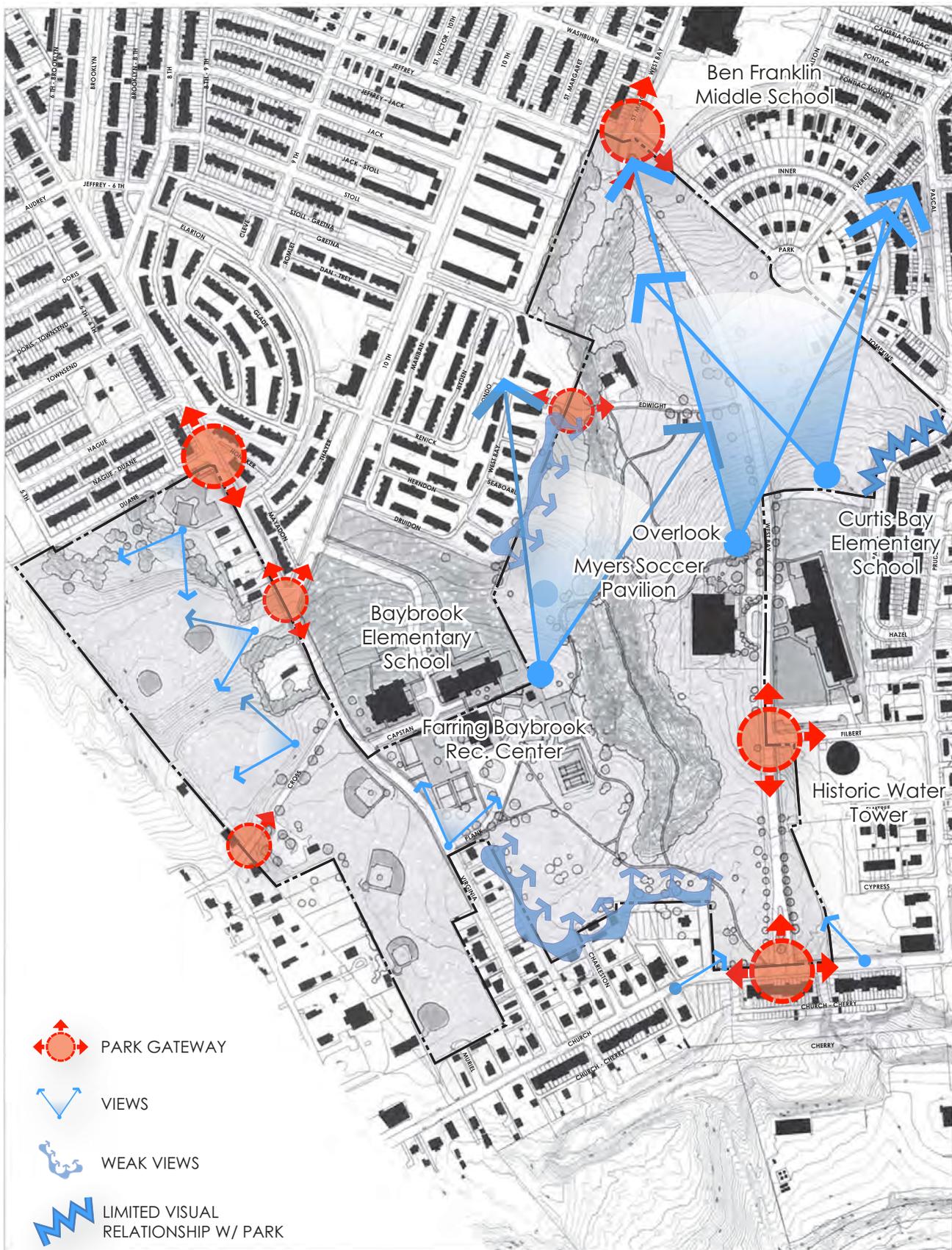
SITE ANALYSIS

FARRING BAYBROOK PARK

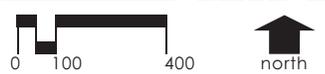
-BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS
 -MAHAN RYKIEL ASSOCIATES, INC.

January 2008

EXHIBIT 5

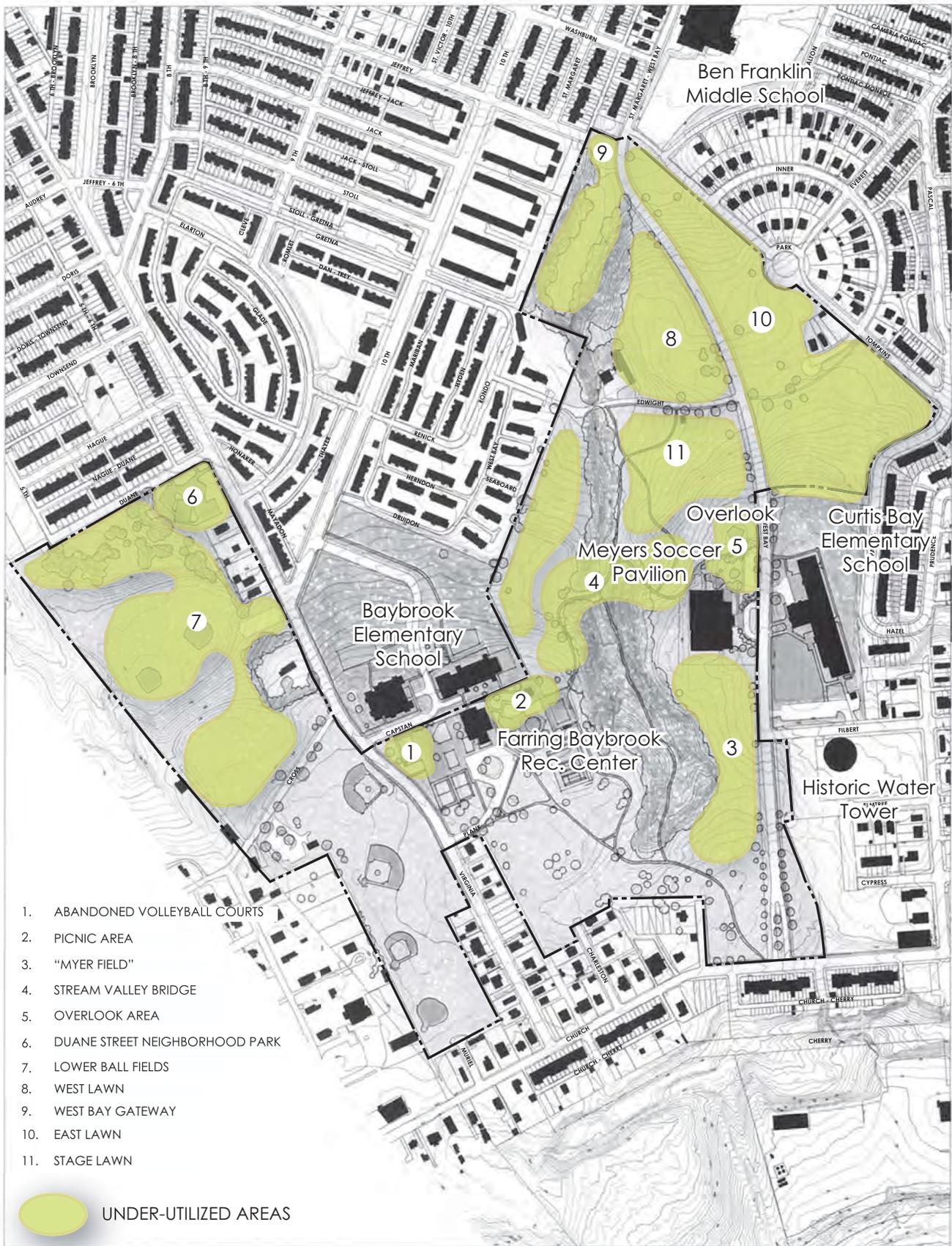


GATEWAYS, IMPORTANT VIEWS & VISTAS

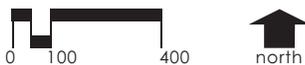


SITE ANALYSIS

FARRING BAYBROOK PARK



UNDER-UTILIZED AREAS



SITE ANALYSIS

FARRING BAYBROOK PARK

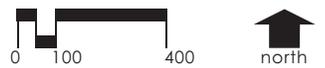
-BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS
 -MAHAN RYKIEL ASSOCIATES, INC.

January 2008

EXHIBIT 7



DEVELOPMENT OPP. SITES



SITE ANALYSIS
FARRING BAYBROOK PARK



- EXISTING WALKWAY
- PROPOSED WALKWAY
- BIKE ROUTE

PROPOSED BIKE & PEDESTRIAN PATHS



ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN
FARRING BAYBROOK PARK

-BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS
 -MAHAN RYKIEL ASSOCIATES, INC.

APPENDIX B: STAKEHOLDER INPUT

MASTER PLAN LEADERSHIP

Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks

Mary Porter
Denise Caldwell

MASTER PLAN CONSULTANT TEAM

Mahan Rykiel Associates, Inc.

Tom McGilloway
Ryan Johnson

STAKEHOLDER LEADERSHIP PARTICIPANTS AND INPUT

Stakeholder Leaders

Concerned Citizens for a Better Brooklyn

Kathleen Hogan
Kennard Ayers

Community of Curtis Bay Association

Linda Bardo
Mary B. Wolfe

Brooklyn and Curtis Bay Coalition and Brooklyn Homes Tenant Council

Carol Eshelman
Scott Stafford
Rosalie Park

Brooklyn Homes

Residents attending Health Fair

Baybrook Elementary School

Ann Cusscis

Curtis Bay Elementary School

Mrs. Pryor

Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks

Bob Wall, Youth and Adult Sports Coordinator
Kay Overton, Myers Soccer Pavilion Director
Mike Naugle, Therapeutic Dir., Farring Baybrook Recreation Center
Mary Gardner, Farring Baybrook Recreation Center

Stakeholder Leadership Input

Following are the notes recorded during a series of meetings with the leadership group identified above. These meetings occurred on May 25 and 31, 2006 and on June 14, 2006:

- Location of a senior center- where? And who land ownership
- Water Tower should become part of the park, currently land is owned by Public Works
- Community gardens did exist near water tower on Public Works land, but had to be removed due to increase maintenance costs
- What will bring people into the park?
 - Skate Park
 - Running & Walking Trails
 - Track with lighting
- Kids located near Saint Victor & Margaret St. will not allow children to walk to park for various reasons, mainly undesirable activity that occurs
- Address how visitors get into the park, not just the park itself
- Think about entry signage & gateways...location and design!
- Outlook Point could be a great location for a tavern on the green...
- Park is currently used by County residents not surrounding community residents...why?
- Ben Franklin Elementary school could potentially become a 6th -12th grade school
- Prostitution has been a problem near Elementary Schools at night
- The park has no place to sit, have lunch, grill...it has NO pavilions
- Farring Baybrook needs a diverse group of users, the park should not just cater to pool, baseball, and soccer players
- Upcoming inaugural event...Lead Sled, antique cars displayed, live music, food
- What about a Dog Park? –keep in mind the breeds of dogs in this community
- Should the park have more child play equipment? Where would it go?
- An area of the park lost electrical connection when bathroom containing transformers was demoed- trying to get BGE to reestablish connection, but not hopeful
- What about a Disc Golf Course? Ropes Course- team building events?
- Try and develop an outreach program with ballplayers who use the park...groups could then become stewards
- What about Nature trails and walks
- Currently there is no redevelopment projects of major concern for the park, but there has been talk of placing industrial type buildings on the site where possible and this could obstruct views
- Masonville Cove is planned to have a Nature Center and Bird Sanctuary (Port of Baltimore-Maryland) along the waterfront...could there be a connection with Farring Baybrook Park?

- Tried to get a capital budget for an outdoor soccer/multi-sport field that could become the home for outdoor soccer festivals...
- The Soccer Pavilion is busy from Fall thru May and the age groups range from 3yrs to 30yrs old
- Pavilion also offers a “Just for Fun” program that is year round and is 10 weeks long and no score is kept and it’s just for fun!
- Pavilion is busy on weekdays from 12pm to 12am, weekends from 8am to 12am
- Pavilion caters to app. 117 teams with app. 2000 participants
- Currently visitors just come to play or watch players...then they leave. Believes that if another activity was offered near the pavilion patrons to the pavilion would mostly likely not stay-could be beneficial to have an “outdoor babysitting” program for younger children
- Currently the pavilion is 98% Anne Arundel County users, but a new soccer facility recently opened up of Rte 97 and facility lost about 30 teams...optimistic that the teams will return as the result of poor officiating
- Pavilion is home to other sports, such as hockey, lacrosse, dodge ball
- Conference room can be rented out and is...Church currently uses it for a bible study program
- Meyer’s Pavilion in the past has offered after-school programs with surrounding schools, but has been difficult since the school has had difficulty in finding teachers to participate...what about the parents?
- During August, September, and November Anne Arundel schools have a cross-country course through the park...these take place during the school year during the day and app. 50 buses are in the park at one time!
- During big events the pavilion does have parking issues, but its not a big problem
- Found that once lighting was added to the building crime and undesirable activity did decrease dramatically
- West Bay Street divides the park into Curtis Bay areas and Brooklyn areas
- Currently the park becomes a gathering place for undesirables such as drug dealers and prostitutes
- What about another Rec. facility?
- Park needs lots of lights at the Overlook site
- What about another Observation Tower on the Curtis Bay side of the park
- Park needs more pavilions, grills, and eating areas, but make sure to make these feature fire proofs with current vandalism that has taken place in park
- Park needs to have more “After-School Activities”
- What about making the children of the surrounding schools stewards of the park...communicate with schools and learn about after school programs
- What about lighting ball fields?
- Park is not used by surrounding communities...why?
 - Fragmented
 - Undesirables
 - Ownership...who owns the park?
- Field sports are currently not well lit...do we need to light them?

- What about a larger pool that caters to a wide range of people...not just citizens
- Park needs more signage and more defined gateways
- What about, “Get to Know Your Parks” program? Rediscover Farring Baybrook Park program
- What about bike trails?
- Park needs more well defined paths and should have circuit training stations
- Farring Baybrook does not feel like a park
- 3yrs ago Ben Post Seniors & Community Center wanted a senior housing center in the Curtis Bay/Brooklyn area...originally the site was going to be near a church along Filbert St., but because of topography issues and costs the project was not developed however there was some interest in land near the entrance to Farring Baybrook Park along Church St. Contact at Catholic Charity-Dan McArdle
- Senior Housing Center would be 60-70 units and max. at three stories
- Seniors at the park could offer a mentoring opportunity for children
- During the summer, Mike walks 35-40 campers from the Curtis Bay Rec. Center to the pool at the Farring Baybrook Rec. Center...doesn’t always feel safe, but feels the walk is worth it
- Could the park be host to more indoor sports?
- Surrounding community children like to play baseball, football, and basketball...soccer is fun, but Curtis Bay Rec. has found more interest in these sports
- Could the lower site of the land that the water tower sits on become an area for a senior housing center?
- Could the land that is taken from the parks be allocated throughout Curtis Bay/Brooklyn area?
- Park needs to be accessible to all types of users at many locations
- Farring Baybrook Rec. Center needs to be more ADA compliant
- Rec. Center is receiving a new Pavilion...no paving at this point purposed
- It would be nice if the wooded area of the park is ADA compliant, but is it possible?
- A nature study program would best be suited in the dry stream/wooded area of the park
- Soccer Pavilion is currently not ADA compliant on the inside so using it as a possible link from West Bay St. to wooded areas may not be possible
- Bache Ball is big at the Rec. Center and they would like to have a regulatory court and host leagues
- Multi-Use Courts should allow both tennis and softball...keep in mind this is for wheel-chair related sports...is it possible to expand the current courts to fit a wheelchair regulator softball field?
- The park needs areas for Environmental Study...it is the largest open space in Curtis Bay
- No connection between public housing developments and park...disconnect!

- The building that was burned down last week could become an area for parking...currently the buildings that exist no longer are used
- Picnic areas should be located near Environmental Study Areas
- All paths need trees!
- Ball park use...Parks division permits for use, but the Maryland Orioles used them
- School grounds near Rec. Center need to be more connected
- Park must be inviting on all sides
- Park needs a bicycle and jogging trail(s)
- The park does not have a clear defined edge, what is park? What is not park?
- In the past the school has used the Rec. Center Pavilion, playground, basketball, and tennis courts on a regular basis
- Park needs lighting
- Children are afraid of the wooded area...some adult too
- Most students that attend the school come from Brooklyn Home Projects
- Rec. Center pavilion needs to be bigger...in the past it had been used for fairs and picnics for the school
- School currently doesn't have a gym...would like to coordinate with Rec. Center and allow access to its gymnasium
- Would like to work/coordinate with Curtis Bay Elementary
- Children arrive/leave school through car...school does have one bus for special education students. Children arrive @ 8:30am (45 min window drop-off time) and are picked up @ 3:00pm (45 min. window pick-up time). Drop-off/Pick-up area becomes very congested so much that the police monitor the area and issue tickets when necessary. Speed bumps added to slow cars down when children are running around
- Many children walk in the street...no sidewalk is provided to school entry/exit
- School needs to be more ADA accessible
- School would like an environmental program associated with the wooded area in the park
- School is becoming a community school and would like the community to draw on the services it offers
- An improved park would increase the school use of it
- School's concerns are prostitution around school, overlook and the trash littered throughout the park
- Outlook vegetation need to be cleared...currently harbors criminal activity
- School would like to see more trees
- Asphalted play area around school is dangerous in spots...children have broken bones on the steep area
- School would like an environmental education program and would be interested in one if provided
- Want more lights!!!
- Majority of children walk to school with parents and they come from different directions

- Believes Curtis Bay and Baybrook Schools don't coordinate because of cultural issues...could be racial
- Person mentioned that years ago there were many programs at the recreation center for the neighborhood kids, (roller skating, dances, classes) but there is really nothing there of interest to the kids now. Several people made similar comments.
- People don't come to the park to picnic - just not an opportunity they see available. Picnic areas with tables requested.
- More play equipment (climbers, swings, slides, hopscotch) requested in addition to the pool location. Nothing much for kids to do in the park.
- Parents want to see safety officers more often in the park because there is a lot of drug dealing in the park.
- Park needs to be cleaner.
- A "Friends of the Park" group would be nice to program and promote the park.
- Bike/walking path from 10th Avenue past Brooklyn Elem. School connecting to the recreation center, the pool, each school, major streets, and loop all around the park. More lights requested on the existing path.
- Football field requested
- Build a nicer pool with a water slide.
- Edwight Street beyond Brooklyn Homes property through the park to West Bay received several comments - clear unwanted poles, clear high grass and big trees near the street edge, repave the street and providing better lights. They would like to see police cruising the park more often.
- "You Are Here" park map at 10th Avenue showing locations of park amenities.
- Park entrance signs requested.
- Picnic pavilions at several locations such as Myers Soccer Pavilion, the overlook area and along the path connecting the schools.
- When kids leave after school activities at Brooklyn Elem. the park is very dark.
- Different scenarios were given regarding future plans for the schools near the park. May need to follow up with School Adm. to get more accurate information.
- Summer family programming in the park was requested - movie night, etc.

Following is additional specific input regarding Farring Baybrook Recreation Center (Interior and Exterior) provided in a memo dated August 24, 2006 from Mike Naugle, Program Coordinator:

Following is a wish list of renovations that would bring the Farring-Baybrook Recreation Center into full ADA compliance. There are some areas beyond the building itself that I will include because these were recommendations made as a part of an eight center study that was conducted in 2005 to determine needed ADA changes at those centers of which the Farring-Baybrook Recreation Center was included.

- Bathroom renovations - The boys and girls bathrooms have privacy walls inside the entrance doors that need to be removed or altered to allow for wheelchair access. Because our facility is used heavily for wheelchair sports, it has become very apparent that wheelchairs with cambered wheels (wider distance between wheels at the bottom than at the top) we need 42" bathroom door entrances and we need the privacy walls to be altered or removed (preferable altered) to allow for access beyond the door entrances. NOTE: Consideration might be given to decreasing or eliminating the current Janitorial supply closet that is in between the girls and boys bathroom. Doing this would enable us to have large entrances and still have privacy walls.
- If the bathrooms are extended to include changing rooms I would like an additional urinal for the boys bathroom and an additional stall in the girls bathroom. Note: We really are not compliant with state regulations for amount of toilets for our summer camp. This would give us an opportunity to meet those standards in addition to ADA standards.
- Changing rooms – We need two separate changing rooms that should be extension areas from our existing boys and girls restrooms. Access should be available through the existing bathrooms and they should probably include emergency exit doors in both as well as a much needed exhaust system. It would be my suggestion that the handicapped stalls in both bathrooms become part of the extended changing rooms. This would allow more space for the additional urinal in the boy's bathroom and an additional stall in the girl's bathroom. The changing area itself should include a roll handicapped accessible shower (in addition to the proposed handicapped toilets), an ADA compliant sink with appropriate hardware, an ADA compliant mirror and a wall mounted changing table that provides enough room when dropped for changing for a non-ambulatory child or adult to be transferred on and off the table from his/her wheelchair. Additionally, enough space needs to be provide in one of the changing rooms for the installation of an electric washer with an accompanying hook up water source and an electric dryer. Good lighting is needed and as previously mentioned, an exhaust system is imperative since changing children and in some cases adults in this area can cause extremely odorous conditions....(That's the best way I can put it.)

- Access Ramps are needed for two of the three gym doors as well as the rear hallway door and attention needs to be given to the emergency access doors that I've suggested being put into the new extended changing rooms.
- ADA Compliant Kitchen – To become fully compliant it was recommended by the compliancy team in 2005 that our kitchen cabinets and sink be lowered to meet wheelchair accessible standards under ADA.
- Sink for Craft Room – A wheelchair accessible height sink with appropriate hardware is needed for our craft room. It would be my suggestion that we change our craft room (meeting room on schematic drawings) to what is now our game room. If we did this, this would give us easy access to a water source that is currently connected to our bathrooms. So we need a full use, handicapped accessible sink in what is now listed as our game room. It would buttress the interior wall of what is now our girl's bathroom.
- Electric Doors – It is recommended that electric doors be installed at the building entrance. This is an issue, especially for many of our consumers who use electric wheelchairs for mobility.
- Rear Hallway and Gym Doors – ADA compliant doors are needed that do not exceed the recommended eight pounds of pressure to open and close.
- Electric Wall Switches – Switches outlets should be lowered for wheelchair access.
- Interior Gym Doors – Should be reconstructed to ADA compliance for easy access including appropriate door handles.
- Interior Room Doors – All interior doors should be equipped with appropriate ADA compliant door handles for access.
- Janitors Closet – If we use the space currently being used as our janitor's supply closet for bathroom renovations then I would recommend creating a new supply closet in our end storage closet closest to the kitchen. A water source and sink will be needed.

Beyond the building the following areas of ADA concern were noted:

- No designated handicapped parking
- Playground area adjacent to handicapped playground, swings and basketball courts needs to be completely resurfaced.
- Grates on playground area need to be changed to prevent wheelchair wheels from falling through grates.
- Access ramps are needed for playground area, area pointing to swimming and wading pool and to wheelchair softball field. It is also recommended that an access ramp be built at the #64 bus stop and sidewalk and the across from this ramp on the center side of the street that an access ramp and path be built that would lead to the center entrance.
- Wading pool needs to be a ground level splash pad for wheelchair access and general safety.
- Swimming pool should have a lift installed or portable lift available for wheelchair users.

- Wheelchair softball field (formerly three tennis courts) should be resurfaced and have an extended concrete/macadam surface to extend right field to meet National Wheelchair Softball Field Standards. Appropriate access path should be built to access the field.
- I would really like to have what was a clay tennis court that sits adjacent to Virginia Ave. turned into two lighted bocce courts with appropriate ADA entrance accommodations. These would not only be beneficial to our program for citywide bocce tournaments, they would be a great resource for the Brooklyn/Curtis Bay community.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND PUBLIC INPUT

Following is an outline of the participants and their input recorded during three community meetings:

COMMUNITY MEETING #1 JUNE 7, 2006

Participants (From Sign-In Sheet)

Linda Bardo
Kevyn Bardo
Jennifer Rosenthal
Leroy Kessler
Mary B. Wolfe
Mary Gardner

Responses to presentation of park site analysis & CPTED principals:

Assets

- Ball fields, clean up existing fields.
- Views
- Recreation Center & pools – utilized city-wide, but liabilities, spec. disabilities; targeting individuals' w/disabilities.
- Pavilion is using more local teams, but is not as utilized as it should be by locals.
- Appreciate the trail system and natural landscape.
- Large piece of land.
- Location is great to schools and recreation center.
- Cross-country meets take place in park.
- Lower field not used for formal active programs, but are used.
- Park has great view shed to city!
- Housing festival and parade – starts at Recreation Center.

Challenges

- Prostitution occurs at Curtis Bay Elementary School parking lot and the T-Mobile Tower.
- Trash dumping occurs/ed near water tower.
- Wooded are dark and uninviting.
- Park at corner of Duane and 6th is under-utilized (not sure what is park). Safety issues.
- Police uses parking lot off 6th. Not much goes on there.
- Upper corner near St. Margaret – West Bay is a dumping area.
- Area near Edwight is a trash area.
- Trail system is not a “loop” system. Not connected to surrounding area.

- Not thought of as park, area around West Bay (east side) not feel as park – result of programming?
- Wooded area divides communities.
- Communities tend to use other parks, instead of Farring Baybrook Park.
- Recreation Center not utilized fully for community (not targeting this community).
- Soccer pavilion.
- People not feeling safe using natural amenities.
- Limited use of land.
- Hills limit use of land.
- Park's size contributes to sense of fragmentation.
- A lot of lights not working.
- In evenings, no surveillance in parking areas near school.

- People not sure what is park vs. what is not.
- Not enough paths to make a circuit.
- East side doesn't feel like a park.

Vision/Possibilities

- Senior Housing Facility – bring people in and bring people back.
- Residential Center, Multi-use Center (bus routes up Virginia and Church Streets).
- Access to bus, groceries, drug store, and health facilities.
- Area off of Cross Street.
- High School and Middle School complex (football and track). Community not satisfied with Ben Franklin School.
- Balance of development and maintenance.
- Synergy
- Be aware of interaction between seniors and school children.
- Senior Housing – max 4 floors. (75 parking per unit).
- Building on being an accessible park!
- Three (3) years after purchase of land – Senior Center – up & running.
- Use every piece of parkland to satisfy everyone.
- More color/seasonal plantings, butterfly garden.
- Pavilions for grilling & picnics.
- Provide outlets for cultural activity & art.
- Create a park center for awareness.
- Park *entry* at Church and West Bay Streets (Filbert Street & West Bay).
- Recreation Center can program for senior citizens (need in-put).
- Senior citizens need a place to stay.
- People want to stay in the area. Senior can assist with Recreation Center.
- Access to bus line, to health facilities, commercial.
- Be careful about relationship with senior center and high school.
- Opportunity for park to capitalize on accessibility.

- More indoors sports.
- Picnic facilities/ grills in ground.
- Cultural arts activities.
- More centralized services.
- Both elementary schools will be K-8; need some expansion capability.

General Notes

- Parking occurs along West Bay, utilize existing parking & allocate future parking area.
- More lighting around Curtis Bay Elementary.
- Provide park police/ patrol that gives a presence in the park; park community has no patrol.
- Streets surrounding park don't give the best vantage points...get activity into the park.

In the summer 2006, Representatives from the Department of Recreation and Parks presented the site analysis drawings during an “Open House / Health Fair” held in the Brooklyn Homes Community Center to gather more input from community members

COMMUNITY MEETING #2 SEPTEMBER 18, 2006

Participants (From Sign-In Sheet)

Kay Staszak	Jon McHale, Sr.
Lee Kessler	Dorothy McHale
Bill Gonce	Marie Sobus
Linda Bardo	Vivian Vann
Kevyn Bardo	Mary B. Wolfe
Mike Naugle	Caren McKarahan
Caroline Sheriden	Bill McKarahan
Patrick Moylan	Richard G. Anderson
Rose Schulz	Carol Eshelman
Brian McHale	

What do you like about the proposed Master Plan Alternatives?

- Opening the park up and making more physical and visual connections
- 3 site locations for proposed senior housing
- “Concept A” caters to seniors and the location of senior housing would have great views to the city and onto the park making seniors a potential steward
- Limbing up trees to create views and improve visibility, using large shade trees as opposed to small flowering ornamentals, removing and trimming shrubs from pathways

- New road connections, but not thrilled about increased vehicular traffic moving through the park...traffic calming techniques
- Reforestation, but should be careful because the potential area has been known to harbor undesirable activity
- New neighborhood parks because this allows groups of citizens to take control of small areas of the park as opposed to trying to take control of one large area, but note that the potential park areas are currently harbor deviants
- Potential stage would require a cover and it's location is near a power source

What don't you like about the proposed Master Plan Alternatives?

- Increased vehicular traffic with new road connections...speeding
- Not enough proposed picnic pavilions...lots of fields, but not a lot of places to sit and eat

Other Comments

- Ben Franklin Middle School will currently remain a middle school, but has the potential to become a High School, but that has yet To-Be-Determined
- Children currently don't go into the park because there are no ball fields for them to play in
- The park currently has no organized event for July 4th, but park has many visitors on that night to view the city fireworks
- Community member could do masonry work on Overlook when it gets rehabbed...how should the community go about making this happen?
- What about parking facilities? Park should currently utilize road parking and existing lots, once the park becomes popular the city could look into using reinforced turf

Priorities

- Overlook...limb trees, thin-out vegetation, rehab the hardscape areas
- Neighborhood parks
- Outdoor soccer fields & permanent post/goals

In October, representatives from the Department of Recreation and Parks went to individual community meetings with the two alternative plans to gather more public input. They attended the Community Association Meeting for Curtis Bay (10/12/06) and the Community Association Meeting for Concerned Citizens for a Better Brooklyn (10/25/2006). Both groups had positive responses for the proposed improvements.

COMMUNITY MEETING #3 DECEMBER 5, 2006

Participants (From Sign-In Sheet)

Linda Bardo
Kevyn Bardo
Two others (did not sign in)

Comments on Draft Master Plan

- People in the community don't know that the Rec. Center is open to them because the main signage directing visitors into the Rec. Center states that the park is "Home of Therapeutic Recreation Division"

APPENDIX C: NATIVE PLANT LIST

Following is an outline of recommended plant material to be used throughout Farring Baybrook Park as planting occurs. The list emphasizes plant materials native to this region, as the majority of new planting at Farring Baybrook Park should utilize native plants. Non-native (but adaptive to this region) plant material should also be considered where it may be required to accomplish specific design objectives, particularly in the vicinity of the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center.

WOODED STREAM CORRIDOR AND REFORESTATION AREAS

Naturalistic planting for erosion control, wildlife habitat and buffer.

Canopy:

<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red maple
<i>Carya tomentosa</i>	Mockernut hickory
<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>	Common persimmon
<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	American beech
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip poplar
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Blackgum
<i>Quercus alba</i>	White oak
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Northern red oak

Sub-canopy:

<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>	Serviceberry
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Eastern redbud
<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>	Fringetree
<i>Cornus florida</i>	Flowering dogwood
<i>Ilex opaca</i> var. <i>opaca</i>	American holly
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweetbay magnolia

Shrubs:

<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Common witchhazel
<i>Ilex glabra</i>	Inkberry (evergreen)
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Winterberry
<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Spicebush
<i>Rhododendron catawbiense</i>	Catawba rhododendron
<i>Rhododendron periclymenoides</i>	Pinxterbloom azalea
<i>Rhododendron viscosum</i>	Swamp azalea
<i>Vaccinium pallidum</i>	Low-bush blueberry
<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>	Maple-leaved viburnum
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood viburnum
<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	Black haw

Groundcovers:

<i>Asarum canadense</i>	Wild ginger
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<i>Aster cordifolius</i>	Common blue wood aster
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Sensitive fern
<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	Cinnamon fern
<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	Christmas fern (evergreen)
<i>Senecio aureus</i>	Golden ragwort (evergreen)
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	Blue-stem goldenrod

Note: Alternate Herbaceous Species Seed Mix

WOODLAND EDGE/MEADOW TRANSITION AREAS

Plantings for meadow foraging birds adjacent to woodland edges along stream corridor

Lower-Branched Understory

<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>	Serviceberry
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	Black chokeberry
<i>Comptonia peregrine</i>	Sweetfern
<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	Grey dogwood
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	American elder
<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>	Mapleleaf viburnum

Berry-Bearing Trees and Shrubs

Berry-bearing plants to attract birds.

<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>	Red chokeberry
<i>Calycanthus americana</i>	American beautyberry
<i>Cornus florida</i>	Flowering dogwood
<i>Ilex opaca var. opaca</i>	American holly
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Winterberry holly
<i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i>	Low-bush blueberry
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood viburnum
<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>	Maple-leaved viburnum

STREAM CORRIDOR OPEN VISTAS

High canopy trees and low growing shrubs and groundcovers (under 4') to allow views into and out of the stream corridor in key locations as identified on the master plan

Canopy:

<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red maple
<i>Carya tomentosa</i>	Mockernut hickory
<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>	Common persimmon
<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	American beech

<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip poplar
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Blackgum
<i>Quercus alba</i>	White oak
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Northern red oak
<i>Ulmus americana</i> 'Princeton'	'Princeton' American elm

Shrubs:

<i>Ilex verticillata</i> 'Red Sprite'	'Red Sprite' winterberry (3'-5' Ht.)
<i>Itea virginica</i> 'Little Henry'	'Little Henry' Virginia sweepspire
<i>Rhododendron periclymenoides</i>	Pinxterbloom azalea (4' Ht.)
<i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i>	Low-bush blueberry (2' Ht.)
<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>	Maple-leaved viburnum (4' Ht.)

Groundcovers:

<i>Asarum canadense</i>	Wild ginger
<i>Aster cordifolius</i>	Common blue wood aster
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Sensitive fern
<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	Cinnamon fern
<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	Christmas fern (evergreen)
<i>Senecio aureus</i>	Golden ragwort (evergreen)
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	Blue-Stem goldenrod

Note: Alternate Herbaceous Species Seed Mix

PASSIVE MEADOWS

Meadow Grasses and Flowering Shrubs in full sun.

<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>	Broom sedge
<i>Andropogon scoparius</i>	Little bluestem
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Ox eye sunflower
<i>Liatris spicata</i>	Spiked gayfeather
<i>Lupinus perennis</i>	Wild blue lupine
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple Coneflower
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black eyed susan
<i>Solidago spp.</i>	Goldenrod
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common milkweed
<i>Aster laevis</i>	Smooth blue aster