

New Castle City Playground Council Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.
1 Municipal Boulevard, New Castle, DE

Members Present: Suzanne Swift, Chair
Brian Mattaway
Nermin Zubaca
Michael Platt, Council Liaison

Absent: Andre Jerry
Judy Guttenplan

Ms. Swift called the Playground Council Subcommittee (PCS) meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Minutes

A motion to approve the June 19, 2023, Minutes as presented was made, seconded and unanimously carried.

Playground Equipment Update

Ms. Swift reported that the existing playground equipment has been demoed, the playground is entirely clear, and the tentative installation date is July 31st. The installer will be visiting the site to make sure it has been demoed and excavated to meet their needs and they will communicate any issues to the group immediately. Mr. Mattaway will be the lead starting Friday, as Ms. Swift will be unavailable for several weeks.

Ms. Swift noted two outstanding issues that will not impede installation of the equipment:

- Installation of the pathway has been delayed but Kompan advised that they can commence installation without the pathway being in place or staked.
- The installer and Ric Delgado both felt the slides would be damaged in the excavation process and would be unusable. There was also concern about the time and cost to repurpose the existing equipment that could impact installation of the new equipment.

Ms. Swift researched driftwood birds nest equipment for younger children that would require funding. The architect provided his plans gratis. Ms. Swift also spoke with a contractor who has worked with driftwood and he will be providing an estimate.

In response to a question from Mr. Zubaca, Ms. Swift ensured him that all parties have the plans for the playground and the pathways.

Mr. Zubaca asked if a Phase 1.2 could be instituted for interim slides and driftwood equipment until the Phase 2 equipment is installed. Discussion of the amount of use slides generate ensued. Ms. Swift will reach out to Kompan to see if a slide can be installed on the driftwood equipment. She cautioned about installing interim equipment that would not be cohesive with Phase 2 and would ultimately have to be discarded. Mr. Zubaca asked if Phase 1.2 could be expedited in order to take advantage of the installation costs of Phase 2. Council President Platt stated that if

Playground PCS Meeting
July 17, 2023

the committee is looking to Council for additional funding, that would need to be considered at the City Council mid-year budget review in the January/February timeframe. He added that the use of ARPA would have to be introduced as a Resolution to Council.

Neighborhood Playgrounds Update

Ms. Swift reported that she has not received any responses from the request to have a neighborhood leads to partner with the PCS regarding equipment for their playgrounds. She opined that there will be an article in the newspaper when the playground at Battery Park is unveiled and suggested that at time they again reach out to the communities to ask for volunteers to partner with the PCS for equipment for their playgrounds. Council President Platt opined that the City playgrounds are well maintained by the City. During discussion it was noted that a makeshift playground has been set up by neighbors in Dobbinsville who are concerned about safety for children crossing the road to the City playground.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Mattaway expressed his appreciation of Mr. Delgado and the Public Works team for their efficiency and speed in removing the playground equipment in Battery Park, adding that they were a pleasure to work with.

In response to a question from Mr. Zubaca, Mr. Platt suggested that the PCS not have multiple projects running at the same time. Mr. Zubaca suggested that there may not be a need for monthly meetings and suggested that the Resolution for the PCS be amended to reflect that meetings will be held "as needed". Mr. Zubaca will discuss this with Mr. Barthel.

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Swift called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded. The motion was unanimously carried, and the meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich
City Stenographer