

Peavey Park Listening & Visioning Project
Focus: Community Involvement & Park Redevelopment

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN

**The Office of the Mayor
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
Hope Community, Inc.**

**ABOUT AN URBAN PARK IN
MINNEAPOLIS, MN**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Need For Project	2
Purpose	2
Project Leadership	2
Project Participants	4
The Listening Model	5
Current Status of The Listening And Visioning Project	5
Overview of Hope Community	6
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and Peavey Park	7
Picture Page	
<u>Interim Project Report Presented To Minneapolis Park And Recreation Board</u>	8
Architect's Reflections	13
List of Listening Sessions	

THE PEAVEY PARK LISTENING AND VISIONING PROJECT

NEED FOR PROJECT

The project began in January, 2000 as an experiment with a new way to involve and engage community residents in dialogue, input and influence with the future of a challenged inner city park. Peavey Park is located in the Phillips Neighborhood/Community, just outside of downtown Minneapolis, and many families and children served at the park live in households impacted by a variety of community stresses. The neighborhood is quite diverse in its population, including Native Americans, African Americans and immigrants from Latino, African and Asian countries, and has a high concentration of poverty as well as a lack of affordable and stable housing. In the past, the park has been plagued with drug dealing, violence and other illegal and/or anti-social behavior that has caused appropriate participation at the park to reduce.

PURPOSE

The primary goal of the project is to identify and involve community residents who are sometimes under-represented in discussions regarding community issues and solutions. An equally important goal for this project is to build broader, deeper and long lasting neighborhood use and involvement at Peavey Park, thereby increasing appropriate behavior at the park. This transformation in effect reinforces Peavey Park as a neighborhood "oasis" and the park becomes a catalyst for community socialization and building strategies. Community residents will gather at the park, get to know other community residents in a safe, green space where their recreational needs are met.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

A partnership between the office of Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) and Hope Community, Inc. was created to lead this effort and was awarded a City Parks Forum grant to support this park improvement effort.

- The MPRB has had a long-standing commitment and history of involving citizens in discussions regarding planning and design improvements that are completed at neighborhood parks.
- The "Listening and Visioning Project" is directly influenced by Hope Community's current vision of neighborhood revitalization –Children's Village– that focuses on building neighborhood and community for children and families in one of the most challenged neighborhoods in Minneapolis.

Staff from the MPRB and Hope Community: formed a Project Steering Group and worked together to plan project activities; identified community residents, organizations, businesses and current park participants who should be involved, and organized and facilitated listening sessions.

A design consultant joined the Project Steering Group and helped facilitate several visioning sessions that resulted in specific design concepts, drawings, scale model and other materials that will be used in fundraising efforts for the park improvements.

PROJECT STEERING GROUP

Office of the Mayor

Sharon Sayles Belton, Mayor

Hope Community, Inc.

Deanna Foster, Executive Director

Mary Keefe, Associate Director

Jeri Schultz, Project Coordinator &

Listening Sessions Facilitator

Jackie Byers & Linda East,

Community Organizers & Listening

Session Facilitators

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board:

Mary Merrill Anderson, Superintendent

Emily Jo Ero-Phillips, Manager –

Public Relations

Jennifer Ringold - Community Planner

Hoisington Kogler Group Inc.

Michael Schroeder, Vice President &

Project Design Consultant

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP GROUP

Hope Community organizing staff began the project by identifying community leaders with whom they already had connections as a result of Hope's community-building work, and specifically identified individuals and organizations who had real connections to park users and/or Phillips neighborhood residents.

The formation of this group ensured that the project is community-based and community-driven.

Individuals who have been involved in the Leadership Group include:

- pastors and staff from three different church ministries close to the Park
- the director of Peavey Park and one of his youth staff
- a representative of the Gateway Project, a community art project situated at the northeast corner of the park
- staff from a nearby church-operated shelter
- a youth worker and youth from a neighboring community center
- local residents

This group was open to people who participated in a listening session and wanted to remain involved. Other community residents may join the Leadership Group as the project evolves.

Role of Leadership Group

- The Leadership Group helped identify the groups with whom listening sessions were held and they took roles in organizing and helping to facilitate the sessions. Members helped to design the format of the listening sessions by giving input about the questions that were asked.
- The group continues to meet to provide feedback and guidance to the project, as well as to give shape to reports on the information received from the listening sessions.
- The Leadership Group has had and will continue to have a major role in presenting this information to the MPRB and other city officials.
- Many members of the group were also directly involved in the design/visioning phase of the project.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

During the first seven months of the year 2000, 181 area residents participated in eighteen listening sessions focused on community and their hopes for an urban park in their community. (A list of the sessions is included after the Interim Project Report.)

Identifying and Inviting the Stakeholders

MPRB staff, Hope Community staff and members of the Community Leadership Group identified community groups and organizations that were potential participants. All listening sessions were organized through individual and group contacts and follow-up initiated by Hope organizers, community leaders and park staff.

1. MPRB staff identified a list of people and organizations with whom they had contacts. All were groups that used the park or organizations located near it. These included:
 - Latino group who use Peavey Park for volleyball games
 - Somali youth who participate in basketball and soccer at the park
 - Artists from Gateway Project (located within Peavey Park grounds)
 - Franklin Area Business Association (FABA) — businesses located along Franklin Avenue (major commercial street at the northern border of the park).
 - Four Winds School (Peavey Park & Four Winds are a park/school complex)
 - Sports teams: coaches, parents, players
 - Private nonprofits and social service agencies in the area
 - Faith Community

2. In addition to community residents already active at Hope Community, additional neighborhood/community contacts were identified by Hope staff and Community Leadership Group members:
 - Centro Cultural Chicano
 - Golden Eagles (American Indian Center)
 - Parents In Community Action (Headstart)
 - Boys and Girls Club
 - Our Savior's Lutheran & Santo Rosario Churches
 - Other neighborhood contacts (community residents)

3. Others Were Invited with Public Notice to Listening Sessions:

In addition to the above listening sessions organized by Hope Community, all residents and business owners within a four-block radius of the park received an invitation to participate in public listening sessions. MPRB staff were involved with and helped facilitate these sessions. The format for the sessions was identical to all other sessions. The invitation described the Listening and Visioning Project and met public participation requirements of the MPRB for all park improvement projects.

THE LISTENING MODEL

The "Listening Sessions" model that was developed by Hope Community focuses on community defined issues, leadership and strategy sessions and overall community engagement with children and families. In this project, Listening Sessions were an effective feedback/input tool in gathering residents' thoughts on their definition of community and how a public park contributes to the well being of the neighborhood/community.

Assumptions

The Listening Session approach in this project is grounded in some basic assumptions. A park has much to offer to a community. Listening to and involving people is a good thing. Collaboration can bring creative energies together in new ways. To make a real difference, the park must welcome and reflect the community in all its diversity. Experience has shown us the listening sessions are part of a process toward that end. They also become opportunities for people to experience, wrestle with and own what community means to them.

Content of Listening Sessions

The Listening Sessions brought together groups of people to engage them in a serious discussion about community and the park. Initial questions encouraged individuals to reflect on how they experience community and to identify how the park affects the community and how the community affects the park. The questions gradually became more specific and eventually focused on Peavey Park itself. The listening sessions were a community building opportunity as well. People got to know each other and were encouraged to continue their involvement.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE LISTENING AND VISIONING PROJECT

The Listening Session phase of the project was completed in July, 2000 and an interim project report was developed with the involvement of people who participated in the project. Members of the Community Leadership Group presented the interim report to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in August.

All of this work led to the "Visioning" phase of the project that was facilitated by designer/architect Michael Schroeder. It resulted in design concepts, drawings, scale model and other design materials that will be used to identify park improvement funding sources.

MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD and PEAVEY PARK

History Of Peavey Park Improvements

Peavey Park is a 7-acre inner-city park that provides critical park and recreation programs and services for the Phillips Neighborhood and Community. The neighborhood and the park are affected by factors such as dense and dilapidated housing, traffic congestion, chemical dependency, high unemployment and crime. Although parks are considered oases in Minneapolis, Peavey Park had become a noisy, barren oasis and needed to be changed with a substantially improved environment.

For years, there were 2 structures (adjacent with park open space) that presented conflicting land use problems for the park. A liquor store (with one of the largest sale volumes in the City) occupied the northeast corner of the park and a treatment social service center was located right next door. Liquor store patrons would purchase alcohol and then walk 50 feet into the park to consume the alcohol (often at a picnic table). Many times, this led to public intoxication, physical altercations, sexual encounters and public drunkenness calls the police frequently responded to in the park. Children using the totlot and wading pool were exposed to these negative results of chemical abuse, including broken glass and other debris throughout the totlot, wading pool and entire park area. The whole situation presented an image of the park that was inconsistent with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) mission and recreation program service goals.

In the early 1990s, park staff worked with many neighborhood residents and groups, social service providers in the Phillips Community, Minneapolis public schools and elected officials to reclaim the park from people who used the park inappropriately. In 1992, the liquor store was purchased and this was the first step toward removing a conflicting land use that substantively interfered with the functioning of the park and adjacent open space. In addition, the Minneapolis Public Schools transformed the former Mt. Sinai Hospital into a K-8 elementary school (to serve 800 children) and a street was closed which allowed continuous green space from the school to the open space and playground. A small park building was attached to the gym of the school. This shared space was opened in 1993, which allowed the MPRB to operate and make the gym available for community use in the evening. The new park building also allowed the MPRB to add a balanced recreation program for neighborhood residents, especially children.

Over the next 2 years, the chemical dependency treatment/halfway house was also removed and also returned to green space. A public art "Gateway" to the park was erected on the spot where the liquor store had been, a new totlot and wading pool were built and 8' baskets were installed for younger youth.

Why did the Park Board become involved?

Superintendent Mary Merrill Anderson became aware and supportive of Hope Community's commitment to the betterment of the neighborhood, especially for children and families. She also discovered that they recognized that an urban park plays a pivotal role in supporting community life and providing safe, fun places for people to gather. Early on, Superintendent Anderson and Hope staff had lively and clarifying discussions about the land use of Peavey Park and realized the potential benefit of a partnership to look at how to involve more of the community with Peavey Park. She was further intrigued about the Listening Project that Hope Community was doing and wondered what implications that feedback tool might have for the MPRB citizen involvement and input processes while working on park improvement projects.

HOPE COMMUNITY, INC.

A Brief Description

Hope Community is a 24-year-old community building organization based on a two-square block area at the intersection of Franklin and Portland Avenues in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis. Hope approaches community building uniquely with two integrated approaches that complement and support each other: (1) community-based redevelopment and (2) engaging residents of the neighborhoods surrounding Hope Community in learning and working together to achieve common goals.

Community-Based Redevelopment

Hope Community began as a shelter/hospitality house for women and children in the late 70s on a block that was devastated by drugs and violence in the 80s. Building on our history, neighborhood connections and our strong commitment to justice, over the past several years Hope transformed a two-square block area into a thriving multicultural community where 24 families with more than 40 children live in Hope Community rental housing that is attractive and affordable. Indoor and outdoor community spaces include two brightly colored playgrounds and a picnic pavilion in the center of the block, as well as indoor spaces for youth activities and gatherings. Hope also owns two lots for future housing and 90% of the north end of the block.

Community Engagement – Youth And Adults:

Organizing / Community Building / Community-Based Education

All our work is grounded at the center by relationships with people who live in the neighborhoods surrounding Hope. Community engagement strategies we have developed and implemented around community networking, organizing and community-based learning are critical to Hope's continuing leadership. Through Hope Community hundreds of people have been involved in learning opportunities, listening projects focusing on key issues, leadership and strategy sessions, engagement with children and families, and community events.

In the year 2000 Hope Community engaged over 500 area residents in listening projects about community and neighborhood. This work provides a foundation for future dialogues between multicultural and multigenerational groups from surrounding neighborhoods, along with leadership training and action. About 100 participated in English As A Second Language Distance Learning, a "Writing for Community Leadership" class, a year-long "Kids as Urban Planners" project with third graders and a leadership training series with students from an alternative high school. Many participated in "Hope To Own," a home ownership program designed especially for low-income people. About 100 children and adults enjoyed community celebrations throughout the year, and many assumed leadership roles. Children participated in a weekly schedule of activities, along with monthly field trips and regularly scheduled projects of the Youth Volunteer Club.

Children's Village

Hope Community has taken on a leadership role in developing a vision for a community-based redevelopment initiative named Children's Village. The visionary plan for over 30 blocks of the Phillips Neighborhood redefines a neighborhood by looking through the eyes of children and their families. Hope Community's history and mission provides a unique source of understanding of the neighborhood, of children and families, of cultural respect and of the political realities surrounding neighborhood revitalization. The plan evolved from Hope Community's experience with creating a "village" on the Hope block. It assumes that the quality of life for children and families is the heart of a successful reclamation of the economic and social vitality of a city neighborhood. The model focuses on preservation of existing structures while adding new structures that create low impact, high density city living. Woven through the plan are spaces that enhance community interaction and build a sense of ownership and relationship. Peavey Park is a major community asset located within the project area.

PEAVEY PARK LISTENING AND VISIONING PROJECT: Hope Community, Inc. and Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

**Interim Report to the MPRB
Thursday, August 9, 2000**

INTRODUCTION

The Peavey Park Listening and Visioning Project was designed in two phases:

- 1) Listening Sessions organized by Hope Community with community members and park users, followed by
- 2) Visioning Sessions led by architect Michael Schroeder that will create a park design.

The goals of the project are as follows:

- 1) Broaden public input into the process of redesigning a park
- 2) Create opportunities for diverse members of the community to engage with each other
- 3) Building on the rich history of the Phillips Community and the park, create the future of Peavey Park as a place that welcomes and reflects that diverse community
- 4) Listen to specific ideas about the park.

This is an interim report about the Listening Sessions. It was prepared by Hope Community staff and participants in the Listening Project. Members of the Community Leadership Group presented the report to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

CERTAIN ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT PARKS, COMMUNITY, AND SPECIFICALLY PEAVEY PARK AND THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED HAVE HELPED TO SHAPE THE PROJECT FROM THE BEGINNING:

- **A PARK HAS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN COMMUNITY**
- **A PARK SHAPES AND REFLECTS A COMMUNITY AND COMMUNITY SHAPES AND REFLECTS A PARK**
- **PEAVEY PARK IS SET WITHIN A VIBRANT URBAN COMMUNITY WITH ENORMOUS POSSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITY THAT COMES OUT OF THE COMMUNITY'S RICH AND GROWING DIVERSITY**
- **PEAVEY PARK NEEDS TO WELCOME AND REFLECT THAT DIVERSITY.**

Goal #1:

Broaden public input into process of redesigning a park

Who Was Involved:

Citizen Input Out of Public Invitation:

- Part of this process: **2,300 invitations** went out to residents, businesses, and organizations in four-block area: **6 people responded**
- Hope Community also sent out **240 invitations to businesses, organizations, and institutions**: **13 people responded**

The Peavey Park Listening and Visioning Project organized by Hope Community in collaboration with the MPRB:

- Formed a **leadership group** made up of community residents including church members, youth that work at the park and live in the community, business reps, and other community agency employees.
- **Identified users/potential users** of park
- Facilitated **18 listening sessions**
- Got input from/listened to **181 participants**
This is not a scientific survey. We made every effort to reach people across cultures and ages, with a strong emphasis on people who use the park. Listening sessions were conducted in English, Spanish, and Somali languages.
- **Tallied all the responses** to the listening sessions and analyzed the information **to identify the themes and summarize the results** of the listening project.
- **Developed principles** out of the listening session themes that **will guide the visioning/design phase** of the project.

What we learned:

- This listening and visioning process should be used by the Park Board as a tool in the future, both in Phillips and in other neighborhoods.
- Money should be allocated by the Park Board either for park staff to do relational community organizing work or to contract with other organizations to do the work.

Goal #2:

Create the Listening Sessions as opportunities for diverse members of the community to engage with each other about community

What We Asked:

Before talking about specific ideas for activities or physical improvements for the park, the listening session groups talked about

- what community means to them
- specifically about their community and Peavey Park –
 - How they think outsiders see their community
 - What they see as residents

What We Heard:

What Makes Community

- A sense of belonging, togetherness and knowing, caring, supporting one another, sense of involvement, sense of home, ownership
 - Common interest, values, concerns, ideas
 - Common history, stories, memories
 - Common goals, working together
 - Common space welcoming all cultures and ages where people can connect
 - Unity and diversity
- Not always limited to common geography
- Culture is a very important community connector

What do people who don't live or work in this neighborhood see when they look at Peavey Park and the surrounding area?

The responses were negative 3 to 1:

- Includes crime, drugs, abandoned and neglected property, etc.
- People see what they want or expect to see

What do YOU (listening participants) see?

The responses were POSITIVE, close to 3 to 1, with two general responses overwhelmingly represented:

- Potential in people: people who want change, who want to be involved, who desire community, who dream, who have compassion, respect, pride, creativity, sense of place, and are friendly
- Positive activities (sports, celebrations)

What this might look like:

- Allocating resources for PR, so the park can effectively promote and publicize the positive things that are happening
- Publishing this Listening and Visioning Project in the MPRB Annual Report
- Forming an Activities Council for Peavey Park, made up of both youth and adults

Goal #3:

Building on the rich history of the Phillips Community and the park, shape the future of Peavey Park as a place that welcomes and reflects that diverse community

What We Asked:

- What they see as the role of a park in a community
- How they use the park now and how they would like to be able to use it

What We Heard:

There is a strong correlation between how people talked about what makes community and the role they feel a park has/should have in a community. The groups said a park should be:

- A place for community, for people to interact and engage, make friends, and get to know others
 - A place for community events – fairs, carnivals, celebrations, performances, and cultural events like pow wows
 - Place to encounter nature, relax, sanctuary, refuge
 - Place for fun, recreation opportunities, education

What this might look like:

- Park police getting out of their cars
- Diverse park staff at all levels reflecting the community's diversity
- New design of indoor and outdoor space at Peavey Park. May include:
 - Performance and Festival space
 - Community Gardens
 - More picnic space
- Artwork that reflects the various cultural groups in the community

Goal #4:

Listen to specific ideas about the park

What we asked:

- We asked what people like about Peavey Park as it is now
- We asked what people would like to see in the ideal Peavey Park

What we heard:

- The responses to the question about what people like about Peavey Park can easily be summed up under two categories: PEOPLE and MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES (diversity of uses)
- In the ideal park, there would be programs, activities, and services for all age groups.
- It would be a natural oasis – a place to enjoy nature.
- The amenities which would make the park accessible to all would be greatly improved, and they would include such things as the availability of public phones, bathrooms, and drinking water.

What this might look like:

- Park presence at the north end of the park (across from Chicago Crossings)
- Accessible bathrooms and telephones
- Longer operating hours
- Voicemail for the Peavey Park office phone
- Large, easily-visible outdoor signboard which lists activities and schedules at the park

Reflections by Michael Schroeder, Project Architect

Peavey Park Design Listening and Visioning Project

The foundations of a concept for improving Peavey Park are found in the “vision models.” Created by Vision Project participants, these models follow the principles framed during the Listening Project and represent the visions of their creators. As the models were developed, participants were encouraged to think broadly, extending their designs even beyond the boundaries of the park, and then to seek out ways to introduce the neighborhood’s character and qualities more directly into the park itself.

The concept design embodies the key elements that Listening and Vision Project participants outlined. These elements, as identified by the Leadership Group, include:

General

- Green space connections to the neighborhood
- Housing at the edges of the park
- Traffic calming on adjacent streets and the provision of safer crossings from the surrounding neighborhood
- Public art and gathering spaces that reflect the culture of the neighborhood
- Multi-cultural spaces, both site spaces and indoor spaces

Site

- Multi-use play fields
- A general skating experience
- Shared hard court games area
- A performance space
- A festival or event space (shared with play fields)
- Sledding hill
- Zero-depth access pool with water-related play features
- Enhanced play structure
- Ornamental metal fences to define spaces, with the art as a part of the fence
- Lighting
- Natural attractions, especially additional trees
- More quiet areas (arbors, pergolas and gardens, with sculpture as a part of each)
- Active, safe walkways at the perimeter
- Greening of 22nd Street
- Gardens
- More picnic shelters and benches
- Chess tables
- Enhancement of walking paths
- A sign highlighting park events
- Slopes or bleachers for viewing activities
- More parking

Building

- Coffee shop/candy store
- Separation of the indoor activities, with cultural activities in one building or area and recreational in another
- Meeting and classroom space
- Full kitchen
- A "real" office
- Arts and crafts room

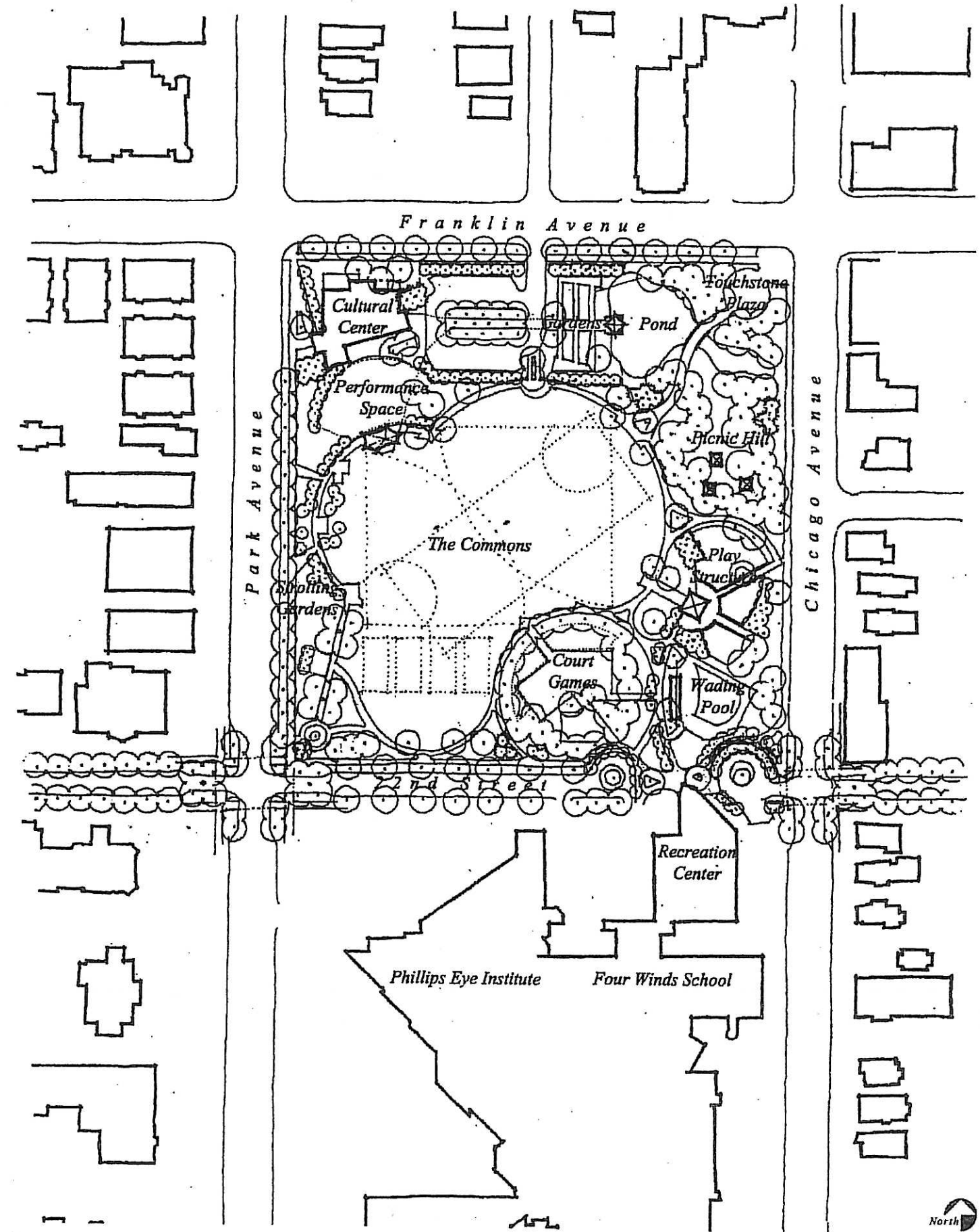
Basic diagrams for the layout of these elements demonstrate important relationships and show how features are used to integrate the park and neighborhood. The diagrams evolved with input from the Leadership Group, ultimately becoming the master concept for Peavey Park.

The master concept is only a guide, not an actual plan for implementation. It provides a credible tool for communicating the need for improvements to the park, and sharing the ways in which desired improvements might happen. Hopefully, it offers a source of energy that will keep the effort focused and moving forward. It is meant to be a thoughtful reflection of the input provided during the Listening and Visioning Projects, and an inspiring and compelling picture of what Peavey Park might one day become.

PEAVEY PARK LISTENING AND VISIONING PROJECT

Listening Sessions Completed

Jan. 25, 2000	Residents at 2615 Park Ave. Co-op (Four blocks from park)	15 adults
Feb. 9, 2000	LSS Transitional Housing Program (Two groups of women with children)	7 adults
Feb. 16, 2000	American Indian OIC (Native Americans participating in job readiness project)	14 adults
Mar. 5, 2000	Santo Rosario Church (Latinos living in the neighborhood)	7 adults
Mar. 24, 2000	LSS Refugee Services (Somali refugees living in the neighborhood)	2 youth, 2 adults
April 6, 2000	Leadership Group (Neighborhood residents, park volunteers, representatives of churches and organizations)	5 youth, 10 adults
May 1, 2000	Kaleidoscope After-School Program (Use Peavey Park and attend Four Winds School)	8 youth, 2 adults
May 9, 2000	Phillips Towers residents (Low-income hi-rise one block from park)	16 adults
May 16, 2000	Somali youth basketball players	4 youth, 1 adult
May 24, 2000	Latino volleyball players	16 adults
June 1, 2000	Our Saviour's Housing Services (Shelter for homeless 1 block from Peavey Park)	10 adults
June 9, 2000	Alliance of the Streets (Provides services to people in transition)	15 adults
June 14, 2000	Businesses and Organizations	7 adults
June 16, 2000	Businesses and Organizations	6 adults
June 19, 2000	Public Listening Session	6 adults
June 22, 2000	Public Listening Session	1 adult
July 10, 2000	Four Winds School (K – 8 school adjacent to park)	23 youth
TOTAL		181

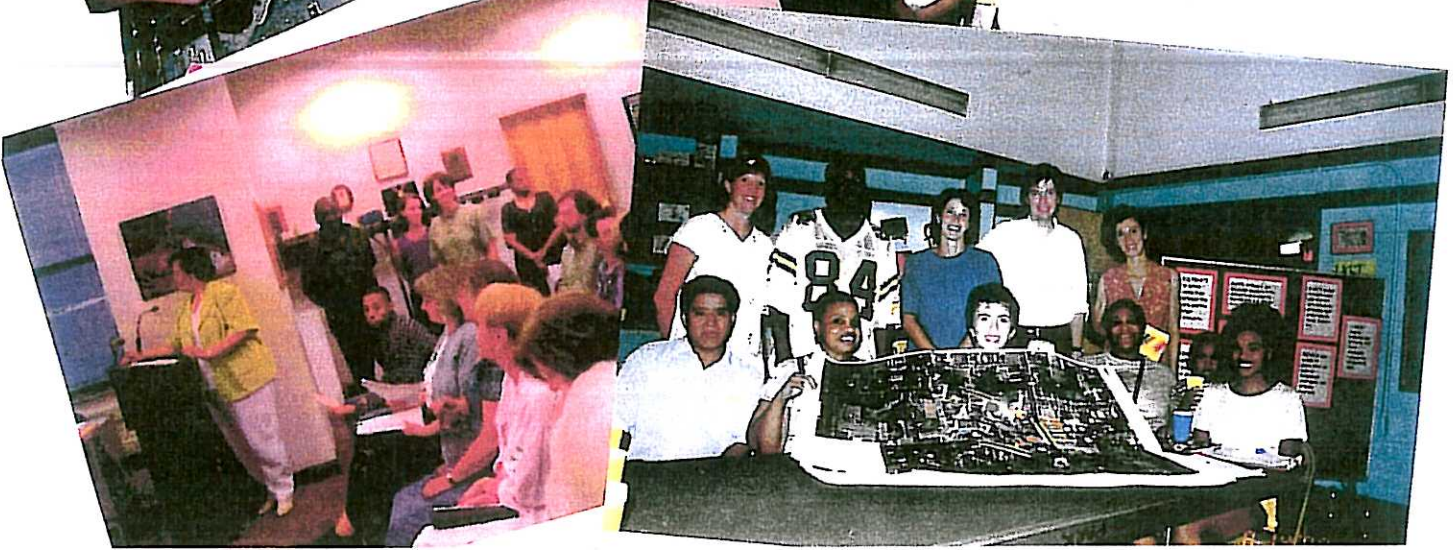
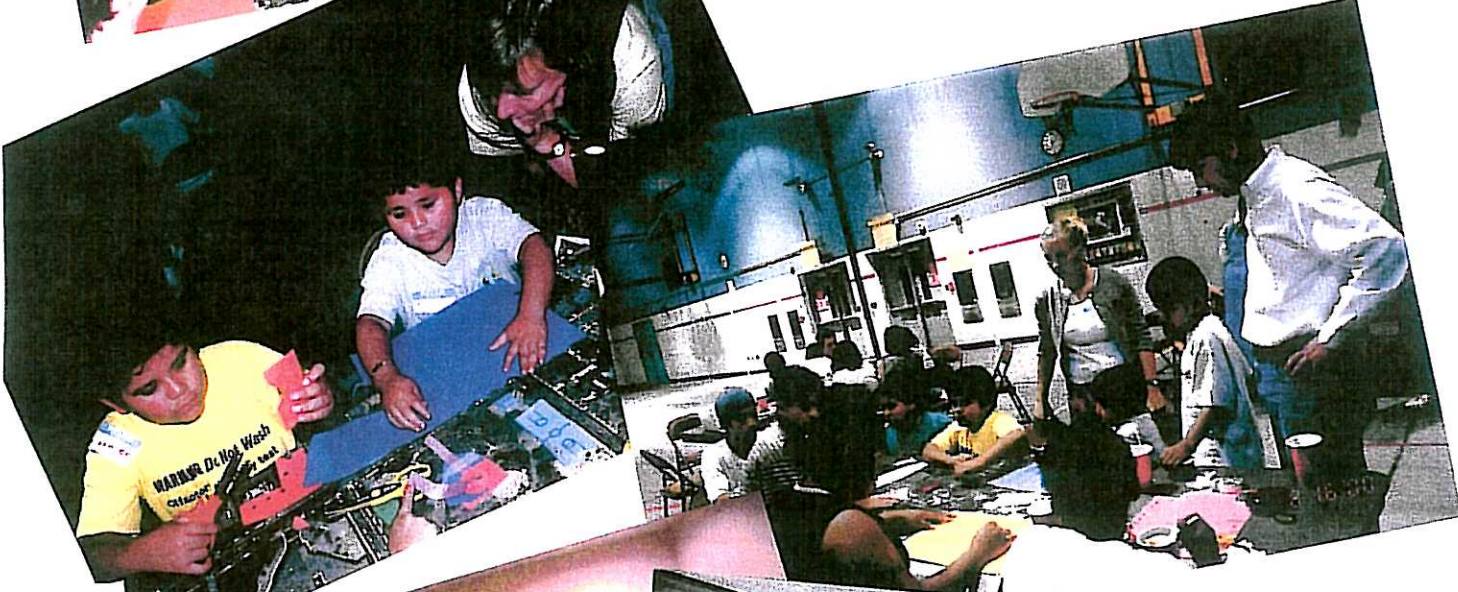
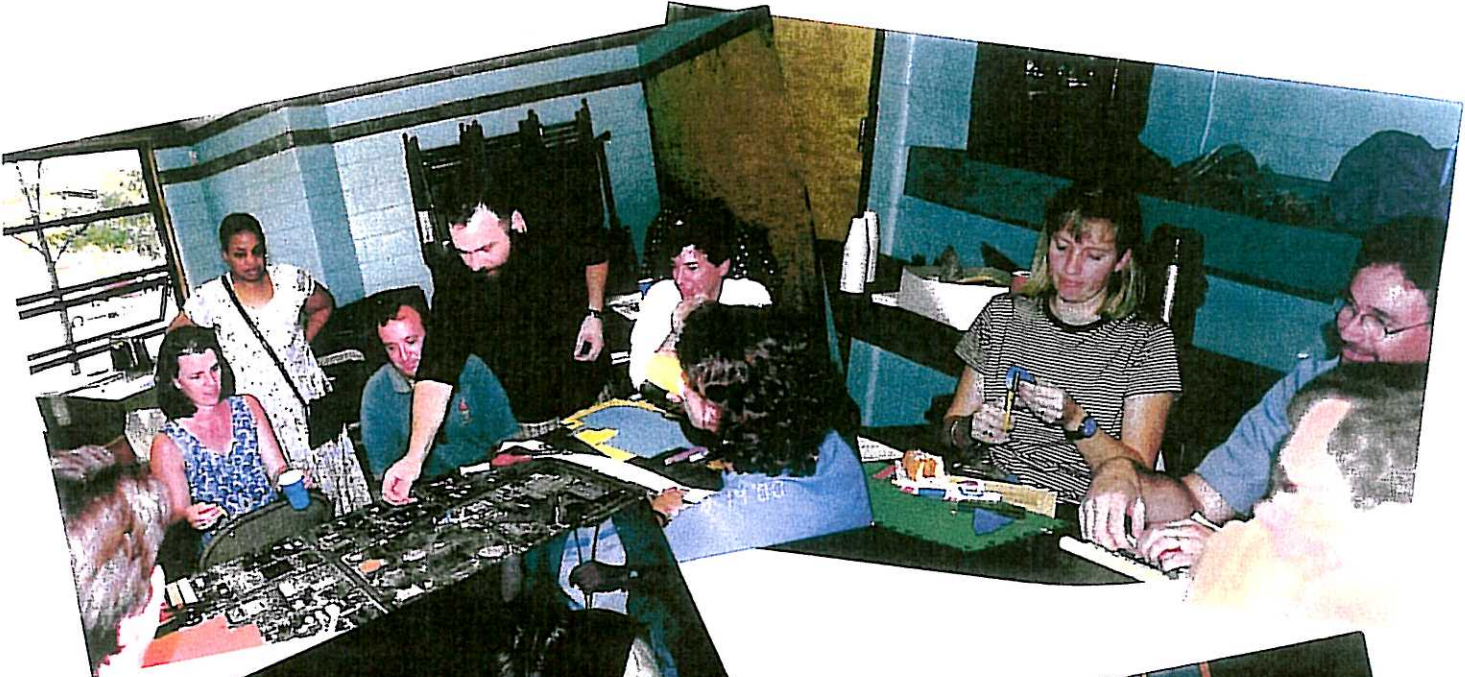


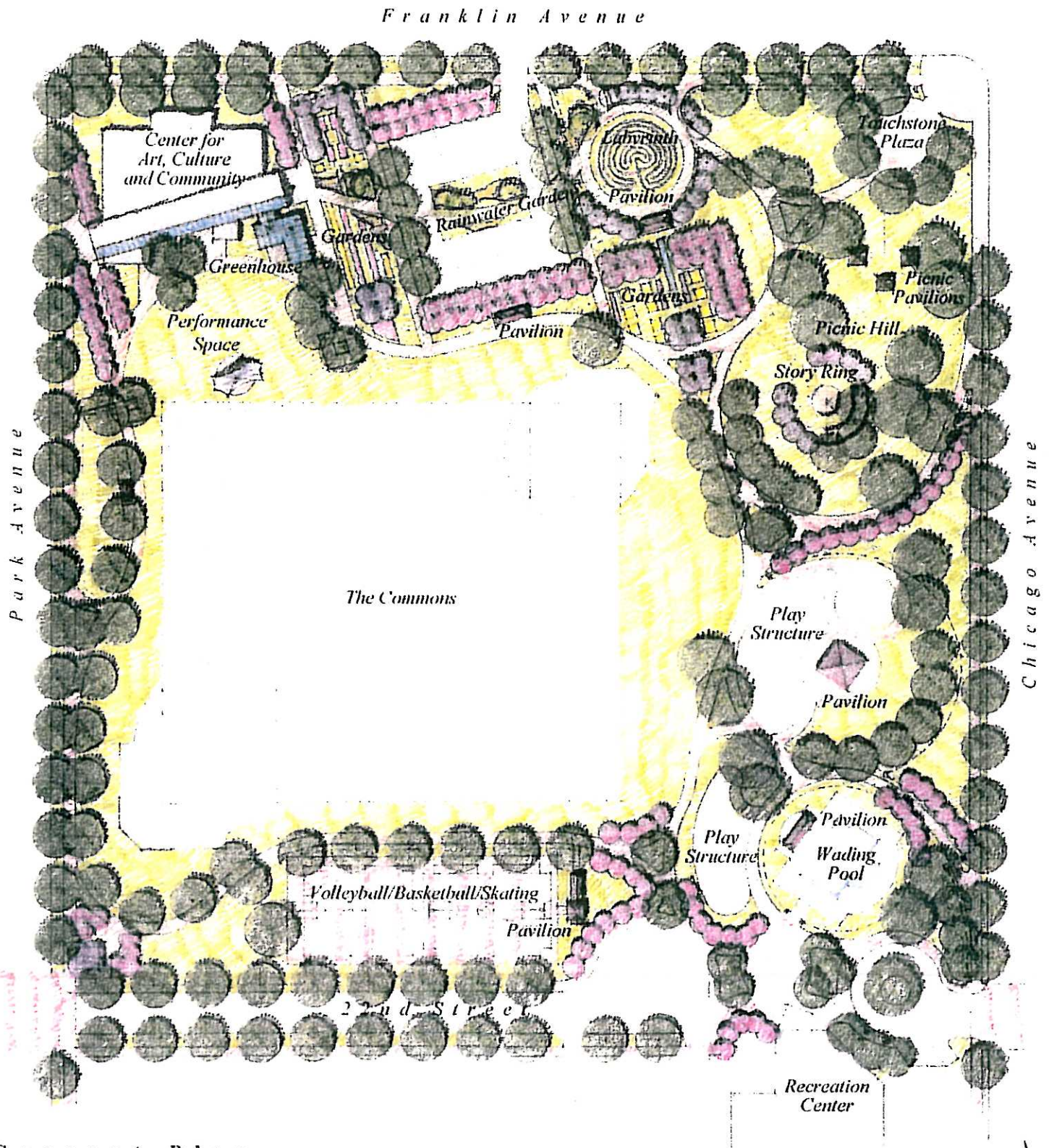
Concept Plan
Peavey Park

This concept plan was prepared as a part of the Peavey Park Listening and Visioning Project, a collaboration between the Office of the Mayor, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and various community groups.



Peavey Park Listening and Visioning Project: Community members - both youth and adults - shape the future of their park by participating in listening and visioning sessions and by making a presentation to the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board.





Concept Plan
Peavey Park
 Minneapolis, Minnesota

This concept plan was prepared as a part of the General Land Use Survey and Feasibility Study for Peavey Park, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The plan is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contract or any other legal instrument. The plan is subject to change without notice and is not intended to be a final plan.



28 August 2018