

**Fort Ward Park Community Meeting**  
**March 4, 2009, 7:00 pm, Lee Center**

## **Small Group Discussions**

### **GROUP 1**

#### Historic/Cultural Uses

- Identify Historic areas to visitors:
  - Grave sites
  - African American History
  - Post Civil War – preserve history
  - Regional Significance of Site – Rt. 7
- 150<sup>th</sup> Civil War Anniversary coming soon – preparations/planning event
- History needs to be more accessible

#### Active/Recreational Uses

- Ideas to address budget/staffing shortfalls:
- Prioritize usage (passive vs. active)
- Users take home their own trash – “leave no trace”
- Adopt-a-park/garden for beautification (volunteers for annuals, azaleas, perennials)
- Donate time (residents/volunteers)
- Coordinate a volunteer corp. for park

#### Environmental Issues

- Incorporate “green” into maintenance
- Return park to arboretum as part of master plan
- Turn up the heat and have coffee/hot chocolate at meetings

#### Other

- No more paving/impervious surface
- No need for speed bump signs – locate at the beginning of the road
- Establish limits on the number of visitors, control numbers in reservations
- No amplified sound/music for picnic reservations
- Overcrowding in park from events (jazz festival) causes spillover parking in neighborhoods
- Jazz Festival does not fit with the character of the park – there should be appropriateness of events in relation to historic uses
- Communicate to reservations use the historic nature of the park “respect park and its resources”
- Regional attraction and community asset

- Increase picnic reservation fees

## **GROUP 2**

### Historic/Cultural Uses

- Valuable levels of historic significance at Fort Ward
- Concerts and programs enjoyed
- Screening the cemetery from public view with trees is needed

### Active/Recreational Uses

- Noise problems connected to picnics and parties a big problem
- No large picnic groups and loud amplification should be allowed

### Park Operations/Maintenance

- No additional pavilions
- Move maintenance yard, but do not replace it with an additional picnic or public access area
- Do not make changes in Fort Ward Park without public process or community input, especially adjacent neighborhoods

### Environmental/Natural Resources

- Start taking care of the azaleas (existing plants) in the park instead of new plants
- Re-plant trees lost to attrition
- Why was irrigation system installed (impractical for walkers, cars running over sprinkler heads)

## **GROUP 3**

- Expand i.d. knowledge of existing site (GPS) - I.D. historical areas, signage
- Maintenance yard/cemetery area overlap- Does maintenance yard need to be moved?
- Stewardship apropos usage
- Utility survey needed
- Management of existing (permitted) uses and enforcement improvements – staffing!
- Interpretive Trail
- Arboretum species specific (Cedars ca 1899)
- Appropriate (wrought iron) fence at cemetery (bounding/definition of space)

- Tours:
  - African American Community
  - Oral History
  - Walking Tour
  - Cell Phone
- Committee for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to get appointed to responsibly implement short and long term interpretive plan
- Working Group tasks: ID short and long term goals
- Capture institutional memory of residents, relatives and stakeholders, including law enforcement
- City empowerment of working group and committee for preservation and managed growth/stewardship of the park; recognize natural habitats and develop master plan in phases.

#### **GROUP 4**

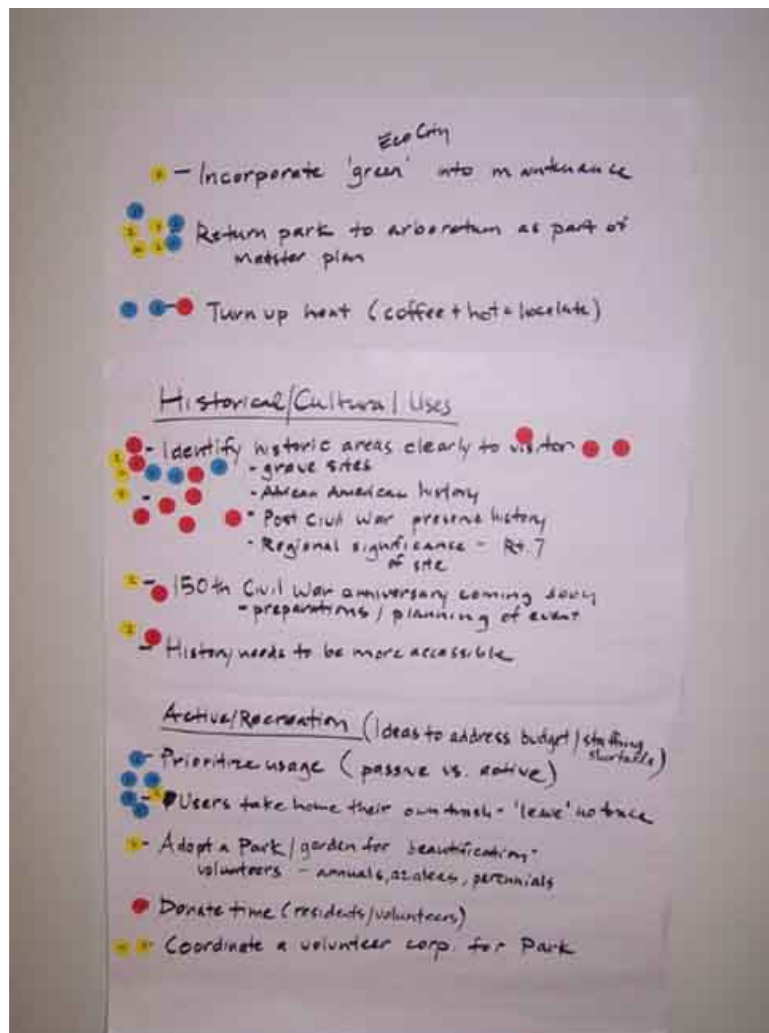
- ID grave sites and ID historic areas based on research
- Preserving history in museum – attention to concerns about flooding basement
- Signage of historical African American community
- ID walking and driving road
- Noise abatement w/ adequate staffing on weekends – overuse concerns

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## Priority Exercise

After the group discussions, all the notes were displayed on a wall. The participants reviewed the notes and were given colored dots to place next to items they thought to be of importance and priority. The dots were given the following ratings:

Red= HIGH level of priority  
Yellow= MEDIUM level of priority  
Blue= LOW level of priority



# - I.D. GRAVE SITES

- I.D. Historic Areas based on research

- Preserving history in museum  
concern about flooding in basement

- Signage of historical African-American community

- a walking/driving road

- noise abatement w/  
adequate staffing on weekends

## - OVER USAGE

- No more paving/impervious surfaces.

- No need for speed bump signs. locate at beginning of road

- Establish limits on # of visitors -  
control # in reservations

- No amplified <sup>sound</sup> music for picnic reservations

- Overcrowding in park from events (jazz festival)  
- causes spillover parking in neighborhoods

- Jazz festival does not fit 'Charter' of park.  
↳ appropriateness of events in relation to historic uses

↳ Communicate to preservation user the historic nature of park - 'Respect park and its resources'

- Regional attraction of community asset

↳ Increase picnic reservation fees - double

## • Park Operational/Maintenance

- no additional pavilions
- move maintenance yard, but do not replace it with an additional picnic area or public access area
- do not make changes in Fort Ward Park without public process or community input, esp. adjacent neighborhoods.

## • Environmental/Natural Resources

- Start taking care of the <sup>(existing plants)</sup> azaleas in the park instead of new plants
- re-plant trees lost to attrition
- why was irrigation system installed (impractical for walkers, cars running over sprinkler heads)?

## • Historic/Cultural Uses

- Valuable levels of historic significance at Ft. Ward
  - Concerts, programs enjoyed
  - screening the Cemetery from public view with trees needed

## • Active Recreational Uses

- - Noise problems connected to picnics + parties a big problem
- - no large picnic groups + loud amplification should be allowed

- Expand volunteerism at Fort Ward Park - thru Community / Friends of Ft. Ward

## THE 'PAM' GROUP

34.09

- EXPAND I.D. KNOWLEDGE OF EXIST. SITE (G.P.S.)
- MAINT. YD. / CEMETERY AREA OVERLAP
  - STEWARDSHIP: APPROP. USAGE
  - DOES MAINT. YD. NEED TO BE MOVED?!
- UTILITY SURVEY NEEDED
- MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING (PERMITTED) USE & ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENTS - STAFFING!
- I.D. HISTORICAL AREAS - SIGNAGE
- INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
- ARBORETUM SPECIES-SPECIFIC (CEDARS - ca. 1899)
- APPROPRIATE (WROUGHT IRON) FENCE @ CEMETERY - BOUNDING / DEFINITION OF SPACE
- TOURS - AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY
  - ORAL HISTORY
  - WALKING TOUR
  - CELL PHONE "



"PAM GROUP"

3.4.09

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- COMMITTEE ~ 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY
  - TO GET APPOINTED TO RESPONSIBLY IMPLEMENT SHORT- AND LONG-TERM INTERPRETIVE PLAN.
  - WORKING GROUP TASKS
    - I.D. SHORT- & LONG-TERM GOALS
    - CAPTURE INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY OF RESIDENTS, RELATIVES & STAKEHOLDERS, INCL. LAW ENFORCEMENT!
    - CITY EMPOWERMENT OF WORKING GROUP & COMMITTEE FOR PRESERVATION & MANAGED GROWTH/STEWARDSHIP OF THE PARK; RECOGNIZE NATURAL HABITATS & DEVELOP MASTER PLAN IN PHASES.

