Arsenal Park Phase 1

Final Review

Project Location:
Arsenal Park
Neighborhood: Lower Lawrenceville

Applicant(s):
Department of Public Works
Pashek+MTR

Project Duration: Permanent
Has this project come before Art Commission before? Yes
If yes, when? November 2021, Conceptual Approval
RCO District: No
Development Activities Meeting: n/a
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission Conceptual Site Plan Review
April 4, 2022
Arsenal Park I Improvements

Organizational Statement

This City of Pittsburgh park improvement project was undertaken by the Department of Public Works. Public Works is dedicated to providing creative, customer-friendly service while maintaining the City's infrastructure by resurfacing streets, improving park facilities and rehabilitating public structures. The department also meets the environmental needs of Pittsburgh residents by collecting residential refuse and recyclables. Lastly, Public Works ensures public safety by responding to emergencies such as flooding, land subsidence, snow/ice storms, and other weather-related catastrophes.

Pashek+MTR, a landscape architecture firm in Pittsburgh's Northside, is the park designer. Other partners include:
- District 7 City Councilwoman Deb Gross
- Project Consultants
  - Pashek + MTR, Landscape Architects, Lead Consultant
  - Christine Davis Associates – Archaeologic and Historic Resources Consultant
  - Graves Design Group - Architect
  - Sci-Tek – Civil Engineering and Permitting Consultant
  - Santangelo & Lindsay, Electrical Engineering Consultant

Letter of Intent

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy prepared a master plan for improvements to Arsenal Park in 2015. Community meetings, several focus groups, and stakeholder interviews all informed the direction of the plan. The master plan design, by MKSK, was presented in a community meeting in September 2015.

Key aspects for consideration as raised by the community during the master planning phase were:
- Playscape
- Powder Magazine Performance Area
- Mall
- Court Play Space
- Ballfield and Memorial Garden
- Tennis Courts, Woodland Garden, and Connection to Health Department

The City Department of Public Works then selected Pashek+MTR to complete the next phases of Phase I Improvements project: schematic design through construction documentation and bidding. Phase I focuses on the Playscape program identified in the master plan.
A new round of public input began in 2020 for the renovated park's schematic design. This plan was guided by input received from three advisory committee meetings, two community meetings, and various stakeholder meetings during this process. This plan, presented in a community meeting in October of 2021, incorporates accessible entrances from 39th and 40th Streets, play area, water play area, shelter, and restroom. It also features prominent water elements that both manage stormwater and encourage nature play. This park is and will be used by people of all ages and abilities.

During the master plan and schematic design phases, the design team has especially considered sustainability, maintenance requirements, user experiences, community preferences for program, inclusion, and an intention to provide a community asset unlike any other in Pittsburgh.

A public art component is under development and will proceed separately to the Art Commission. The design team plans to spend 1 percent of the budget ($17,000) on public art. The City is currently in the process of reviewing proposals for artists, designers and art collectives for the public art project for implementation in the park.

Groundbreaking is planned for July 2022, and ribbon-cutting in Spring 2023.

Letters of Support anticipated
- Chris Hornstein, Acting Director, DPW
- Lawrenceville United
- Lawrenceville Corporation

Budget
$1.7 million – Funding from City of Pittsburgh, grants and matches for park improvements
- Includes $17,000 for public art in the park
ARSENAL PARK – PHASE 1
Art Commission – Final Review
April 2022
ARSENAL PARK – LOCATION IN LAWRENCEVILLE
November 11, 2021

RE: Arsenal Park Conceptual Review | Letter of Support

Dear Pittsburgh Art Commission Members:

On behalf of Lawrenceville Corporation (LC), I am writing today to express our continued support for the implementation of the Arsenal Park Master Plan.

In our mission to serve as the catalyst and conduit for responsible and sustainable growth in the Lawrenceville community, we envision a neighborhood where open space is cherished, filled with amenities, and accessible to all. Unfortunately, Arsenal Park in its current state falls far short of this vision and its potential to serve the Lawrenceville community and nearby neighborhoods.

It is this recognition that led to the creation of the Arsenal Park Master Plan in 2015. Through this plan, we engaged many dozens of stakeholder groups and hundreds of surrounding neighborhood residents and businesses. Working in partnership with the City of Pittsburgh and Lawrenceville United, we have spent the past year updating and improving this plan to ready it for implementation.

What is being presented to the Commission today is the result of over five years of robust community engagement, stakeholder input, and multiple iterations from the engineering and design team. We have poured ourselves into this plan and are eager to see it move forward.

We appreciate the City's commitment to advancing the Arsenal Park Master Plan and look forward to our continued partnership to see this project through.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lauren Connelly
Executive Director
Lawrenceville Corporation
November 3, 2021

Andrew Moss, President
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

RE: Arsenal Park Conceptual Review

Dear Pittsburgh Art Commission Members:

On behalf of Lawrenceville United (LU), please accept this letter of support for the Arsenal Park master plan implementation. LU’s mission is to improve and protect quality of life for all Lawrenceville residents. We are pleased to be partnering with the City of Pittsburgh to be moving forward implementation of the Arsenal Park Master Plan, which was completed in 2015 after robust engagement from the Lawrenceville community.

Arsenal Park is Lawrenceville’s largest and most historic park. Improvements to Arsenal and Leslie Parks have been long overdue and top priorities of community members for many years, and we are pleased to see these planning efforts advancing. As the resident advocacy organization for the neighborhood, LU has worked with our sister organization Lawrenceville Corporation to engage the broad community around the City of Pittsburgh’s refinements to the Arsenal Park Master Plan and additionally stewarded an advisory committee of key stakeholders that represent dozens of organizations and constituencies with direct ties to Arsenal Park. That process has shown consensus of support for the concepts presented to the Art Commission and an eagerness to see this project built!

We appreciate the City of Pittsburgh’s investment towards our neighborhood’s most precious park and public space and thank the Art Commission for its consideration.

Sincerely,

Dave Breingan
Executive Director
Lawrenceville United

cc:
Andrea Ketzel, City of Pittsburgh