Homewood Park
Conceptual Review

Project Location:
Homewood Park, 540 North Lang Avenue
Neighborhood: Homewood North

Applicant(s):
Department of Public Works

Project Duration: Permanent
Has this project come before Art Commission before? No
If yes, when? n/a
RCO District: Yes
Development Activities Meeting: Yes, the DAM has been held
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission Conceptual Site Plan Review
May 4, 2022
Homewood Park Improvements

Organizational Statement
This City of Pittsburgh Homewood Park improvement project began in 2015 when the City and Homewood Community Sports (HCS), with the help of Heinz Endowments, Operation Better Block, Neighborhood Allies, Bridging the Gap Development, and The Mission Continues began a grassroots level study of field improvements at Willie Stargell Field. The study identified some of the challenges that the site faces with the existing conditions. Currently, the field serves both as a baseball and football field, however, the field is inadequately sized for both sports.
HCS led an extensive community engagement process in order to develop a Master Plan for the existing Stargell Field and expansion of Homewood Park onto the previous Homewood School property along Hamilton Avenue.

Studio Zewde, a landscape architecture firm in New York City, is the Park designer.
Other partners include:
• City DPW Project Manager Andrea Ketzel
• Project Consultants
  ○ Studio Zewde, Landscape Architects - Lead Consultant
  ○ Ethos Collaborative - Civil Engineering
  ○ Drummond Carpenter - Civil Engineering/Groundwater/Geotechnical
  ○ DIGSAU - Architects
  ○ J+M Engineering - MEP
  ○ WBCM - Structural Engineering
  ○ Alpine Allegheny - Cost Estimating
  ○ Counselman Hunsaker - Pool Designer
  ○ Navarro & Wright - Surveying and Geotechnical investigation
  ○ Tillotson Design Associates - Lighting Designer

Letter of Intent
Based on the results of the Master Plan, the City of Pittsburgh’s Department of Public Works, along with the essential community partners and the landscape architecture firm Studio Zewde, will be designing the following improvements:
• Site engineering for the development of a combined, regulation-size football and baseball field, seating and site-wide ADA accessibility
- Structural engineering for retaining walls surrounding the site
- Relocation of existing pool and bathhouse/locker room to accommodate field renovations
- Site-wide stormwater management solutions, including cisterns or r-tanks under the athletic fields
- Connection to the Martin Luther King Jr. Busway and renovated pedestrian bridge to Westinghouse Park
- Cultural/performance space with connections to the Afro American Music Institute
- Playground and multi-purpose courts for various youth activities
- Public Art is currently being planned to be integrated with the architecture and the park paths and walls. 1% of the project budget ($120,000) is budgeted and the City has already solicited artist proposals and is conducting the interview and selection process.

We are looking forward to our Conceptual Review, and our Project Schedule currently is to “break ground” with site prep and demolition this fall of 2022 and are planning to complete the project in 2023.

**Letters of Support anticipated**
- Chris Hornstein, Director, DPW
- Homewood Community Sports
- Homewood Collaborative

**Budget**
$12 million – Funding from City of Pittsburgh, grants and matches for park improvements
- Includes $120,000 for public art in the park
Homewood Park

+ Faison Field Improvements for Baseball & Softball

Art Commission Conceptual Review

MAY 25, 2022
Homewood Park & Faison Field
Existing Conditions
Community Engagement #1 - March 12, 2021

What is the best thing that could happen in Homewood?
Community Engagement #2 - April 17, 2021
Community Engagement #3 - June 12, 2021
Concept: One Heart and One Hub

- heart
- hub
- new pool
- new building
- new stands
- concessions
- plaza
- space for play, art, and gathering
- "passing traditions through generations"
- "bringing community together at the field"
- Homewood + Westinghouse pride!
- best family atmosphere
- cornerstone of local community
- recreation center
- neighborhood parties
- "History steps" "a place for the kids to come and be safe"
- intergenerational love
- the field is an important place for guidance + support
- Cultural events
- "Cultural and academic enrichment"
- "Incorporate Black history"
- "Incorporate art into the field"
- "Life motivation"
- "Life changing emotional support"
- "Children taking care of each other"
- "Everyone taking care of each other"
- "Friendships that last forever"
- "Parents for academics and athletics"
- "Parental support system"
- "HCS community"
- "Year-round programming + winter activities"
- "Bridge the gap between Point Breeze + Homewood Park"
- "A center for academics and athletics"
- "A concert on the field for everyone in the city"
Site Plan

- Pool
- Poolhouse
- Fieldhouse
- Playground
- Amphitheater + Lawn
- Plaza
- Football Field
- Field Shed
- Bike Racks
- Parking Lot
  - 42 Spaces + 4 ADA Spaces

MLK Jr. East Busway
Hamilton Ave
N Lang Ave
Clawson St

1" = 50'-0" 100FT
View of the Stands & Building
Furnishings & Material Palette

Pavers
Poured In Place
Safety Surface
Concrete Sidewalk

Pavers
Concrete Paver
Pool Deck
Pavers

Bituminous Paving
Parking Area

Character Reference Images

Furnishings

1

2

3
Views of the Building

VIEW FROM DROP-OFF

VIEW FROM NORTH HUB
Views of the Shade Canopy
Faison Field

Faison Elementary Multipurpose Field

STUDIO ZEWDE - HOMEWOOD PARK

ART COMMISSION - CONCEPTUAL REVIEW - MAY 25, 2022

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Development Activities Meeting – Form to Use During DAM

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logistics</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Name/Address:</td>
<td>Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homewood Park Improvement Project – 540 N Lang Ave</td>
<td>residents, employees, etc. where this is evident):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parcel Number(s):</td>
<td>Homewood Children’s Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125-S-125, 125-S-150, 125-S-150-1</td>
<td>Homewood Community Sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZDR Application Number:</td>
<td>Homewood Community Development Collaborative</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCP-ZDR-2022-03341</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Location:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hybrid (Zoom + in-person at Homewood-Brushton YMCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date: March 29, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Start Time:</td>
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<td>6:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant:</td>
<td>Approx. Number of Attendees: 27 on Zoom; probably about 20-25 in person</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrea Ketzel – City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sara Zewde – Studio Zewde (landscape architect)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boards and/or Commissions Request(s):</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Art Commission – improvements to City property</td>
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How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

- The president of Homewood Community Sports, Mubarik Ismaeli, discussed the condition of the field and noted that what the architect drew up in 2015 “blew him away.” He noted that parking was the number-one issue for residents around the park when there are games there.
- M. Ismaeli said that with the new field, his program will “build capacity for violence prevention.” He noted that violent crime is decreasing for those under age 30. He discussed wanting to expand mentoring programs for young males and “especially females,” to get more positive Black females to see strong Black women.
- M. Ismaeli introduced Derrick Tillman, a real estate developer who has been involved with the Homewood Park improvement project since 2015 and is a Westinghouse High School graduate. D. Tillman has been helping to lead the community engagement on the park improvements.
- Andrea Ketzel went through a PowerPoint presentation. She showed an aerial view of the park and noted that the community did not want baseball and softball to be displaced.
- After A. Ketzel went through the first couple of slides, the sound cut out from the Zoom recording of the live/in-person proceedings. The in-person presentation continued, but landscape architect Sara Zewde took over those attendees on Zoom and gave a separate presentation.
- S. Zewde showed photos of past community engagements, including in-person events in April 2021 and June 2021. She pointed out that there was a physical model of the park improvements produced for the June engagement and that discussion centered around having a community hub including a playground and plaza near the field.
- S. Zewde shared a site plan, pointing out that the curving path served a dual purpose as both a walking circuit and an orienting path to get people in the community from Hamilton Ave to the “community hub,” with its fieldhouse (office space for Homewood Community Sports, multipurpose community gathering space, and lockers), poolhouse, and new pool.
S. Zewde noted that parking was a major issue, so 42 spaces of parking with four ADA spaces are to be provided. Vehicular circulation will be provided from N Lang Ave to Clawson St.

In addition to the improvements around the “community hub,” an amphitheater and lawn are also part of the design. The walking path is to be designed as a “walk of fame.” The football field will include a new natural turf surface.

Shade trees and benches will be provided along Hamilton Ave in the plaza.

S. Zewde showed a three-dimensional aerial view of the park design, pointing out the walk of fame, playground, amphitheater, and football field as the center of the park, as well as the pool and poolhouse/fieldhouse (to be under one roof) and the parking lot in the rear of the park along the Busway.

S. Zewde showed the circulation plan. She pointed out that all hardscapes would be “universally accessible to the maximum degree possible,” which she noted was difficult given the amount of grade change on site. A path to the pedestrian bridge leading to Westinghouse Park in North Point Breeze will be maintained.

The sound from the in-person presentation came back at this point, during which D. Tillman was discussing post-construction opportunities for residents and teenagers in the community.

### Input and Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions and Comments from Attendees</th>
<th>Responses from Applicants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“One of the things that’s concerning is that when I bring my kids to the park, I don’t see anyone there but adults drinking and smoking weed. Parents are drinking, hollering, and cussing. I’m really serious about children. The things that kids are being exposed to. No positive interaction.”</td>
<td>M. Ismaeli: “When you have 300 kids being coached on the field, you don’t see any positive energy?” [This devolved into a back-and-forth argument between the question asker and M. Ismaeli and between multiple in-person attendees that lasted for many minutes.]</td>
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<td>“Your starting point for the community engagement, is that it’s not long enough. You have to start in layers.”</td>
<td>M. Ismaeli: “We’ve done the community engagement. We started in 2015. When the City put in the money, that’s when community engagement on record started.”</td>
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<td>D. Tillman: “What you happened is a microcosm of what’s happening in the black community. It’s unfair to put that on HCS. This organization is a safe haven keeping kids out of trouble. What you’re speaking of is a community problem. All stakeholders need to be involved. But that’s not something that HCS can do alone. They’re doing their part. That’s all of us working together.”</td>
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<td>Walter Lewis, Homewood Children’s Village: “This is a rich conversation. We apologize trying to put two DAMs in one night. We don’t often get this many community members in the room at one time. The front desk is trying to kick us out — we’re already over time.”</td>
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<td>M. Ismaeli: “We are a 100% volunteer organization. If you want to help make things better, we do things every day at the field, usually 5:30-8:00 PM.”</td>
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### Other Notes

Planner completing report: Phillip Wu