

Fort Lowell Park Master Plan Visioning Workshop June 25, 2008

Meeting Notes

1. Opportunity for people to make suggestions on a website? Some information currently available on Pima County website. <http://www.pima.gov/cultural/>
2. Give your child the “roots” of where they came from. The cultural dynamic of the site and how that story is told from the time during the Fort Lowell Period. Who is the audience- local, county, state, etc. Opportunity to expose people to a story that might not be very popular. Tell all the stories.
3. Retired history teacher. Should be alarmed at the lack of understanding by today’s students. Closer history is to home more students can relate to it. Make it kid friendly and tactile. Let the kids touch and learn. Have good volunteers.
4. Keep historical values alive but integrate a communal place for people. A place people can use and gather. Sports, youth sports, families, picnics. Not necessarily indoor functions. Should use outdoor space, primarily.
5. 15,000-20,000 people on Friday night of Fort Lowell Shootout. Why is it so popular? There is history, but it is not that apparent to visitors. Starting a website to make people more knowledgeable about history of the park. Shootout and Park have history together. Want to keep Shootout at Park.
6. La Reunion – How to get people around the park without getting lost in the parking lots, recreational amenities. Need interpretive trail that connects nodes in park and around the park like TMC. Alamo Wash trail. ‘Hawk’ Crossing idea might not be appropriate for a historic district. Need wayfinding and overall plan for neighborhood.
7. Trails- Vista del Monte – Pro Neighborhoods Grant for McCormick Park. Would be nice to have historic resources that are usable for daily activities to make them alive.
8. Interpretive Ranger Staff at Tumacacori is based on Kino History. But there are other ways of interpreting resources, such as architectural interpretation. How to bring that architectural knowledge about Officers Quarters #3 to the visitor. Consider other approaches such as timelines to bring message to different users.

9. Natural resources- riparian interpretation at the Pantano. Wildlife viewing requires trails and interpretation. Natural history is a part of the regional and neighborhood context and history.
10. River Parks system – Pima County is planning for future trail system along with bank stabilization that could change the riparian values of the park, unless this is staved off.
11. Adults need to be considered. Have a great museum and Officers Quarters #3. Commissary could be coffee shop, bookstore, for arts for adults.
12. Erosion of spatial order of Fort Lowell Period. It is a stretch to imagine that this was a military site. Need to bring that forward through landscape and other means.
13. Of course we're going to underground Craycroft ☺.
14. Would bet that fewer than 5% of the visitors recognize the Museum and pit houses. And now the Adkins Parcel. Need to tie all these different elements together. Can see that these different stories are available. And maintain the character of this area- not Downtown.
15. If playing tennis- how know that pithouses and Museum are there. (Multi-purpose wayfinding needed) Lights are an important item. Light is being dispersed to the surrounding neighborhoods. Need lighting that is functional.
16. Need a “billboard” for the park to orient visitors. New lighting is available that is more sensitive and focused. But not currently at Fort Lowell Park.
17. Unification of landscaping could help create “feel” for the Park. Approaching the park from Craycroft is very different than approaching on Ft. Lowell. On Craycroft Road, the “shock value” of Cottonwood Lane conveys the feel of the Fort. (good shock value currently).
18. Apache statue- A statue of an Apache Scout is a good idea, but should be at Fort Apache. If put one at the park, should be someplace different in the Park. Should have own focus. An Apache Scout is not appropriate to Ft. Lowell.
19. Where did Apache Statue idea come from?
20. Will be a Chiricahua Apache “hostile” statue, not a Scout.
21. “Hostile” is a relative and extremely offensive term. When Fort Lowell was functioning it was part of one of the most dynamic and destructive struggles in the history of the US - the conquering of an ethnic people as a part of manifest destiny. Trying to destroy one group of people's history. How can this be interpreted sensitively? It was a very complex situation. Other Native American scouts also present during this time period –Tohono O'odham. There were conflicts between Tohono O'odham and Apaches as well as between Apache groups. The dynamics of the 1860s-1890s are complex and difficult. So many layers to history- incredibly sensitive. Camp Grant Massacre – many believed that eradication of the Apache people was the only answer. Interpreting this story will be a daunting task.
22. Will actively solicit input from Native American Communities.
23. And other cultural traditions of our community and interact on this site in dynamic ways. How to tell the stories in consultation with the different groups.

24. Fort was in existence for less than 20 years, but history of area is much longer. Has been incorporated into the neighborhoods history and the continuation of resources from one period through to the other periods. Can you bring a visitor from Hohokam history to Adkins history on one site?
25. Fort Lowell in name, but the longevity of other periods is important and needs to be told.
26. "Lakeshore Drive" how include Craycroft in park? Connect adjacent to statues.
27. How will park be operated? Could inform the planning- who will operate the different components- Museum, Recreational pieces, Is there admission? Where does the first-time visitor go? Should consider the operational issues early in the process rather than at the end. Planning implications may include parking locations (west of Craycroft?)
28. Is there are entrance fee for the Museum?
29. Commissary needs on-site manager.
30. Is it possible to bring forward restoration plan for Officers Quarter # 3 to show progress and because there is a lag of 8 months after the Master Plan before this would get started.
31. Crossing Fort Lowell Road is also a problem. Have discussed closing Fort Lowell Road at Craycroft.
32. Commissary – this process will help determine the best use. Not necessarily apartments.
33. Type of lighting should be run through the users.
34. Safety and security issues – Pedestrian safety will be a big issue.
35. Speed humps (pedestrian tables) on Fort Lowell Road are too far into neighborhood- have been scrapped and are no longer visible. At Craycroft desired to break up edge to slow down traffic. Look at how the right-of-way will allow for pedestrians and landscape.
36. Do people in Tucson think of Fort Lowell Park only for recreation? Can we change that thinking and how to change the perception to historical / recreational? There is an opportunity to help "redefine" the park through the master plan process. Fort Lowell Recreational and Historical (Cultural) Park.
37. Can we learn from other projects around the Country?
38. As someone who grew up here I do think of it as a historical park. Statue is an opportunity to bring more educated discussion to the complex issues present on the site.
39. Alternative mode considerations should be made. Diversity of plant and wildlife is amazing in this neighborhood. Unique aspect to this neighborhood.
40. OFLNA- Historic Walking Tour –each year. Many native Tucsonans never realized this part of Tucson and its history existed.
41. Would like to see how this historical park is linked to other heritage sites in the area. Through the proposed Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area – Theme of "U.S. Military History on the Border". Should be planned in conjunction with other historical sites in the region.
42. Foreign visitors come to Fort Lowell Park to learn about the Fort Lowell history.

43. Craycroft Road is the issue that will drive many other decisions. Large museums back east that depict the living conditions of different people at historical sites. Could use Commissary at Fort Lowell for this purpose. Youth don't appreciate local history. Opportunity to bring students out to learn about Tucson in 1873
44. Many layers of history but also has current use and is in the middle of a neighborhood. Don't lose sight of the fact that this is in the heart of the neighborhood and is used for many (evolving) purposes
45. During the war, Chinese farmed areas around the neighborhood.
46. "There is no future without the past"

Additional comments received following the workshop

My personal quick input is that the future plans and development should take into consideration the trail system that OFLNA has promoted and developed thru out the neighborhood. Orchard River is looking at eliminating grass lawn along North side of Glenn and putting in a compacted dirt sidewalk trail to match what the Fort Lowell road has. We want to get a Pro-Neighborhood Grant to make the conversion. This would be a continuation of the Fort Lowell trail and could pass thru the park in various ways then pass over a pedestrian bike bridge to Atkins property. The bridge should line up with the Cottonwood trees. To the east the trail could continue up the Pantano Wash when that trail gets developed similar to what is along the Rillito Wash.

Gary Olson, President Orchard River Garden Park