

Community Engagement in Bryte Park Master Planning June 2011

Overview

Bryte Park has for many years been the corner stone of community activities ranging from baseball and soccer to large multicultural events. These have been very successful for the promoters and along with increased popularity the park is now seen more as a regional venue than the local park originally conceived. Associated with these activities and events also come the noise and traffic problems that proportionally have more impact on the residents living nearest the park. By most standards of measurement Bryte Park needed a new master plan that was focused on the traditional activities but, extended to include other facilities and amenities that could serve the community.

Recent History

Bryte Park Visioning Workshop on February 27, 2010. The workshop was attended by more than 75 people and included a wide range of interests, ages, cultures and expertise. The workshop included information, discussion and feedback about the Bryte Park General Plan. The City's plan will include enhanced playing fields, public spaces and more! Sponsors of the workshop: City of West Sacramento, California Sierra Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, and BBCAN.

Bryte Park Visioning Exhibition May 2010. The exhibition was conducted for a group of 30 residents that came out on a rainy evening to see and weigh in on the community's ideas for park activities and conceptual layouts for the future of Bryte Park. The exhibition was co-sponsored with the Bryte and Broderick Community Action Network and the California Sierra Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Volunteer landscape architects from the region analyzed the inventory of park activities and prepared professional renditions of plans created at the Bryte Park Community Visioning Workshop in February 2010. Along with the original workshop materials and refined illustrations, the exhibition presented a conceptual plan that illustrated the most preferred themes expressed at the workshop. Exhibition participants voted for their highest priority park activity and three favorite layout concepts for a redeveloped park. These priorities and preferences are the initial public input to the Bryte Park Master Plan a component of the Bryte Park Redevelopment Project.

The Bryte Park Redevelopment Project continues to move forward. The next step will be to identify funding needed to complete the Master Plan. The Master Plan is necessary so the City and other civic organizations can seek grants to help fund the implementation of the plan. Developing a completed project Master Plan may take 18 months depending on the available funding and the extent of consultant assistance. The City is considering the most effective approach to continuing the project plans, including using consultants and/or staff for various components. Staff is currently reviewing the Capitol Improvement Budget for available resources. The Project plans will continue.

Scope of Community Engagement

BBCAN has included Bryte Park Master Planning in its MAP work plan document which defines which strategies are used to fulfill our mission and achieve our goals. The strategic view of Bryte and Broderick residents being actively and meaningfully engaged in their community is clearly identified in this document. A key activity is labeled Park Development.

Specific community engagement opportunities are identified in the following ways:

- a. Outreach by using any of these methods
 1. Meet ups where the topic for discussion is park development, status update or conducting community surveys.
 2. Community Meetings where topics are major developments or next steps are discussed with the residents and community wide input is being solicited.
 3. Community Events where the residents are invited to enjoy and participate in a full range of park activities including music, sports and food fairs.
 4. Community Activities where residents can give back to the community by volunteering to participate in neighborhood and park cleanup or related maintenance activities.
- b. Fund raising
 1. Use Partnerships to explore grants and other funding sources
 2. Conduct capital funding programs
 3. Plan sales of donated items to raise money
 4. Plan events where guests are charged a fee for entry
 5. Plan social events where invitees can meet and visit with special guests

Focus of Community Engagement

BBCAN was actively participating in the Bryte Park Visioning process from the beginning to the presentation of a conceptual plan that illustrated the preferred themes expressed in the workshops. Exhibition participants as noted before voted for their highest priority park activities and three favorite layout concepts for a redeveloped park. Since that event more conversations have taken place and ideas put forth that if they were carried through would substantially enhance the value of Bryte Park to the community. New land and usages are being added to the concept and additional Facilities and amenities not discussed previously in public venues will be possible as well.

It is within the role of BBCAN to keep abreast of these conversations and as they mature bring them to the residents for their input and commentary. BBCAN must keep vigilant at all times and be prepared to step up when called upon. This latter fact is very evident during these difficult times when city budgets are very lean and just the legal minimum community notification is the norm for projects going forward. Bryte Park Master Planning even in its most exotic form is too important to the residents of Bryte and Broderick to allow only minimum conversations to set the standards for this corner stone of the community as it is

redeveloped. The focus of the community should be kept on every step taken now and into the future of this "Park /Community Center" that relates to it's funding, development and maintenance. Each of these focus items will have a bearing on the perceived value to the community long after the construction is finished.

2011 Assessment

Bryte Park Master Planning discussions have expanded in scope in all aspects including available land, facilities, amenities and perspective uses. In a good way it is almost like starting over but, with a different horizon.

In a much more direct way BBCAN will be called upon to help with getting the word out on issues that are bit foreign to us now such as public financing and transportation. These outreach activities will place a burden on BBCAN in several ways as it supplements the city's efforts to communicate with the residents Bryte and Broderick and the larger community of West Sacramento. BBCAN will need to recruit the volunteers that can carry the message to the community and the financial wherewith all to defray the associated costs.

Next Steps

BBCAN should form a new committee to focus on Park Development as stated in the MAP work plan document. This committee should insure communications between the City and the Community are not hindered by the lack of funding for robust community outreach. This committee should maintain a presence at the "Table" during all meetings including scoping, workshops and other planning type meetings when permitted to do so. This committee should report back to BBCAN on a regular basis and conduct regular public outreach activities.

To support these and related efforts this committee needs to raise funds to pay for the costs of such efforts.