

Winnemac Park Advisory Council  
 Monthly Meeting Minutes  
 Wednesday, October 11, 2023 – 6:15pm

**Members Present ✓:**

✓	Manny Vega	✓	Deb Miretzky
✓	Dave Miretzky	✓	Anne Sylvan
✓	Cathy Vega		Johanna Raimond (WP Tennis)
	Amy Williamson (Nature Committee)		Dinakar Vinnakota (Treasurer)
	Elvia Heneghan (Amundson Athletics)		Christian Blume
✓	Margaret O’Conor (TIF Committee)	✓	Russ Klettke, (WP 4 <sup>th</sup> For All)
✓	Jacob Shuster (new member 10/11/23)	✓	Claire Howard
✓	Eleanor Arnold		Adam Honaker
	Serena Honaker	✓	David Cady Jr.
✓	Michael Pavilon	✓	Mike O’Keefe
✓	Mary O’Connor		

**Chicago Park District Representation ✓:**

✓	Lisa Ragucci (CPD Park Supervisor)	✓	Kate Thomas (Senior Project Manager)
✓	Rachel Evashan (CPD Project Manager)		

**Community ✓:**

✓	Kristi Eilers (Amundsen Principal)	✓	Deirdre O’Connor (Representative of the 40 <sup>th</sup> Ward Office)
✓	Cameron McConnell (Amundsen)	✓	Dan O’Conor
✓	Craig Newman (Amundsen)	✓	Jenny Newman
✓	Heidi Hoffmann	✓	Chris Fortier
✓	Jayson von Osinki	✓	Dave Johnson (Pres. of Amundsen Athletics)
✓	Drew Girard	✓	Bennett Newman
✓	Jason Szott	✓	Will Szott
✓	Unknown 1 L	✓	Tommy Kaiser
✓	Unknown 2 L	✓	Jackson Walker
✓	Unknown 3 L	✓	Patty O’Keefe
✓	Daniel Jeske (Amundsen Athletics)	✓	Andrew Sikler
✓	Mr. Sikler	✓	Conor Fortier
✓	Unknown 1 R	✓	Spencer Harris
✓	Unknown 2 R	✓	Seth Horrow
✓	Unknown 3 R	✓	Unknown 1C
✓	Unknown 4 R	✓	Unknown 2 C
✓	Unknown 5 R	✓	Unknown 3 C
✓	Unknown 6 R	✓	Unknown 4 C
✓	Unknown 7 R	✓	Unknown 5 C
✓	Unknown 8 R	✓	Unknown 6 C
✓	Unknown 9 R	✓	Unknown 7 C
		✓	Unknown 8 C
		✓	Unknown 9 C
		✓	Unknown 10 C
		✓	Unknown 11 C
		✓	Unknown 12 C

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Manny Vega called the meeting to order at approximately 6:15pm.

**Public comment** – no one signed up to speak

There were over 50 attendees, including 13 representatives of the Amundsen baseball team.

Manny explained that the purpose of the meeting is to inform the public of the Winnemac Park Improvements planned for spring 2024 and solicit feedback from the Winnemac Park stakeholders and the community. Manny introduced the members of the WPAC board and Kate Thomas and Rachel Evashan from the Chicago Park District

**Old business:**

Rachel Evashan spoke and is the CPD Project Manager for the refurbishment of the tennis court and multi-use court:

- Refurbishments will include: a full resurface of both courts, new fencing and ADA compliant pathways.
- The west court will be a dedicated tennis court while the east court will be a multi-use court with a pickleball overlay. The pickleball will be a different color than the tennis to differentiate.
- The CPD is finalizing construction and design on 18 tennis/pickleball projects (including Winnemac Park) and moving them to bid. Due to this and the weather quickly changing, the refurbishments will most likely take place late in quarter 1 of spring 2024
- The CPD doesn't know the timeline of the work until the bids are received.
- A question came up around tennis courts being reserved. Lisa Ragucci confirmed that the tennis courts at Winnemac have always been on a first-come, first-serve basis and will remain that way.

Kate Thomas then spoke, she is the CPD Project Manager for the refurbishments to the baseball field:

- The baseball field in question is the field adjacent to the soccer field and between Amundsen and Chapell schools.
- The refurbishments are to include: a turf infield, lawn outfield, player benches, spectator benches including ADA compliant benches, a scoreboard, batting cage, lights along the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> baselines and potential permanent fencing or netting along the 1<sup>st</sup> base line (if the budget allows).
- Construction will take place Q1 – Q4 of 2024.
- Kate explained that the TIF money allocated to the improvements needs to be spent by December 31, 2024.
- The landscape architects 50% construction diagrams will be available in November and the internal construction team will review.

Questions for Kate from the Winnemac Park stakeholders and the community:

1. -Will the drainage issue be addressed? Yes, the drainage issue will be addressed and will mitigate the issue of standing water on the field. The turf will be placed over gravel and drain tile.
2. Will the outfield be turf also? No, the infield will be turf and the outfield will be leveled
3. Why turf on the infield? The turf wears longer and dries quicker for the field to be playable more often.
4. Where is the scoreboard going? This is up for suggestion but will be placed in the most ideal area where it will be out of the way. There will be more flexibility on the location of the scoreboard if it's solar and this would depend on the cost and budget.
5. Will the soccer field be refurbished? The soccer field will be the staging area for the construction taking place on the baseball field. There are no plans to do work on the soccer field, but it will have to be repaired to playable condition after the construction to the baseball field is completed.
6. Will there be a home run fence on the baseball field? The CPD does not fence in fields because it doesn't allow for use by other park patrons on non-baseball days.
7. Can there be gromets placed in the outfield so that temporary home run fencing can be set up? This could be an option if the user group agrees to purchase, store, set-up and take down the fence as needed. The

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Chicago Park District would not be responsible for the purchase, maintenance, or storage of the fence. The CPD would need to know sooner than later if the user group would like to see this as an option.

8. There was a question about the fencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> base line? If financially feasible, there will be permanent fencing, temporary fencing, or netting along the 1<sup>st</sup> base line because of its proximity to the walking path.
9. There was a question about the concrete edging – there will be edging on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base lines
10. There was concern about the sewer lines in the grass outfield. Engineers will be looking into the sewer lines to confirm that they are not clogged, broken, or cracked. There was a question as to whether they could use drain tile in the outfield to tie into the sewer lines.
11. Concern was voiced regarding the contractors that may be chosen and if they have experience working on this type of construction. CPD will be selecting the contractors from the rapid response pool and the candidates will have strong experience with renovating baseball fields.
12. Will there be anything else in the dugout besides the benches? Only the benches at this time, but CPD is open to other suggestions they may have.
13. Will there be a bullpen? Not at this time, but Kate can take this back to the designers if it's something that is wanted/needed. A community member mentioned that it would be great to have a pitcher's mound and plate along one of the base lines for the pitchers to warm up.
14. What will the batting cage look like? It will be a concrete base with netting all around and will be located behind the benches on the 1<sup>st</sup> base side.
15. Will there be a storage shed? No, the storage sheds are usually provided by the user groups.
16. Will there be a water fountain? This could be a possibility but would depend on the pipes in that location due to lead issues.
17. What will be the schedule of the lights? The lights will be angled down to feed light to the field only. The will only be on if there is a game scheduled by one of the user groups. They are on a timer and only the approved user groups will have the key to turn the lights on. The lights would follow the same hours as Winnemac Park.
18. Since the construction will begin quarter 1 and run through the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2024, where will the Amundsen team play and practice? The CPD has been in touch with the school and other effected teams and will be working with them to ensure that they will have a place to practice and play while the field is under construction.
19. Will there be roofs over the dugouts to protect the players from sun and rain? It's not in the design at this time but could be added if the user group would like it to be.
20. Due to the unforeseen issues that could be identified to resolve the drainage issue with the field, Margaret would like for the CPD to let the group know as soon as possible what will be included in the construction and what we can fundraise for (if needed). Kate mentioned that the CPD would need to approve anything the school will purchase.
21. Is there any money in the TIF for the future maintenance of the baseball field being constructed? No, the TIF funds were for the initial construction and must be spent by December 31, 2024. CPD knows that the field is in Winnemac Park and moving forward will be included in the line-item budget through CPD. The maintenance costs are included in the long and short budget of the Chicago Park District.
22. What are the next steps? The landscape architect will have their 50% of drawings completed in November for the internal construction team to review. Kate advised that they'd like to have all community suggestions/concerns submitted by November 1<sup>st</sup> at the latest. There's a form that can be filled out on the Winnemac Park Advisory Council website [www.winnemacpac.org](http://www.winnemacpac.org) to provide this feedback. The feedback will be sent directly to Kate.

-There is no second meeting needed, but Kate encourages those present at the meeting to be a mouthpiece for the project and make sure that accurate information is being shared with the community.

Kate also recommends that any and all feedback should be submitted.

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**Committee Reports:**

**Safety:** For the sake of time the Safety report from the Chicago Police was to be provided with the meeting minutes. Provided is activity in Winnemac Park between 01JUL23 - 15AUG23.

-There were 4 calls for service in the immediate area of Winnemac Park; 1 domestic disturbance call on the 4900 block of Damen Ave. and 3 theft reports (5100 block of Damen Ave, 5000 block of Damen Ave and 5000 block of Leavitt).

**Fund raising for Winnemac Park :**

-A Chipotle dine-for fundraiser has been set up. The fundraiser will be November 18, 2023 from 4:00pm – 8:00pm. ORDER ONLINE FOR PICKUP USING CODE 92RLAJX or SHOW FLYER when ordering in restaurant. It's only at the Chipotle located at 5224 N. Broadway Ave., Chicago, IL 60640 and the flyer must be shown. Chipotle will donate 33% of those sales back to WPAC for an operating budget.

Adjourn: Manny Vega moved to adjourn the meeting and Dave seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. Adjourned at approximated 7:27pm

**Announcements:**

**Next Monthly Meeting: The next WPAC meeting will be Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 6:15pm in the Amundsen HS Rm 118 meeting room.**

Summary of Action Items:

1. The community should provide suggestions/concerns regarding the refurbishments to the baseball field by November 1, 2023. Feedback can be submitted using a form on the Winnemac Park Advisory Council website: [winnemacpac.org](http://winnemacpac.org)
2. An agenda item for a future team building activity was suggested by a member and will be discussed during the next public meeting.
3. WPAC gained 1 new member during the meeting. ✓