



Date: November 23, 2012

TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Shannon Mews Park Concept Plan

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the proposed concept plan for the Shannon Mews public park as shown in Appendix E.

POLICY

The Board approves major changes in Vancouver Parks including the design and development of parks.

BACKGROUND

This background information is provided as reference for this report. This report addresses only the park-related rezoning condition, and the resulting Park Agreement.

The park rezoning condition and Park Agreement require the Wall Financial Corporation to convey at no cost to the City, a public park area of 2,804 square meters (0.69 acres), that is to be designed, constructed and completed by Wall Financial Corporation, to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks and Recreation, in consultation with the Director of Planning and the General Manager of Engineering Services. The estimated value of the park construction is approximately \$800,000.

The 4-hectare property known as Shannon Mews is located north of 57th Avenue at 7101-7201 Granville Street, in the Kerrisdale Community. The property has a rich history including a heritage “A” status Beaux-Arts style mansion and perimeter wall constructed during 1913-1925 by the Rogers family, and a coach house, gate house, and ornate Italianate gardens.

The property was acquired by the Wall Financial Corporation in 1967, and in 1972 local architect Arthur Erickson designed two-story rental townhomes, and local landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander introduced rhododendron and shrub gardens on the grounds, adjacent to the heritage buildings.

In August of 2010, on behalf of Wall Financial Corporation, Busby Perkins + Will Architects submitted a rezoning proposal to the City for Shannon Mews, from RS-6 to CD-1, and the City sought in depth community input before taking the redevelopment proposal to Council for consideration.

The original proposal for 14-story towers was reduced in height through the public input process to include buildings ranging from 2 to 9 stories in height.

In July 2011, Vancouver City Council approved the rezoning application for Shannon Mews following a Public Hearing on July 26, 27 and 28, 2011. By-law No. 10413 was enacted at a Regular Council Meeting on January 17, 2012; and further amended by By-law No. 10535.

The rezoning and development permit package includes public access to the heritage grounds through public right-of ways, Leed Gold building designs with sustainability features such as urban agriculture and car sharing, tree preservation, heritage restoration of the buildings and Italianate gardens, interpretive elements, and a new public park. An overview of the public access and the location of the new public park within the redevelopment site is attached as Appendix B to this report.

The Park Agreement includes a specific requirement for engaging with the public in the park concept design process, in keeping with applicable Park Board processes for similar projects, including a required approval of the concept design by the Park Board. This report summarizes the public engagement findings and recommends a concept plan for the new parkland.

DISCUSSION

The landscape architecture firm, Durante Kreuk Ltd. developed a concept design for the new public green space under guidance from staff.

The location of this park takes advantage of a gentle south facing slope with two groups of existing trees and easy access to 57th Avenue, and the other public right of ways through the site, as well as a safe overlook from the new adjacent residences. Seating areas for all ages and a fully accessible pathway traverses the site at a gentle 5% grade. A curved wall weaves through the park and it is intended that this wall be built partially from salvaged building materials. There is an accessible children's play area with a waterspout and sand, as well as playful natural elements such as salvaged logs along the tree area trails. The landscaping includes shrubs with edible fruits and native plants as well as an open and formal grass lawn to compliment the mansion view. These design elements match the Park Board Strategic directions for "Leader in Greening" and "Parks and Recreation for All", in the objectives for universal inclusivity and accessibility, local food systems, and greener spaces.

Illustrative park concept design displays were prepared for consideration by the public, and a copy of the concept plan and sections on display at the Open House event are attached as Appendix C to this report.

Public Open House

A public open house was held on September 19th at St. Stephen's United Church Hall from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. This event was advertised in the Vancouver Courier, on the City of Vancouver Website, on Facebook and on Twitter. Staff, consultants and representatives from Wall Financial Corporation hosted the event and provided residents with an opportunity to learn about the new park, to review the concept drawings, and to provide comments. An on-line survey was available via the on-line survey tool "PlaceSpeak" until October 3rd.

A summary of the written survey findings is attached as Appendix D to this report. Of the 18 survey participants, 3 did not support the proposal as shown, and 4 supported the proposal with modifications. Only 5 of these participants live locally. Particular comments included an interest in:

- Improving the playground location and content;
- Improving seating opportunities;
- Improving safety; and
- Providing noise attenuation.

Review of this preliminary concept plan with Park operations staff indicates a need to adjust the planting and turf areas for ease of mowing, to ensure maintenance vehicle access on pathways, and to provide standard site furnishings that are easier to maintain.

The public and operations input resulted in a revised proposed concept plan attached as Appendix E to this report. The playground is made larger and can accommodate both natural and active play, and the pathways, planting areas and seating are also modified. Standard park benches are included in addition to the seat wall. With respect to the concerns about noise attenuation, it was noted that the new condominium at the corner of Granville Street and 57th Avenue would buffer noise from busy Granville Street, and that the open view from 57th Avenue should be retained so that the park is visibly public and safe. The park is to be lit with directed lamps on poles: lighting details will evolve during the detailed design phase.

Should this concept plan be approved by the Park Board, staff will continue to work with the Owner's consultant to review the technical drawings, and arrange for a formal park operations sign-off and approval of the detailed construction plans. The Park name will be determined in the future through a separate park naming process. The park is to be delivered in 2 phases related to the condominium development, with construction of the first phase estimated to begin in 2014.

SUMMARY

The concept plan presented at the September open house for this park was well received by residents. It was subsequently modified based on input received from residents and operations staff. The revised plan embraces the heritage Italianate landscape style and infuses elements of the Park Board strategic directions for “Leader in Greening” and “Parks and Recreation for All”. Staff recommends that the Board approve the revised concept plan for the Shannon Mews park site as shown in Appendix E.

Prepared by:

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TM/BH/PK

Attachments:

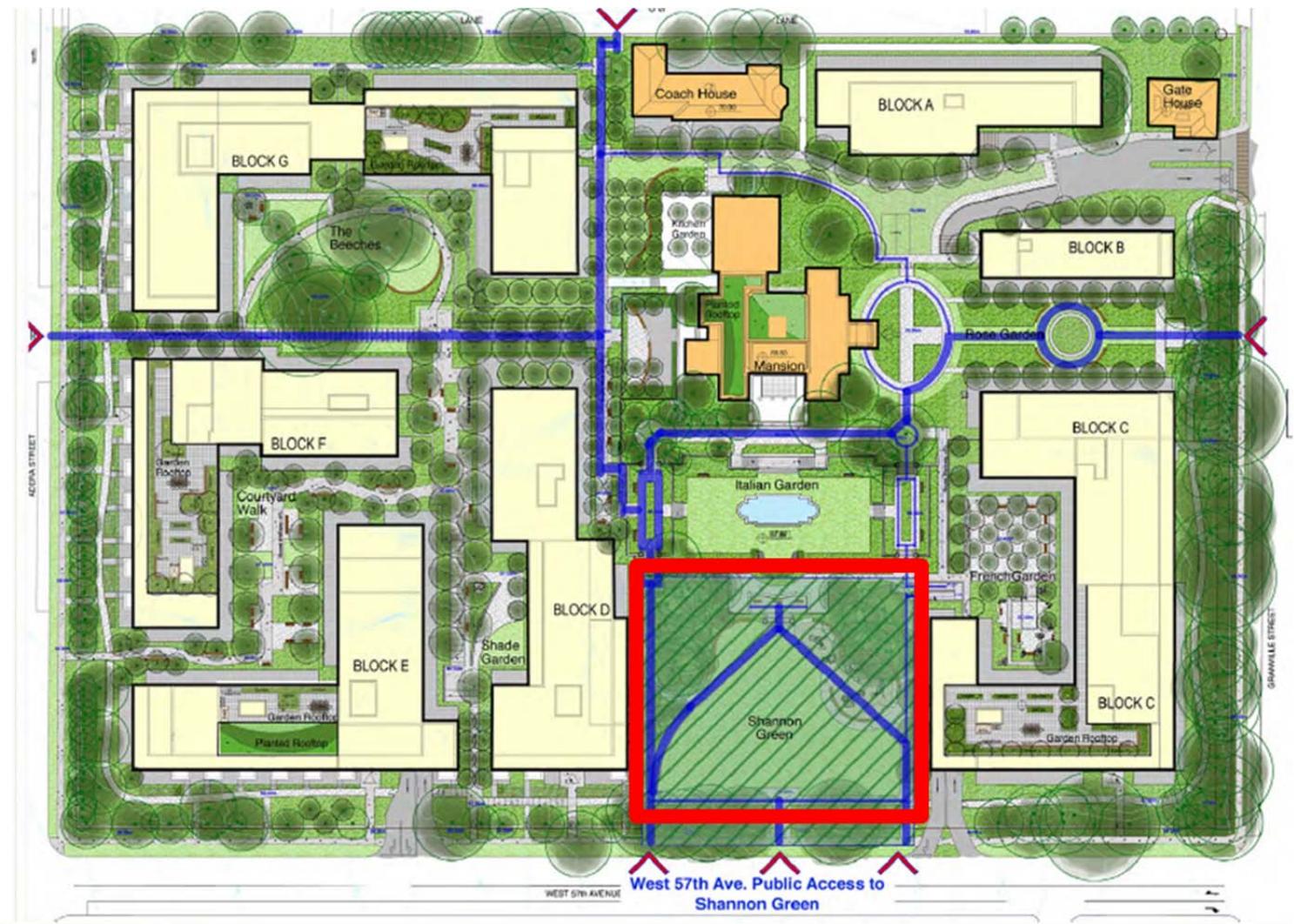
- Appendix A - Site Location and Photos
- Appendix B - Public Access to Development Site
- Appendix C - Open House Concept Plan
- Appendix D - Open House Summary
- Appendix E - Revised Proposed Park Concept Plan

Appendix A – Site Location and Photos

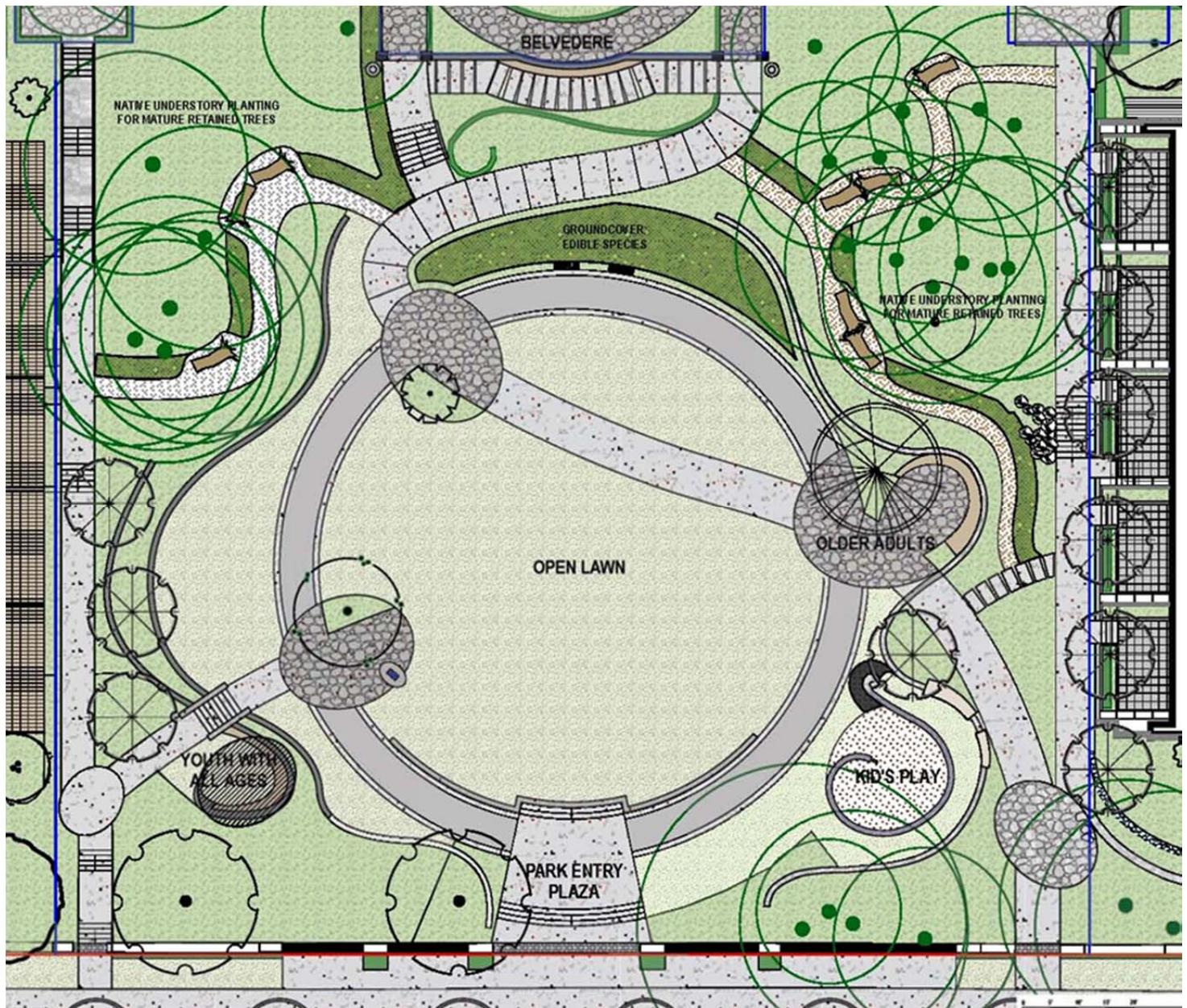




Appendix B – Public Access to Development Site

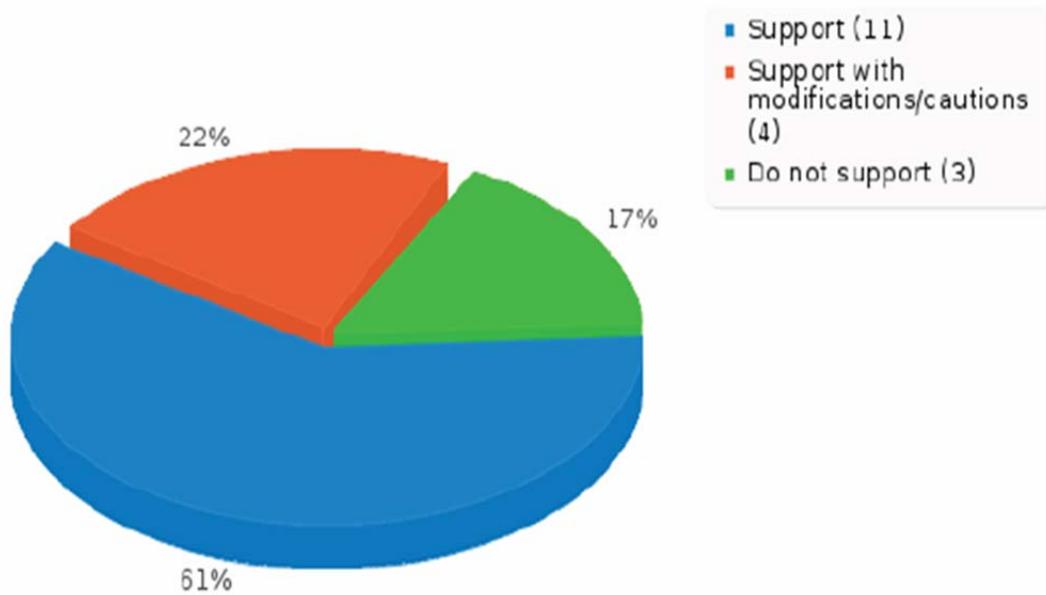


Appendix C – Open House Concept Plan



Appendix D – Open House Summary

Of the 18 survey participants, only 3 did not support the proposal and 4 supported it with some modification, only 5 residents that participated in survey live locally.



id	Do you support the proposed concept plan for Shannon Mews Park?	Please tell us why?	The walking loop shown in the conceptual design will provide an accessible route through the park from West 57th Avenue. The park will also have an accessible path from Granville Street. Do you support the inclusion of pathways through the park?	If you have concerns or do not support the walking loop , tell us why?	There is a children's play area planned for the south east corner of the park. Do you support the proposed playground concept?
1	Support	It seems like a nice place for people to congregate in their neighbourhood.	Support	I support it, but I want to make sure that the path doesn't take away from too much of the greenspace.	Support
2	Support		Support		Support with modifications/cautions
3	Support with modifications/cautions	I don't see any off leash area for dogs. Or would dogs be allowed in the park area. I also have some concerns regarding the type vegetation and trees that will be selected. Parks Board and the City has been selecting the cheapest type of trees that add no beauty, character or produce too much sap.	Support with modifications/cautions	Will the walking loop surface be suitable for people in wheel chairs or use of walkers? Gravel pathways can cause problems and are sometimes high maintenance.	Support with modifications/cautions
4	Support		Support	Ensure that they are well lit and direct(i.e. don't meander aimlessly.)	Support with modifications/cautions
5	Support with modifications/cautions	I find it hard to imagine the park from the one drawing provided. I do not see the access from Granville St. presume the park entry plaza is from 57th and cannot be sure where the paths are. But the general concept seems good.	Support	I like the idea of a walking loop as it gives a choice when walking in the neighbourhood, not just straight up and down streets.	Support with modifications/cautions
6	Support	We need to have green space that is located within communities, so families and seniors can walk there and not rely on public or personal transportation.	Support		Support
7	Support		Support		Support
8	Do not support	Site is too small within the huge new development	Support		
9	Do not support	I am opposed to the development. I believe council pushed through the development and did not listen to the overwhelming community opposition to the development. It was a politically driven decision rather than one that enriched and enhanced the community.	Do not support	The development is not appropriate for this site. It is too dense and too tall.	Do not support
10	Support with modifications/cautions	We are in need of more park space in this area but I would like to see more dog friendly space.	Support		Support with modifications/cautions
11	Support	Will provide public access to land with a variety of recreational options for visitors with a range of interests. Will provide access to interesting re-developed formal gardens and views of restored heritage buildings that are significant to Vancouver.	Support	Access to landscapes with formal gardens, mature trees, and restored heritage buildings.	Support
12	Do not support	This park will be of no benefit to anybody in the surrounding community except the residents of the new development. This should not be funded from general revenue but at the expense of the developer. This has never been a development supported by the community.		The entire park is a bad idea.	
13	Support with modifications/cautions	The area needs more density, this is a good plan but needs some tweaking to make it better.	Support		Support
14	Support	I think it has the right balance of walking space, playing space, and plantings.	Support		Support
15	Support	i have always thought that Shannon mews was an island of tranquility in that area. its a beautiful setting and would make a lovely park there. The nearest park is a bit of a ways from granville	Support	I don't have any concerns at this point. perhaps it would be not safe after dark.	Support
16	Support	I grew up in this area and always wished it had public access.. I'm glad this historical building is being kept up.	Support		Support
17	Support	very few of this type of park in the city	Support		Support
18	Support		Support		Support

Are there features that you would like to see in the children's space?	There is a seating area designed for youth proposed for the south west corner of the park. Do you support the inclusion of this proposed space?	If you have concerns or do not support this area, tell us why.	There is a seating area designed for seniors on the west side of the park. Do you support the inclusion of this proposed space?	Tell us why.	Do you have any additional comments about the proposed design?	A few questions about you...Your home... [Do you]	Which age category do you fall in?	Polygon
I think having playgrounds throughout Vancouver is very important for creating/maintaining a family friendly atmosphere.	Support		Support	I think seniors lack places to congregate in the open.	It sounds nice.	Rent your home	20 - 29	Downtown
Move it further from Granville Street traffic.	Support		Support			Own your home	30 - 39	Riley Park
What kind of playground equipment are you using. What will the ground surface be i.e. wood chips, gravel, asphalt or artificial turf? Some of these can cause more harm when a child falls. Also, will there be drinking fountains available?	Support with modifications/cautions	I am only concerned with youth at night causing problems in the park.	Support	There is not enough meeting or seating places for Seniors around Vancouver. This area in particular has many seniors so this would be a good location for them to gather.	My main concern is who will be maintaining the park? The parks around Vancouver (if they are not exposed to tourists) are in poor condition with neglected landscaping, pruning and planting of new plants. After a year would this park look like an overgrown patch of greenery that will only attract vagrants like what is happening to other parks around Vancouver?	Own your home	40 - 49	West End
ensure safe structures for pre-school age children (2-5) who are often overlooked in play structures.	Support	Kids definitely need a place to hang-out.	Support			Rent your home	30 - 39	Mount Pleasant
Is the proposed playground concept that it should be a natural playground? Or that there should be a playground at all? I would like children to use their imagination in the playground.	Support	I think it is a good idea to offer youth a place to get together when the weather is good. But I think an open space would discourage unwelcome activities like smoking and drinking alcohol.	Support	We all need to rest out feet. I'm thinking many seniors would enjoy a seating area close, but not too close, to the children's play area.	Will the heritage house be visible from 57th? At the moment you wouldn't know it's there.	Own your home	40 - 49	Maple
	Support with modifications/cautions	Why do youths need a designated seating area? isn't the whole park for everyone?	Support	Seniors on the other hand, need to rest, so it makes sense to have a seating area for them.		Rent your home	40 - 49	Fairview
	Support		Support		Please do not allow dogs off leash in the park.	Own your home		Maple
It is not clear what features are included, but a large jungle gym and active features would greatly improve our children's health.	Do not support	We are trying to improve active recreation among the youth, who are now 33% likely to be overweight or obese. We especially need facilities for youth to exercise.	Support with modifications/cautions	it is far too small for many to gather.	It seems confined and cute, but offers no real placemaking.	Own your home	50 - 59	Riley Park
	Do not support		Do not support		I feel that this park is window dressing on a development that has been imposed on the neighbourhood and does not relate to the neighbourhood. The city should do a survey of the number of units actually lived in by permanent residents of Vancouver after the sale have completed.	Own your home	50 - 59	Kensdale
We have lots of kids playgrounds around; one more is always good but only if other community needs are being met too.	Support	There are very few areas for youth to congregate in this city. I fully support more and would like to see a covered area included.	Do not support	I don't think seniors need a specially designed space, they are able to go anywhere they want. Also, it is my understanding that it is most younger families living in the Shannon Mews community.	I would like to see dog friendly space.	Own your home	40 - 49	Kensdale
Provides facilities of interest to a broader range of visitors, i.e. an attraction to parents/care-givers and children.	Support	Provides facilities of interest to a broader range of visitors.	Support	Provides facilities of interest to a broader range of visitors.	There will be lots of 'eyes & ears' on the spaces that are open to the public, i.e. the residents. Visitors will be aware of the oversight that will be occurring & hopefully behave accordingly. I would support the area being closed from sundown to sunup. This property has been of personal interest for many years. It will be interesting to have access and the opportunity to experience the many features that are being proposed.	Own your home	60 - 69	Victoria-Fraserview
The entire park is a bad idea		The entire park is a bad idea		The entire park is a bad idea	It is too small to be a viable community park. It is only twice the size of the average lots in the area.	Own your home	60 - 69	Kensdale
	Do not support	Afraid it might attract the wrong activities to the area.	Support			Own your home	30 - 39	Downtown
Public water fountain.	Support	What is it about this space that will attract youth in particular?	Support	I understand there are senior residences near the park, so it makes sense to accommodate frequent visitors.	I am happy to see native plantings planned, and am intrigued to see if the edible plantings get used or abused.	Rent your home	30 - 39	Riley Park
A fenced in area that children could be minimally supervised and would be safe	Support	it might become a youth hangout, but it might also be a place to have small music concerts	Support	It's always nice to have a place to sit		Own your home	60 - 69	Kitsilano
	Support		Support		Will it be lit for use at night or will it close at dusk?	Own your home	50 - 59	Kensington-Cedar Cottage
	Support		Support	many seniors in the area within walking distance.		Own your home	60 - 69	Kitsilano
	Support		Support			Rent your home	60 - 69	Downtown

Appendix E - Revised Proposed Park Concept Plan

