

**CITY OF ALBANY
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda date: May 19, 2011

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Penelope Leach, Recreation and Community Services Director
SUBJECT: Dartmouth Tot Lot Improvements

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission provide recommendation(s) for next steps regarding Dartmouth Tot Lot improvements.

BACKGROUND

At the March 3, 2011 Commission meeting, the Commission voted to recommend to Council plans for the installation of rubber surfacing at the Dartmouth Tot Lot. On March 21, 2011, the City Council approved the Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendation for the rubber surfacing at Dartmouth Tot Lot.

In April 2011, neighbors contacted City staff concerned about the amount of sand that would be removed given the newly approved design. After exchanging information via emails with the neighbors surrounding the park, many of whom are frequent users of the park, it became clear that more discussion regarding the design was needed before moving forward. To date, there has been no cost for postponing the project and there will be no additional cost should the Commission recommend and Council approve a redesign of the rubber surface.

Attached please find: **option 1**, the approved design from March 2011; **option 2**, a new design which minimizes the rubber surface area, but maintains minimum ADA compliance; and **option 3**, a design idea submitted by Albany resident Joanna Manqueros. Also attached is a sketch of the current layout of the park.

DISCUSSION

Staff continues to have three major concerns with the current condition of the Dartmouth Tot Lot: (1) the sand creates a slippery surface when it spills onto the surrounding concrete walkway (please see attached pictures **A1 and A2**); (2) the amount of sand that is getting into the nearby storm drains creating sediment and potential clogging; and (3) improved ADA access (please see attached pictures **B1 and B2**). A fourth concern does not have to do with the design, but with the number of toys left at the park. Please see pictures **C1-C4**.

Regarding the sand on the concrete walkway, a suggestion was made to cover the concrete walkway with rubber surface. This may not address the slippery surface sufficiently. As can be seen by picture **A2**, once the rubber surface is covered with sand, it too can be slippery. The cost of the rubber surfacing on top of the concrete, which would be \$9,470, compared to its benefit may not have the desired impact of creating a less slippery surface.

Regarding the ADA requirements, **option 2** shows a design that decreases the rubber surface area compared to option 1, but satisfies ADA compliance. Specifically, picture **B1** shows the area under the slide which is currently sand. In order to be ADA compliant the landing area under the slide needs to be an ADA compliant surface. The entry into the play structure is compliant, see picture **B2**; however, access into and out of the play structure is required to have an ADA surface; therefore, rubber surfacing needs to be extended under the landing area of the slide.

Not an ADA requirement, but a safety issue is the edging of the current rubber surface. The current rubber surface is more than a ½ above the level of the sand and has a straight edge. Anything more than a ½ inch is considered a tripping hazard. Please see the attached pictures labeled **D1 and D2**. A sloping edge into the sand would prevent a tripping hazard. Please see the attached pictures labeled **E1 and E2** to see an example of the sloped edge that needs to be installed. Pictures E1 and E2 are from the recently installed rubber surface at Jewel's Terrace Park. The pictures of Terrace were taken prior to the sand being raked up over the sloped surface; therefore, the entire sloped area is exposed. After the pictures were taken, sand was raked over a portion of the sloped area creating a gentle entry into or out of the sand preventing a potential tripping hazard.

During email exchanges leading up to this meeting, there were concerns that the sand at the tot lot has not been replaced in many years. Staff has looked at nearby sand providers and is trying to choose a provider where the sand could be picked up by staff to avoid the high cost of delivery. The cost of sand would be approximately \$40 per cubic yard. The tot lot would need approximately 50 cubic yards to replace the sand with its current layout. The cost of the sand would be approximately \$2,000, plus labor; however, this could be an ideal project for volunteers. The sand should be replaced regularly.

Regarding **option 3**; thanks to Joanna Manqueros for taking the time to put together this idea. Option 3 is more of an aesthetic option. If option 3 is pursued, the installation of the planter boxes and wooden fence would need to be in addition to either option 1 or option 2 so that the safety and ADA issues can be resolved. There are a few things to consider as the Commission/community talk through option 3. If planter boxes are installed, there needs to remain a 5 foot width of sidewalk for ADA access. The suggested wooden fence would require more maintenance over time than the cyclone fence that is at the park now. The art work on the outside of the planter boxes could be part of the community art project tentatively planned for later this year.

Also part of a more recent discussion was creating a *Friends of Dartmouth Tot Lot* group. There are a number of residents who are already involved in helping out at the tot lot and at least two have expressed interest in developing a "Friends" group that would meet a couple of times per year with staff. By having a Friends group communications, solicitation for

volunteers, and needs for the park could be more easily addressed on an ongoing basis. Staff will pursue this idea with residents in the coming weeks.

Due to questions raised regarding liability of the sand, toys, and rubber surface throughout discussions over the past weeks, staff contacted the City's risk manager and will have an update at the meeting should the risk manager have any additional requirements/suggestions.

FISCAL IMPACT

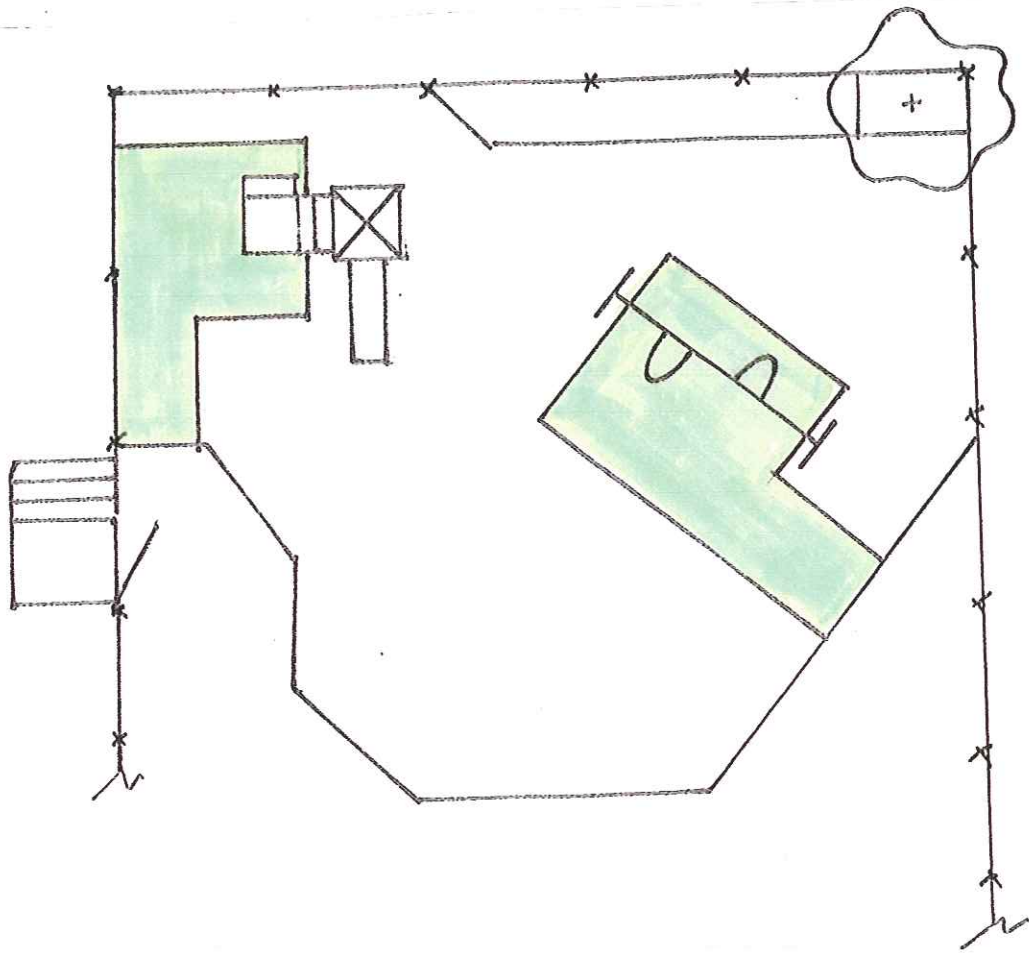
Option 1: \$22, 661, plus 5% contingency \$1,133 = 23,794

Option 2: \$ 14,739, plus 5% contingency \$737 = 15,476

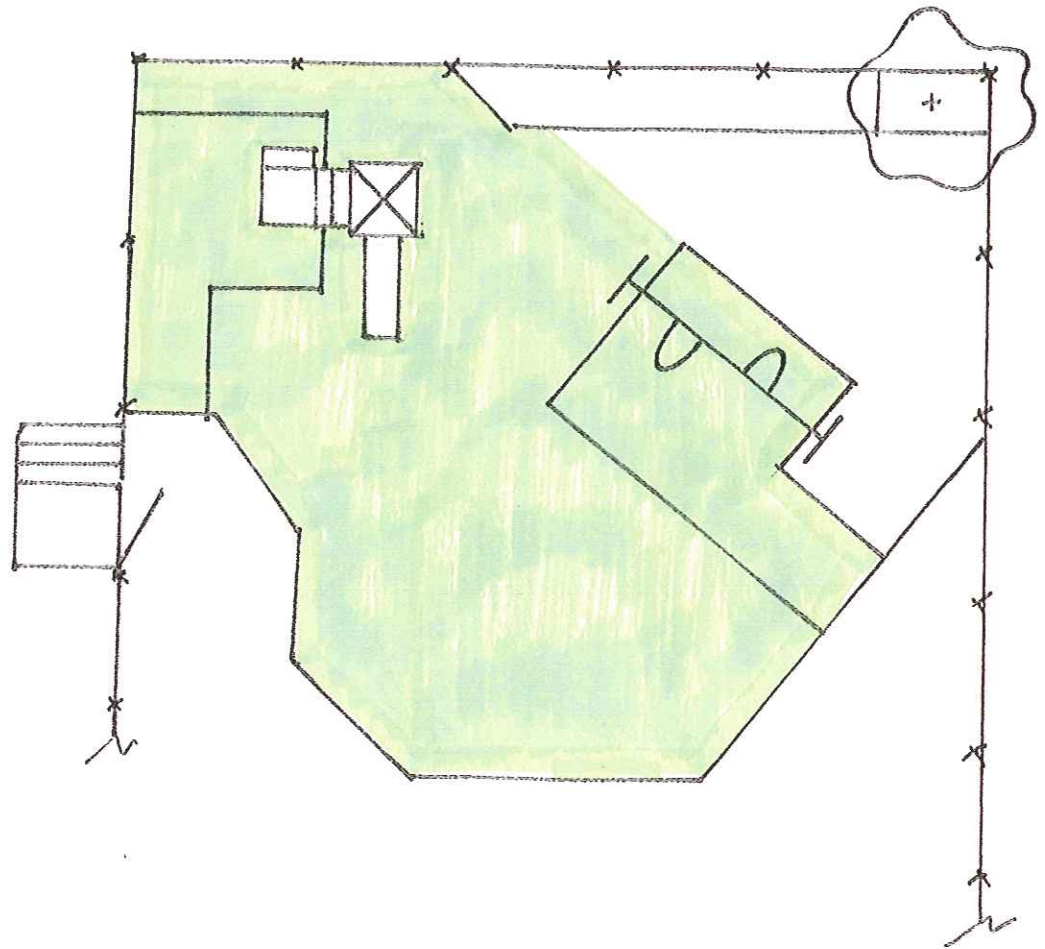
Option 3: Cost TBD

Cost to cover concrete walkway with rubber surfacing: \$9,469.75 (this would be in addition to option 1 or option 2)

Cost to replace the sand: \$2,000, labor not including



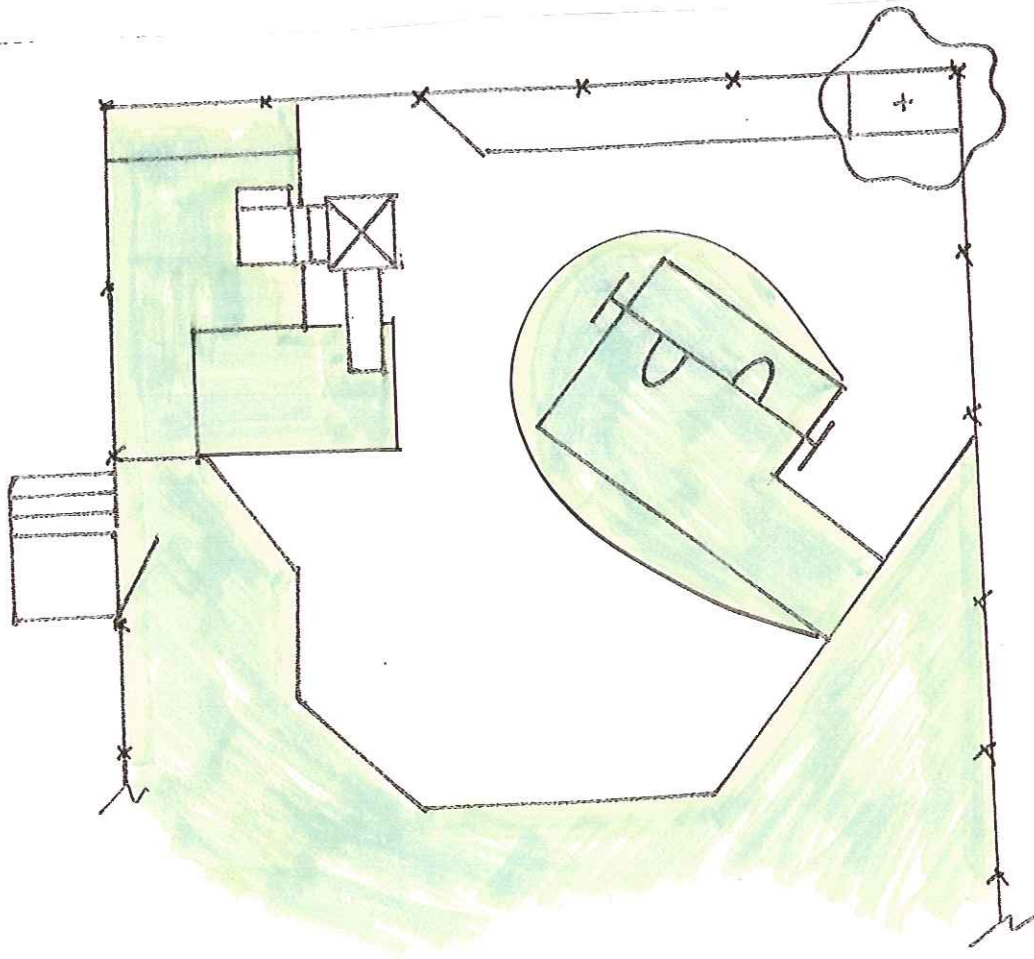
DARTMOUTH PARK, ALBANY
EXISTING CONDITIONS



DARTMOUTH PARK, ALBANY

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

OPTION 1



DARTMOUTH PARK, ALBANY
ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL

OPTION 2

A1



A2



B1



B2



C1



C2



C3



C4



D1



D2



E1



E2

