



Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning

THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

MCPB
Item: 4.
Date: 4/01/04

Memorandum

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeff Zyontz, Chief *Jeff Zyontz*
Countywide Planning Division

FROM: David Vismarra, Director of Brookside Gardens
Bill Mooney, Partnerships Manager *Bill Mooney*
Ken Nichols, Director, Parks Foundation

SUBJECT: Victims Memorial at Brookside Gardens - Reflection Terrace

Requested Planning Board Action: Approval

1. Recommend that the Planning Board approve the plan and cost estimate for a memorial space at Brookside gardens commemorating the victims of the sniper shootings from October 2002 and name the site Reflection Terrace.

Background

During the summer of 2003 the County was preparing for an event to commemorate the victims of the October 2002 sniper shootings. During the preparations, discussions were held with the families of the victims concerning a permanent memorial. The families expressed interest in a place that would be peaceful and provide a quiet place for relatives and friends to sit and remember. They are interested in a simple place out the main stream of everyday life. As a result, County staff requested that the Commission consider such a facility in Brookside Gardens. The memorial would be designed as a joint project. Initial discussions concluded that such a memorial could be incorporated at Brookside and it was agreed that staff would work to identify an appropriate site and concept.

Subsequently the curator of Brookside, Phil Normandy, has recommended the stone garden that overlooks the Gude Gardens as the site. This extraordinary site meets or exceeds the criteria requested by the family and the memorial can

be created with minimal disruption of the park. The Parks Foundation has secured the pro-bono services of a landscape designer, Sunny Scully, to prepare a detailed concept for the memorial, which is described below.

This project provides an opportunity to provide a place for the families, friends, and the whole community to pause and remember the victims in a setting that is peaceful and healing.

Brookside Gardens Victims Memorial Objectives and Related Recommendations	
Objective	Plan Recommendation
Provide a contemplative space for reflection, healing and remembering	The memorial space is the stone formation overlooking the lake and the Gude Gardens. The space is in the center of the park, yet it is not a heavily traveled area. The space sits beside the park lake and a small waterfall and looks out on an expanse of lawn planted with specimen trees and shrubs.
Inform visitors of the purpose of the memorial	On one of the two major stones in the formation, the following wording will explain the purpose of the memorial: <i>During the frightening Summer and Fall in 2002, the senseless, purposeful violence of two men caused the deaths of thirteen innocent people. Although the tragedies occurred in several parts of the country, sniper fire in the Washington, DC area abruptly ended the lives of ten men and women. The stones here, engraved with the names of those ten, bear witness to the fact that they lived and worked among us – and they are not forgotten. Their lives, each unique but all too short, are forever part of our collective story. This place also honors the kindness of so many who supported their families, and whose active compassion still strengthens the bonds of community.</i>
Remember the victims	Each victim's name will be engraved on the second major stone.
Provide a place for reflection	The site has existing stones which provide a variety of seating and various views of the landscape features described above. The placement of the existing stones provides privacy for visitors. In addition, on the stone that looks over the pond, the following will be engraved: <i>Linger here and reflect on those lost to violence, hope for a gentler world; seek a reverence for life among all people.</i>

Cost Estimate and Schedule

The cost estimate for the memorial is less than \$10,000 with an additional cost of \$20,000 for an accessible path to the site. Working with the Parks Foundation and the police victims assistance unit, we intend that the project will be funded through contributions and by the County.

The project is to be completed in time for the Fall 2004 remembrance event.

Other Issues

The project will disturb minimal ground area during installation (less than 5,000 square feet). The minimal disturbance will not trigger either the forest conservation ordinance or storm water management and there will not be a requirement to do a natural resource inventory, comply with forest conservation, or storm water requirements.

It is anticipated that this project will cause minimal change to park visitation and will require no change to the existing parking at Brookside Gardens.

There are no operating budget impacts anticipated from this project.

The families of the victims have been presented the concept and viewed the sketches and representations. They are very pleased with the proposed memorial.

The project has been presented to the Parks Foundation Board and received their support. In addition, the Arts and Humanities Council has reviewed the project and has expressed their support as well.

Attachments

1. Existing Park Map
2. Plan Concept