

## **RANELAGH GARDENS PARK – User Group Meeting**

5.30pm on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at Ranelagh Arts Centre

Attendance: Chair: Councillor Mary Freehill (MF)  
DCC, Parks Department: Michael Noonan (MN), Kieran O’Neill (KO’N), William Burke(WB).  
DCC South East Area Office: Brian Kirk (BK)  
An Garda Siochána  
Approx 50 residents / park users

Intro: MF welcomed everyone and introduced the representatives of DCC Parks Department.

1. MN reviewed outcome of previous meeting with residents held in Ranelagh Gardens Park on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and gave an update from Park Services on works undertaken since that date. Works were carried out in Nov / Dec, mainly clearing and cutting back undergrowth. At the earlier meeting three areas were identified as possible playground locations – two in Ranelagh Gardens and one in Mountpleasant Square. The pond was noted for improvement, to make safer and more ecologically friendly. Lighting in the park and possibly opening the park up 24/7 had been discussed, but it was agreed that this would be parked for the present and not form part of the deliberations of this current group.
2. Superintendent Lorraine Wheatley gave an update from Garda on reported incidents in the park over the previous 4 months. The winter period has been quiet but we are heading into a busier period now. There is a Community Garda and there is a new plain clothes drugs unit working in all parks.
3. WB gave a presentation from Park Services outlining possible design improvements to the park incorporating a play area and improvements to the pond among other things.
4. A discussion followed where residents commented on the presentation and put forward suggestions for future improvements to the park. There was general appreciation for the presentation and support expressed for some of the works proposed. Some of the items raised were as follows:
  - Concerns re drainage / flooding risk if works done on park.
  - Biodiversity – replanting of the island, some concerns regarding removal of wild growth which allows for biodiversity.

- Playground location – removal or partial removal of mound – concerns.
  - Some felt that there was too much going on in the conceptual design proposed in the presentation in terms of play.
  - Some felt a more traditional type playground would be preferable.
  - There was a request for a games area in Northwest corner. Some discussion took place. Garda felt that games can attract older teenagers and noise etc. Mountpleasant Square was also put forward as a possible, perhaps more suitable, location for games area.
  - Concerns were raised re wildlife in the park – bats’ habitat affected since taller trees were cut and no longer any fish in the pond.
  - Some felt that local schools should be catered for while others were of the opposite opinion.
  - General support for playground, but mixed response to ball games area.
  - The idea of gym equipment was raised as these can be used by older people also.
  - Need for new signs and highlighting of Richard Crosbie memorial.
  - Improvements needed to entrances also.
  - Access – paths are broken in some places and need to be improved.
5. MF outlined what would happen next. A Liaison Group was appointed made up of the following residents: Caitriona McGuinness, Francis Ryan, Fiona Mahon, Zoe Hartigan, Maureen Kane, John O’Connell, Sally Corcoran and Cormac Callanan. This group will meet with DCC Parks over the coming months to agree a draft design for Ranelagh Gardens Park which will then be brought to a full meeting of residents and DCC for final agreement. The implementation of the adopted proposal will, of course, be subject to the availability of funding in Parks Department budget.

Programme: First meeting of Liaison Group end of March 2014.  
 Second meeting of Liaison Group end of April 2014.  
 General residents meeting to agree design mid-May2014.

Any queries in relation to this group please contact Brian Kirk, Administrative Officer, South East Area Office, Dublin City Council at [brian.kirk@dublincity.ie](mailto:brian.kirk@dublincity.ie). Date of next meeting: TBA.