



**BROOKDALE
PARK**
CONSERVANCY

June 13, 2009

Board members,

I'm pleased to report that the Brookdale Playground Paving meeting on Friday went very well. Phil LiVecchi, Essex County Public Works Director, has already told the paving contractor to schedule playground area paving per our first layout recommendation (see pages that follow). They will push for the area to be completed along with the rest of the park's paving on June 30th, but due to a number of factors, included the recent excessive rain fall, the playground area improvements may not be completed until shortly after that.

Existing chain link and wood fencing will be adjusted to relocate enclosure entries as needed. Secondary entries will be sealed off, leaving only one opening per play enclosure to ensure the children's safety.

High foot traffic areas where grass has been worn down to expose soil and tree roots will be filled/reseeded at the time of paving. The new grass is expected to grow in by this fall.

Three large shade trees will be planted by the County in the large central mounded planting bed in Sept/Oct. I will consult with Kathy Salisbury, Essex County Parks Horticulturist to determine a first choice and alternate tree species that best represents the original Olmsted Bros. tree selections for the playground area. It was requested that it be a non-fruiting species to avoid future safety and maintenance issues.

Mr. LiVecchi is currently working with Dan Salvante, Director of Essex County Parks to help bring five benches to the center of the playground area. Underutilized benches may be relocated from the former Brookdale Dog Park large dog enclosure. Bruce Simon, BPC Facilities Chairperson, has graciously agreed that the benches would be better used at the new location.

There are a few other playground improvement and park-wide paving related items from the meeting that I will be following up on next week. I will send a follow up to this report as soon as they are finalized.

Sincerely,
Mollie Smith
BPC Master Planning Co-Chair



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PLAYGROUND PAVING RECOMMENDATIONS

Prepared by the Master Planning Committee
June 10, 2009



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COMMUNITY REQUESTED IMPROVEMENTS LIST

Approximately two dozen playground parents contributed to the following list of playground improvement requests.

- Keep ample green/turf play areas for small family picnics and 2-3 kid informal games, also for teaching small kids to kick around a soccer ball, play catch etc. Currently these types of activities get interrupted by parents with strollers walking south to the main pedestrian path.
- Paved and easy path that leads to Fieldhouse restroom facilities.
- Shaded seating outside of all play areas where parents can still keep an eye on their kids.
- Reworking of grade or addition of drains to both the southwest corner of Tot Play Area and southwest corner of the Kid Play Area to stop run-off/sediment from collecting on play surface. Currently these areas become and remain muddy when it rains.
- Fencing moved in for all play enclosures so that grass and muddy areas are excluded and kept away from playing children. (It is worth mentioning that this would also improve conditions for maintenance crews since they would no longer need to mow small bits of grass inside the play enclosures.)
- Improvements to make the overall play area more inviting, attractive, and safer. There were inquiries of the chain link fencing being replaced by another type of fencing that would be less industrial looking.



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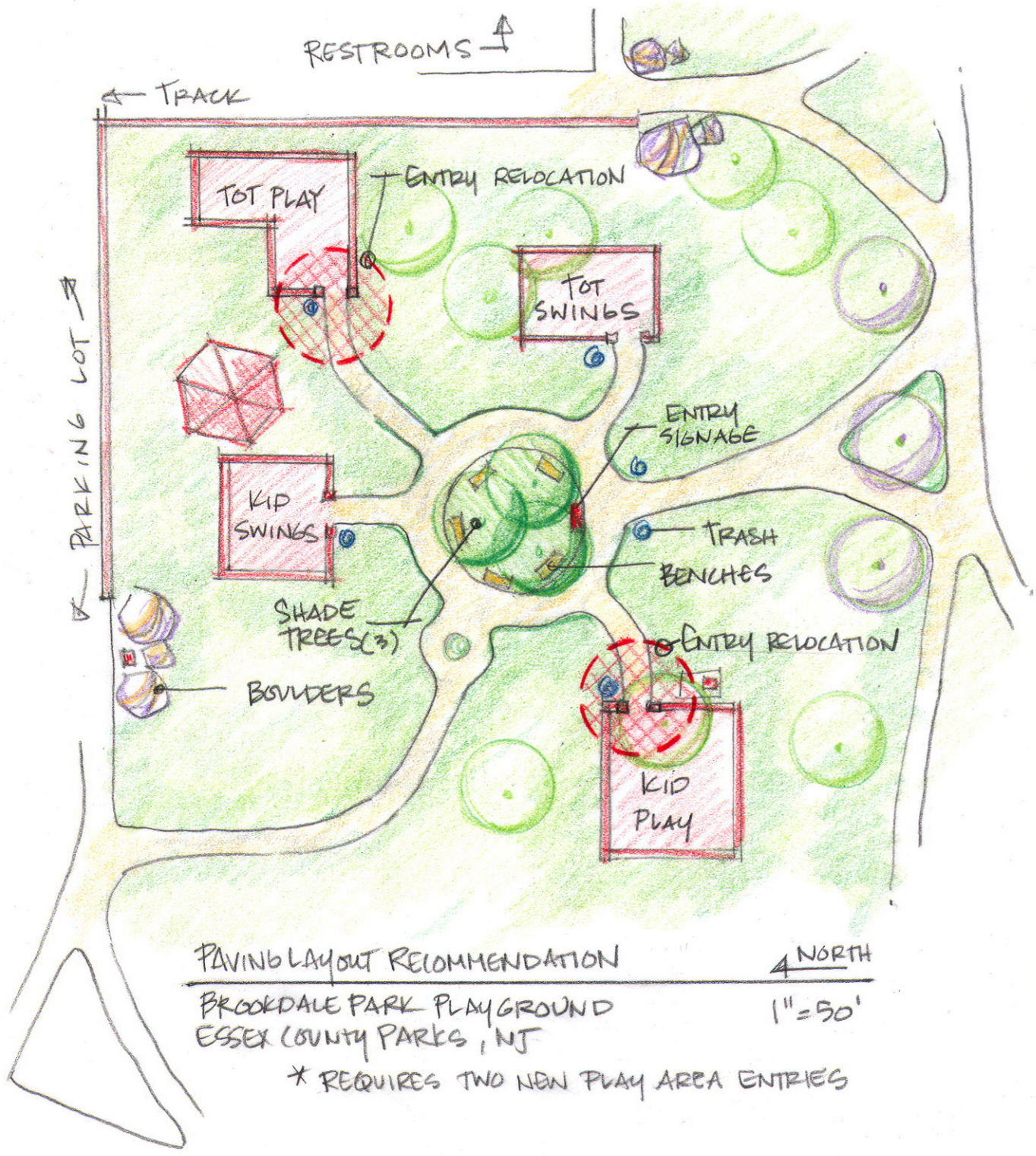
BPC PAVING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Relocate entries of Tot Play Area and Kid Play Area to face the center of the Brookdale Playground area. Tot Play Area entry relocation to west side will require some minor re-grading (re-grading is already necessary to address an existing drainage issue). Remove or block secondary entrances to Tot Swing Area and Kid Play Area for safety and better circulation.
- Create a main Pedestrian Rotary that can accommodate high foot traffic. Add four secondary radial paths that directly connect each of the play areas to Pedestrian Rotary.
- Utilize the existing paved pathway that leads from the north parking lot (path currently terminates at a sculpture) by connecting it to the Pedestrian Rotary.
- Connect Pedestrian Rotary to main pedestrian pathway on the south side of the playground with a single path that splits to the east and west between the three existing 'Crimson King' Maples. This becomes the official Brookdale Playground Entrance.
- Place five (5) benches on inside of Main Circular Path facing out to play areas.
- Leave a large Green Circle (planting bed) inside Main Circular Path where three large shade trees can be planted. Green Circle would be approximately 50 feet in diameter.
- Relocate existing Playground signage to south end of Green Circle area. Or place new Essex County Playground Entrance signage to match that of the Dog Park Entrance signage.
- Relocate large and small boulders from the area to block stroller and pedestrian access to dangerous and muddy turf areas that were previously impromptu pathways.
- Use fine textured fill generated from pathway base excavation as top dressing in areas where tree roots have been exposed as well as where foot traffic and run off has eroded soil and turf. Add grass seed and hay to all areas with exposed soil.
- Use the rough textured fill generated from pathway base excavation to mound the Green Circle area creating a raised planting bed. This would simultaneously address the issue of standing water in the center of the Brookdale Playground.
- Relocate existing four trash cans to enclosure entrances and add two new trash cans to Pedestrian Rotary entrance. Remove two 50 gallon drums near proposed entrance (currently being used as a trash cans).



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PAVING LAYOUT RECOMMENDATION NORTH
 BROOKDALE PARK PLAYGROUND 1" = 50'
 ESSEX COUNTY PARKS, NJ
 * REQUIRES TWO NEW PLAY AREA ENTRIES



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