

Notes from the 5/4/22 Playground Planning Meeting

Lenart Elementary Regional Gifted Center needs a new playground and revamp of the green space on the south side of the building. The current playground equipment is unsafe and was relocated to Lenart from another school that was closing. It is time for the school to receive the renovation it has desperately needed for years.

280 students use the playground; 400+ if summer campers and community members on the weekends are included.

% Estimates for Budget:

Equipment = 50-60%

Surfacing = 10%

*Preparing the site includes removal of old equipment, site grading, drainage, surfacing (CPS requires the foam padding (wood chips not allowed) that costs around \$100K), landscaping, and fencing.

Instillation = 20-35%

Shipping = 5-15%

Any donation of services must be completed by an approved CPS contractor and work through the CPS process to bid on the project.

A design will be created that could result in a multi-phase plan of implementation. These phases may include:

Playground (younger/older sections)

Outdoor learning space

Track/walking path

Garden

Shade space

[Benches](#)

Group gathering space

Lighting at night

Tables

Trash receptacles

Bicycle rack

Rain barrels

Ideally this space is used by the school during the week and by the community when school is not in session.

Four Committees with Definitions – please sign up for a committee at this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4AADA828A3F9C16-playground>

1. [Design/Budget](#) – create the design of the project and the budget associated with projected costs to accomplish
2. [Grants](#) – research, write, and submit grants to support the project
 - o Important to document community involvement
 - o [Kaboom Grants](#) – was willing to fund Lenart a few years ago and then issues with removal of existing equipment and grating of land was not covered in the grant and ended the project

- o Openlands [Space to Grow](#) Grant – Lenart was told five years ago that the school was at the top of the list, but have not heard anything further
 - o [Chicago Works Community Challenge](#)
 - o [Nationwide Grants](#)
 - o [Illinois Specific Grants](#)
 - o [Lowe's Foundation](#)
3. **[Legislators/Community Engagement](#)** – connect with elected officials and neighbors of the school to engage them in the development and support of this project
- a. Alderman [Howard B. Brookins Jr.](#) – has agreed to assist with the project.
 - b. Illinois State Senator [Elgie R. Sims Jr.](#)
 - c. State Representative [Nicholas “Nick” Smith](#)
 - d. Congressman [Bobby L. Rush](#)
 - e. U.S. Senator [Tammy Duckworth](#)
 - f. U.S. Senator [Dick Durbin](#)
 - g. Commonwealth Community Church
 - h. West Chatham Group
 - i. Other Neighbors in the Community
4. **[Fundraising](#)** – connect with private donors and businesses that could support the project both in goods, services, and financial support

Please let us know if you have any experience or know anyone who could assist with:

- Landscape architecture
- CPS approved vendor that could work on this project
- Project Budgeting
- Grant writing
- Fundraising
- Connections to elected officials, Commonwealth Community Church and/or the West Chatham Group
- Experience completing a project like this with CPS

Next Steps:

- Committee meetings
- Create budget estimate
- Send request letter to Alderman Brookins to assist with this project

Any further questions, thoughts, suggestions? Please contact Kathleen Gerhold at KathleenGerhold@gmail.com or (312) 622-5626. Thank you!!