Staff reviewed the project status and input received from the second community meeting (June 27, 2017) and the Ken-Gar 125th Anniversary Celebration (September 16, 2017). A recommended plan with minor variations for the program areas was presented for discussion. Eleven people attended the meeting. Participants introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting and participated in discussions after the presentation.

**Design Development/Recommended Plan**

The recommended plan refines prior schematic concepts based on community feedback from the second community meeting and the Ken-Gar Anniversary Celebration, as well as operational needs and site constraints. Program components and spatial strategies are similar to the schematic concepts except the plan relocates the park entrance to the southeast to align the entire accessible route along the southeastern property border. Three variations of the plan using different materials were presented at the meeting. These variations were titled Alternative A, Alternative B, and Alternative C.
Maintenance Access
Park management staff require direct vehicular access to the upper play area (2 to 5 year-old) and the lower play area (5 to 12 year-old) to perform maintenance tasks. The plan incorporates a 10-foot wide maintenance access route from Hampden Street and proposes to improve the existing timber stairway at the northeastern corner as a maintenance easement from the driveway extension of Mertford Street to accommodate operational needs. The RAD 6 Development Corporation, addressed at 3920 Mertford Street, agreed to grant a maintenance easement across their property for park use.

Play
There is an 8” sanitary sewer line and an 18” storm drainage line running through the park which impacts selection and placement of the proposed play equipment. A combination of open and stand-alone play structures was selected and test-fitted to coordinate with the locations of utility lines. Engineered wood fiber (EWF) is proposed for safety surfacing for all play areas.

Stormwater Management
Geotechnical investigation is complete. Results conclude that the existing soil has poor infiltration and would not be suitable to incorporate permeable paving. Staff consulted with the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) for stormwater management. Due to site constraints, the park renovation project will be allowed to take credit from the adjacent off-site stream restoration project if onsite treatment cannot be achieved. The offsite treatment would have to be equivalent in cost or scale to what would be required onsite and be executed at the same time or before park construction.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION:

General:
- Most participants seemed supportive of the design development plan.
- The neighborhood is a diverse and multi-generational community. Park amenities should serve all age groups and pull people together into the community to share the space.
- The spatial limitations of the park are understood. Large events in the neighborhood usually take place at nearby church parking lots. The community needs gathering spaces. The proposed terrace and community open space could serve this purpose for the neighbors, churches and the adjacent Leonard D. Jackson Ken Gar Center.
- Preserve the quiet and neighborhood character of the park. Be cautious not to over-program the park with play equipment and paving. It would be nice to include more green areas in the park if possible.
- Provide seating opportunities throughout the park.
- There are lots of scooters and skaters in the park. Be cognizant of what might happen. Kids might skate on the seat wall. Consider including skate guards to protect the seat wall.
- Concerns were brought up about the grade change along the property border between the park and the neighbors.

Front Terrace:
- Prefer open terrace at the front shown in Play Alternative B, rather than the swing shown in Alternative A.
• There should be dedicated space for picnicking, ideally on a lawn area with the paved space behind it.
• Provide nice furniture for casual sitting and social gathering.
• Several people liked the idea of a ping-pong table that could be played by people of all ages.
• Consider replanting cherry trees in this area.
• Consider accommodating games such as hopscotch for the space.
• Lawn may be an option for this area if the community open space is paved.
• This part of the park should feel like an outdoor living room. There should be an aesthetic balance with natural materials.

Community Open Space:
• Though lawn would be nice, it may be impractical due to shade and maintenance limitations.
• Artificial turf may not last in this location.
• Most people preferred that the community open space should be paved.
• Several people liked the labyrinth idea shown in Play Alternative B. The idea of highlighting the paving and down-playing the walkway/maintenance access was well-received.
• There was a preference for paving with natural stone, rather than artificial materials.

Upper Play for Children 2 to 5 years old:
• There are many young children in the neighborhood. Play components should allow multiple children playing at the same time.
• It was agreed that a toddler swing is the priority for this area, shown in Play Alternative B and C. Neighbors expressed interest in the nature-themed T-swing example, although mentioned that all the play equipment should blend aesthetically together (some was nature themed and some was modern) and too much money should not be spent on one interesting structure at the expense of having to cut other amenities in the park.
• Some liked the Weevos composite play structure shown in Play Alternative A which is more transparent and would allow visual connection through the park, but others preferred the play structure shown in Alternative B, which was more colorful and included roofs for shade.
• Neighbors liked the example of the 4-seat Daisy rocker and Log Crawl Tunnel.
• People were open to the smaller footprint Smart-Play Motion composite play structure if more space is needed for the swing.
• It is understood that nature-themed play components require more space. Play value should take precedence over themed appearance yet components should be in harmony with the park setting and with each other.

Lower Play for Children 5-12 years old:
• Spatial limitations are understood. A swing will not fit in this area.
• Older kids get bored with static structures. Neighbors are in favor of a combination of compact or stand-alone structures (shown in Play Alternative A or B) than a single
composite larger structure that may take up the entire space (shown in Play Alternative C).

- *Supernova* is the top priority, as all ages like this equipment.
- There should be a tall slide somewhere in the play area, especially if there are not swings for older kids. The slides on the 2-5 years old equipment are too low and only suitable for very small children.
- Neighbors have expressed interest in the more compact *Galaxy* play structure over the *Netplex* play structure.
- Kids like to sit in high areas to observe or play. Include opportunities for perching in climbing structure.
- Shade is needed in both play areas.

**Embankment between Upper and Lower Play:**
- A boulder retaining wall as grade transition between the upper and lower play areas and as climbing play was well-received.

**Stormwater Management & Nature Play:**
- Neighbors like natural play opportunities and landscape that integrates with stormwater management features towards Rock Creek Stream Valley Park.
- Examples of stepping stones and log crossings were well-received.

**NEXT STEPS:**
- Develop preferred plan and obtain stormwater management concept approval from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services. Coordinate off-site stormwater treatment as required.
- Coordinate features and grades along the property boundaries with neighbors to ensure well-integration of the plan.
- Develop budget and submit preferred plan to the Montgomery County Planning Board for approval.