**Continuing Concerns with the Proposed 11 Hole Disc Golf Course May 25, 2021**

Judy Hunt compiled these questions from her memory of the significant questions of the public meeting held on April 15th between the ECA board and concerned residents adjacent to the John Laurie Park. Responses and mitigation undertaken were compiled from the committee of volunteers working on the project.

The annual ECA AGM was held in early May and the Disc Golf Committee repopulated.

Committee Chair: Rick Wierzbicki

Members: Rick Wierzbicki, Bill Kirk, Stephanie Luk, Bruce James, Matt Sticksl, James Koizumi, Brett Plaizier (all are community residents except Brett, a long serving community member and board volunteer who has moved to BC but remains involved as this has been the project he created and has lead for the last three years; and James who was invited to join the committee as he is an expert in disc golf course design and layout; the terms of reference for committee structure allows out of community participation in committees, all decisions made by the committee are ratified by the board )

1. John Laurie Park is not an under-utilized park. It is a rare moment during the day to see the park playing fields not being used by individuals/small groups during these Covid times when teams are not playing. When teams are playing we have seen baseball, soccer and football being played simultaneously. It is one of the precious few flat public spaces in Edgemont and needs to be preserved and not over built.
   * *(DGC Response):* Green space is of value to Calgary and the community of Edgemont. Taken into consideration of the numerous activities currently at the John Laurie Park, the Disc Golf Committee has taken the initiative to relocate the course to the other side of the west side of the parking lot on the slopes which are not used for sport, where interference to the existing activities is minimal.
2. Hole 11 interferes with the playing fields as it forces disc players to walk off the course over the fields to the parking lot. It encourages players to continue throwing their discs until they get to the parking lot. During normal sports seasons, that area is where the Mavericks Football Team practices and plays. The parents watching their children, sit in lawn chairs along the chain link fence that borders on the pump station. It seems natural to end the disc golf course at Hole 10 as that would encourage players to exit along the pathway by the basketball/tennis courts to the parking lot. Thus, avoiding the playing fields all together.
   * *(DGC Response):* Disc golf players will be advised to respect other users of the park and to not walk through a practise or game on the adjacent fields or throw discs at or near players. Respect for other users of the park is a requirement of disc golf course users. The committee has moved the basket further downslope, there is now no possibility of interference with the field, from the new basket location it is much more attractive to walk back to the path to return to the parking lot than cut across the field. The practise basket has also been removed from that side of the field.
3. The Practice Basket must be moved off the playing fields as well. It encourages continued play from Hole 11 as players make their way to the parking lot. Suggest that it would be more appropriately placed behind the existing garbage bin between the two park benches where it would be conveniently adjacent to the parking lot and close to Hole 1.
   * *(DGC Response):* The practice basket location has been moved to the west of the parking lot. Hole 1 is moved slightly west and the practice basket is moved in the location on the same side of the course.
4. Holes 1, 2 and 3 need to be revisited to minimize interference with the public pathways/bus shelter.
   * *(DGC Response):* Interference with public pathways/bus shelters have been considered. Hole 1 is moved west to minimize chances of discs flying to public pathways and major roads. Hole 2 and 3 tee-off currently utilizes existing pathway, location will be clearly signed and within line of sight for pedestrians. During the course of play throughout the following year, DGC will take feedback to consider the need to add a dedicated tee-off pad away from the pathway.
5. Consultation to the broader Edgemont Community is scheduled for end of June with course build out scheduled for July/August. Considering the time lag for ordering baskets, signage, etc. this seems like a very tight, perhaps unattainable construction schedule and certainly not enough time to digest and incorporate residents’ input. With this tight timeline, the ECA and the City of Calgary cannot view this consultation as true public engagement for community buy in. By all accounts, this disc golf course is already a confirmed project!
   * *(DGC Response):* A webinar will be held with a follow up survey to quantify the Edgemont Community engagement and gather further information at end of June or in early July. The ECA board will take the recommendation of the committee and the City of Calgary parks department and approve development once that information is collected. The Edgemont Disc Golf project has been ongoing since 2019 and communication with the community has been constant via AGM and community newsletters, onsite signage, and walk through or public meetings to take any feedback. The DGC has engaged all parties for consultation to ensure a safe and fun activity for the community. The public engagement has been ongoing and as this summary demonstrates concerns have been addressed and mitigated and continue to be addressed by further course adjustments. After final approval it will take up to six weeks to obtain the baskets which will mean construction will be late August or into September. One of the grants given require the monies to be spent in 2021, losing this public grant by further delays would put a financial burden on the community association.
6. With the tight construction timelines, there is the risk of rushing the project and not ending up with a top- notch novice/introductory/family-oriented course that is the goal. Can this process be slowed down, incorporating the restrictions of the funding that is already in place?
   * *(DGC Response):* The Edgemont Disc Golf is planned to be constructed over 2 years. S In the summer or fall of 2021 the plan is to install permanent baskets based on feedback and trial over the past year. The plan for the summer or fall of 2022 to install required launch pads based on observing patterns of use from a season of play. Planning started in 2019 and there has been ample time to come to the final course design which has incorporated and mitigated the concerns of residents and users. A stake trial has been in place since Summer 2020 and the final layout takes into consideration all feedback received. The committee believes a high quality layout has been developed, thanks in no small part to strong input from residents, and we are looking at a top notch, entry level, family oriented course which will serve the residents of the community for years to come. One grant of $7500 must be spent in 2021.
7. Phasing the project seems to make sense to allow time for the community to become familiar with this new activity and to provide more input into the final design of the course. Given the many questions surrounding the placement, design and maintenance (mowing and erosion) of the launch/tee pads, delaying their construction is a good idea. This would allow for more research into the ideal launch pad designs and locations for this course.
   * *(DGC Response):* Launch pad design and locations will be a continued investigation through the course of 2021/2022, construction of that phase is planned for 2022.
8. A new community activity means more traffic. More traffic means more litter. As it stands, the sole garbage bin in the parking lot fills up rapidly encouraging people to deposit litter around it. Unfortunately, the wind picks this litter up rather than the City. Apparently, the budget for this course allows for another bin or a larger bin to be installed. Does the budget allow for more frequent garbage pickup by the City?
   * *(DGC Response*): DGC will add an extra bin or larger bin to address the litter issue. This is an existing concern and the addition of another bin should improve the situation up there. Perhaps a sign to remind users to use the bin will help. The signage for disc golf players will include a request to not litter and pick up while they play through. This has been very effective at other Disc Golf venues. A call to 311 gets the bin emptied, ELM contractors pick up garbage when they mow, the extra planned bin should cure this problem which was already in place prior to the disc golf course.
9. The maintenance of the disc golf course, once installed, becomes a City asset and the City helps with the maintenance. Would this mean more frequent garbage pick up, additional mowing and trimming costs around the baskets and launch/tee pads, as well as erosion repair? Or does this fall to ELM which all the residents of Edgemont are paying for?
   * *(DGC Response):* The course will become a sporting asset of the City Park and ELM which is doing maintenance right now will continue to do maintenance in the future. The ELM budget is not only from residents of Edgemont, ELM also receive an annual grant from the city which covers what the city would have spent on park maintenance. The current city policy is one mowing every two weeks and a mowing every week in sport fields. ELM picks up litter but garbage collection is done by a city hired contractor. The ELM lot levy allows for enhanced landscaping which means weekly mowing in all Edgemont parks and turf areas. ELM does not expect that the disk golf course will have a noticeable impact on park maintenance, ELM already does a weekly mowing throughout the growing season on the slopes on which the course is planned, extra mowing will not be required. The garbage issue was addressed in the previous comment.
10. Can we be assured that any liability claims in case of accidents will be covered by the City of Calgary? We have been told that It is City owned land and a City asset so the assumption is that proper due diligence has been done to ensure any issues are mitigated. Guy Beaver, City of Calgary Parks Community Strategist, mentioned that the site is sensitive to water management, trees, tennis courts and pathways. But it is also sensitive to vehicular traffic on Edgemont Drive and Edgemont Blvd.
    * *(DGC Response):* DGC and the City of Calgary Parks has spent much effort to design a course that is safe and accommodates to the City requirements. It is our understanding that the City would take on liability when it is a city asset.
    * Traffic impact on the community will be minimal, the access to the parking lot is before the first home and off a major road, the public park has had the access road and parking lot there for decades. Not all users will be driving in, we expect community based walk in and bicycle traffic as well. This course is community oriented with our major target audience being residents, just like the tennis courts, basketball courts, and sport fields. City departments have signed off on the project fitting in the park and not affecting the reservoir or the other facilities up there.
11. The budget set for the project is $27,500 with $17,500 already raised through grants. Is the budget realistic? How much of the project can be built with the funds raised? How will the balance of the budget be covered? We all know that construction projects run over scheduled time and budgets.
    * *(DGC Response):* Yes the budget is realistic. The two groups who granted us $17,500 reviewed our budget as part of their evaluation so the budget has been peer reviewed. The budget has also reviewed by the ECA board and approved. Since we won’t be pouring concrete pads for all of the holes (the current budget had planned for this) the budget will drop significantly (each tee pad was budgeted at $1500 a piece). As this will be a great asset to add to the community any costs not covered by grants and donations will be covered from ECA reserves, This is a simple project with only modest construction, the drilling of 11 holes in the ground and cementing in of 11 posts is unlikely to lead to construction overruns.

**Judy Hunt compiled this information from the public meeting and subsequent discussions with residents in the area. The list of residents from which these questions came is listed below to the best of our abilities for a zoom meeting, if more than one person was on a signed in account we cannot determine if they were present, the same is true if the camera on their device was not turned on, Zoom meetings do have limitations. It was not recorded who asked a specific question, often people had similar questions.**

Residents who attended the meeting

Jane Coates

Barry Slusarchuk

Bill Rawlusyk

Brett Redpath

Catherine Kernaghan

Doug Crapo

Harvey Widmer

Al Coates

Jennifer Crwickshank

Jian Skeet

Judy Hunt

Julie Egers

Larry Sorensen

Stephanie Luk

Ralph Krueger

Sharon and Alex Kozub

Stacey Bertsch and Justin

Matt Sticksl

**Board members in attendance**

Pam Wilson

Bill Kirk

Brett Plaizier

Bruce James

Jo-Ann Wither

Elspeth Kirk

Below are the notes taken at the meeting by the ECA secretary, Pam Wilson

Mitigation and response from the DGC in bold.

**Disc Golf Consultation – April 15, 2021**

**Enhancements and Suggestions for Consideration**

1. Review the pedestrian traffic flow to minimize interference. Consider in particular holes 2, 3, and 11. Note that playing hole 11 requires players to throw over the pathway. **Done, changes made to address concerns.**
2. Review hole placement to minimize or eliminate any interference to the use of the soccer fields. **Done, changes made.**
3. Itemize the plan to deal with erosion at the site and enhance where possible. **Launch pads will be installed next year after wear patterns observed**
4. Consider if there are ways to reduce the chance of discs flying over the fence at John Laurie and the notion that players will climb the fence to retrieve discs**. Course is laid out to ensure overshots will not end on roads.**
5. Review the size of the course plan to balance the footprint with designing a good introductory course. **The course is small but is challenging, it is a course that requires controlled finesse shots, the footprint fits within the portion of the park being used.**
6. Minimize, if possible and practical, chances of discs hitting the fence around the tennis courts. **The course has been designed to minimize strikes on the protective fencing.**
7. Consider relocating the practice hole to move it further away from the soccer fields. One possible location is between holes 4 and 5. **Done, the holes have been adjusted and the practice basket moved**
8. Discourage players from throwing from hole 11 to the practice basket. Although that type of play is not part of the plan, the fact that the practice basket can be seen from hole 11 will challenge some to try to throw the distance**. Done, the practice basket has been moved and hole 11 has been adjusted to encourage people to walk back to the pathway, this will be reinforced by signage.**
9. Look various alternatives to throwing pads including turf pads which could be installed flush with the turf surface. **That is being evaluated, flush ground level pads utilizing material other than concrete will be examined.**
10. Improve transparency and accountability so residents know what’s being planned. A first step would be to prepare a written response to the list of concerns published in Judy Hunt’s letter and discussed at this meeting. Published said response in the newsletter and on the website. Expand consultation to the broader Edgemont community. **Community engagement via our newsletters, AGM reports, signage, and public meetings will continue, the website will be uploaded with more information including concerns and steps to mitigate them. A public webinar and community survey is being developed.**
11. Consider a second year operating as a temporary course and gather additional data on its use and design. **This is the second year of the temporary course; one grant must be spent this year**.

Goal: Look at reducing the impact of the disc golf course, not eliminating it.