
[EXTERNAL] Concerns related to Voigt Park HDC Proposal

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To Historic District Commission (Staff) <hdc@detroitmi.gov>; Public Spaces Planning Unit <PSPU@detroitmi.gov>

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HDC Staff/City Officials,

I am writing to you as a concerned City of Detroit resident regarding my objection and disappointment I have around the HDC assessment and plan for concrete paths through Voigt Park.

I could not disagree more with the Staff Report prepared by G. Landsberg.

The statement made that Voigt Park is, "awkward to approach and does not necessarily have design elements that welcomes visitors" couldn't be farther from the truth. As a resident of Boston Edison that has a clear line of sight to Voigt Park, I see the daily foot traffic and enjoyment of the open green space. As visitors approach the park, they are joyed to explore with an unimpeded exploration of the park. Blankets are placed to hold cozy picnics under the shade, soccer games and croquet matches are held in the open green spaces, people freely roam with their pets, and children play spontaneously.

It is truly a gem to behold how creatively visitors approach and use the space. No icy concrete walkways, no chips in the sidewalk (like much of the neighborhood), no bikes/mopeds or other fast-moving modes of transportation. Out of town visitors are always in awe of the park.

The preparer commented, "Without interior paths, defined vistas, designed outdoor spaces, or amenities the park offers a fairly one-dimensional experience to visitors who do venture across the street, and is mostly restricted to ambulatory users."

The fact that Voigt Park is a path-free, concrete-free, simplistic park IS the amenity itself! It is one of the few peaceful, tranquil parks to enjoy in the city.

By stating, "There is no invitation to linger" is also a falsehood. Residents intentionally go to the park to walk around on the grass and take in the splendor of its simplicity. To linger and absorb the natural beauty of the park is the exact point. Visitors do this daily. Yoga, book reading, bird watching, picnics, family walks, you name it.

As a child growing up in North Rosedale Park, myself and the neighborhood kids used the open green spaces of the park daily. And, we didn't frequent the playscape area or "forced play" zones, what we enjoyed most were the open green spaces. Those were the areas that we ran to with our friends

embarking on a creative, curious play - tag, finding sticks, pickup soccer, playing catch. The open green spaces of that park shaped my childhood.

I implore those who would like to move forward with this proposal to come to Voigt Park, spend time there, lay a blanket down in a desired area of the park, and listen to the environment around you; the birds, the sound of kids playing, the leaves of the trees. You would then understand why we're trying so hard to protect this city treasure. Please do not make this park the same as every other. It is unique. It is rare. And it is the reason why we moved to this area of Detroit.

- City of Detroit Resident
Stacey Linton