

March 20, 2022

Venice Neighborhood Council
DISCUSSION FORUM COMMITTEE

Proposed DFC Initiatives

As the pandemic wanes (for the moment) and community interaction “in person” becomes possible again, the VNC Discussion Forum Committee will emphasize its commitment to the welfare of children in and around the Venice community. This “Focus on Children” is in keeping with the Vision Goals that animate our work. Our focus on children will complement and inform initiatives inspired by other Vision Goals. We welcome participation of the community at large, the VNC broadly and members of other VNC committees in the campaigns described below, which are now being pursued in our discussions and ongoing activities. Please contact us at (insert email address) for information about getting involved.

1. “The Playground Project”

Well-designed and maintained playgrounds serve as social and recreational hubs where children and neighbors meet and “community” is formed.

The DFC will survey existing Venice playgrounds/parks, catalog amenities offered, and consider the locations, number, and adequacy of local offerings. Survey findings will be referred to in advocating for additional playgrounds, parks, services, or features that are of benefit to residents and visitors, particularly children and their families. In this work, we expect to engage with other VNC committees, District 11 Council officials, and other LA City departments.

(Re: “Focus on Children” Vision Goal, potentially in association with other VNC committees)

2. Improved Pedestrian Access to Public Library and other Neighborhood Amenities

The DFC will advocate for additional crosswalks, signals, and other improvements to the community’s ability to access the Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library and other locations of benefit to children, families, and residents.

(Re: “Walkability” Vision Goal, potentially in association with other VNC committees)

3. Action on Behalf of Homeless Children and Families

This initiative could complement efforts to promote access to the public library, as mentioned above. The Centennial Park homeless encampment now impacts the community’s use of the library.

(Re: “Diversity” Vision Goal, which refers to affordable housing, potentially in association with other VNC committees)

4. High School Student Internship Program

The DFC will resume contact with Venice High staff and discuss the prospects for re-starting this work.

(Re: “Participation” Vision Goal, potentially in association with other VNC committees)

5. Further Options/Next Steps: For discussion

cc: File/NB

(From John Palka) "My impression is that there are very limited playground spaces for young children and parents in the Venice area. There is a wonderful playground in Marina del Rey on Glencoe Ave by Alla Street (Glen Alla Park).and have to tell you, it is packed with young moms and dads and little children all having a wonderful time and meeting neighbors. There is also a wonderful little park with a great playground for little children east of where I live called the Culver West Alexander Park. It is also a hub of activity for young families with children.

I do not know of a similar playground setting in Venice. I know that in the area of my church, there is no public playground. It's a park and playground desert.

My observation is that well designed and maintained playgrounds serve as a community hub where children and neighbors meet and "community" is formed. Perhaps our committee can raise awareness of this deficiency and perhaps work with others to develop a plan to get a great park and playground in our neighborhood"!)

(From Joe Murphy)
Hi DFC Team Members.

Attached and below is the summary of tasks you indicated you would try to do before our next regular monthly meeting - 5:30pm Thursday Sep 22:

Hi Joe! Here is what I recall people saying they would do:

John - check with local Venice elementary school Coeur d'Elene PTA/Admin. re: support for parks initiative

Mehrnoosh - continue to develop design representations for Triangle Park

Joelle - consider checking in with Chamber of Commerce and/or Westminster Elementary re: support for Parks Initiative

Paul - Visit Parks and Rec in Rancho Park for info about any readily available park improvement features; add 300-yard radius to park map

Erica - Check in with Isabelle Duvivier re: possible role of her expertise in moving ahead

Paul

Please 'Reply to All' with any concerns or suggestions you may have about this direction we're taking to implement our VNC-approved **DFC Venice Parks Initiative**. I'm suggesting you 'Reply to All' since the listed recipients include what has evolved as the members of this **DFC Venice Parks Initiative Team** which includes the 6 *Voting DFC Members* (those listed in the 'To' section) and the currently 5 Non-Voting DFC Members (those listed in the 'Cc' section) - and I'd like them to know your concerns and/or suggestions before our 5:30pm Thursday September 22 regular monthly meeting. I believe that could significantly enhance the focus and value of the discussion.

Comments from yours truly:

- I thought we had decided to focus on successfully completing one playground park before expanding our focus. My impression was that we had decided to concentrate our efforts on the one at the Lutheran Church site on Venice Boulevard.
- I am not personally as concerned about 'getting something done quickly' as with 'getting something done well'; if that takes several months or even more, that's OK with me. In the meantime, we can use our efforts to learn how to get a quality children's playground successfully developed - including attracting the support and involvement of other entities in the effort.
- This is an approach we can communicate to the VNC Board on occasion as we deem appropriate.

We are all involved in other matters in our lives - work, raising children, extended family concerns/celebrations, etc. Overburdening ourselves is not productive. I appreciate what you're doing.

Much affection, Joe

