



Institute for Human Centered Design

Site Analysis of Potential Locations for an Accessible Public Playground in Nashua, New Hampshire

May 30, 2014

Executive Summary

The City of Nashua has a strong selection of sites to consider for the location of a new accessible playground suitable for people of all ages and abilities. The sites that have been recommended balance the most favorable characteristics required for accessibility with the preservation of functional existing site facilities.

While it was not in the original purview of this report to recommend or discuss the specific type of play equipment being considered, it is in this team's estimation, worth noting that there are many ways to create a successful accessible and sensory rich playground that cooperates with the natural environment in both a sustainable and aesthetic way, providing a broad range of accessible and equally important, inclusive experiences, to people of all ages and abilities. Choosing the appropriate site is where the goals of accessibility and inclusivity begin, but the objects and experiences created by the playground itself is where the goals of accessibility and inclusivity are met.

This written report has been prepared by: The Institute for Human Centered Design, Boston, MA

The Institute for Human Centered Design is an educational and design 501©3 organization committed to advancing the role of design in expanding opportunity and enhancing experience for people of all ages and abilities through excellence in design. IHCD's work balances expertise in legally required accessibility with promotion of best practices in human-centered or universal design.

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Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II (public entities including cities and towns) Program Accessibility

The primary obligation of public entities under the ADA is “program accessibility.” Under Title II of the ADA public entities must make sure that:

“No qualified individual with a disability shall, because a public entity's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity” [28 CFR Part 35.149].

This means that all related programs, services, and activities of the public entity, when viewed in their entirety, must be accessible to individuals with disabilities unless doing so results in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program or in an undue financial and administrative burden. This requirement is known as "program accessibility." [28 CFR Part 35.150].

Program accessibility does not typically require that every playground be made accessible. Usually, a public entity determines which method it will use for meeting its program accessibility obligations. When structural changes are made to existing facilities, the changes must comply with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design. When choosing to purchase equipment or to make structural changes, the public entity should factor financial resources required to maintain program accessibility.

Over time, a public entity will need to reassess its compliance with program accessibility, and it may become necessary to acquire new accessible equipment or make structural modifications. To determine which playgrounds must be made accessible, public entities should consider:

- How to provide the program in the most integrated setting appropriate
- Locations where the activities are offered
- Which playgrounds are accessible and to what extent
- Level of dispersion of the accessible playgrounds and convenience to reach them (playgrounds accessible by public transportation or walking)

It is important to note the concept at the heart of the Americans with Disabilities Act: Equal opportunity to participate in an integrated setting:

II-3.3000 Equality in participation/benefits. The ADA provides for equality of opportunity, but does not guarantee equality of results. The foundation of many of the specific requirements in the department's regulations is the principle that individuals with disabilities must be provided an

equally effective opportunity to participate in or benefit from a public entity's aids, benefits, and services.

II-3.4000 Separate benefit/integrated setting. A primary goal of the ADA is the equal participation of individuals with disabilities in the "mainstream" of American society. The major principles of mainstreaming are –

- 1) Individuals with disabilities must be integrated to the maximum extent appropriate.
- 2) Separate programs are permitted where necessary to ensure equal opportunity. A separate program must be appropriate to the particular individual.
- 3) Individuals with disabilities cannot be excluded from the regular program, or required to accept special services or benefits.

Play Areas - 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design

The 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design establish minimum accessibility requirements for newly constructed and altered play areas. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that children with disabilities are able to access the variety of play components provided.

The Standards define a play component *“as an element designed to generate specific opportunities for play, socialization, and learning. Play components may be manufactured or natural, and may be stand alone or part of a composite play structure”*. Swings, spring riders, water tables, playhouses, slides, and climbers are examples of play components.

Ramps, transfer systems, steps, decks, and roofs are not considered play components. These elements are generally used to link other elements on a play structure. Although socialization may happen on these elements, they are not primarily intended for play.

The Standards provide scoping, meaning what needs to be accessible and how many as well as technical requirements, meaning design specification. Consideration should be given to circulation paths, ground surfaces, and the selection and dispersion of play components – ground and/or elevated play components, water play components.

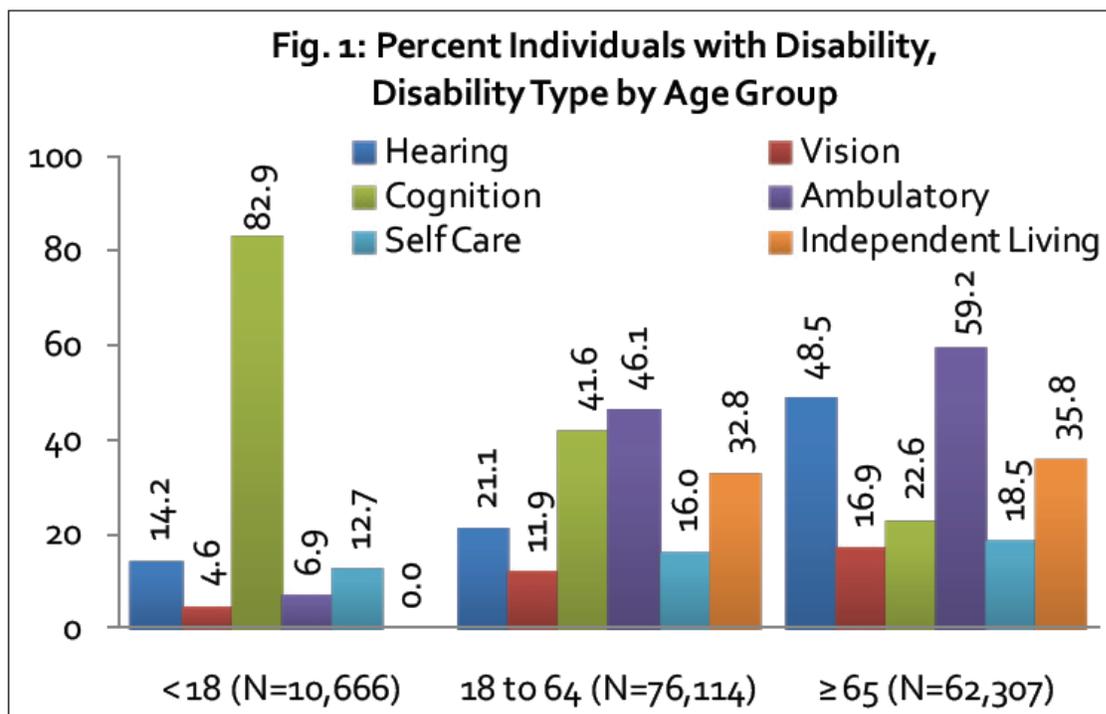
See 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design:

<http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards.pdf>

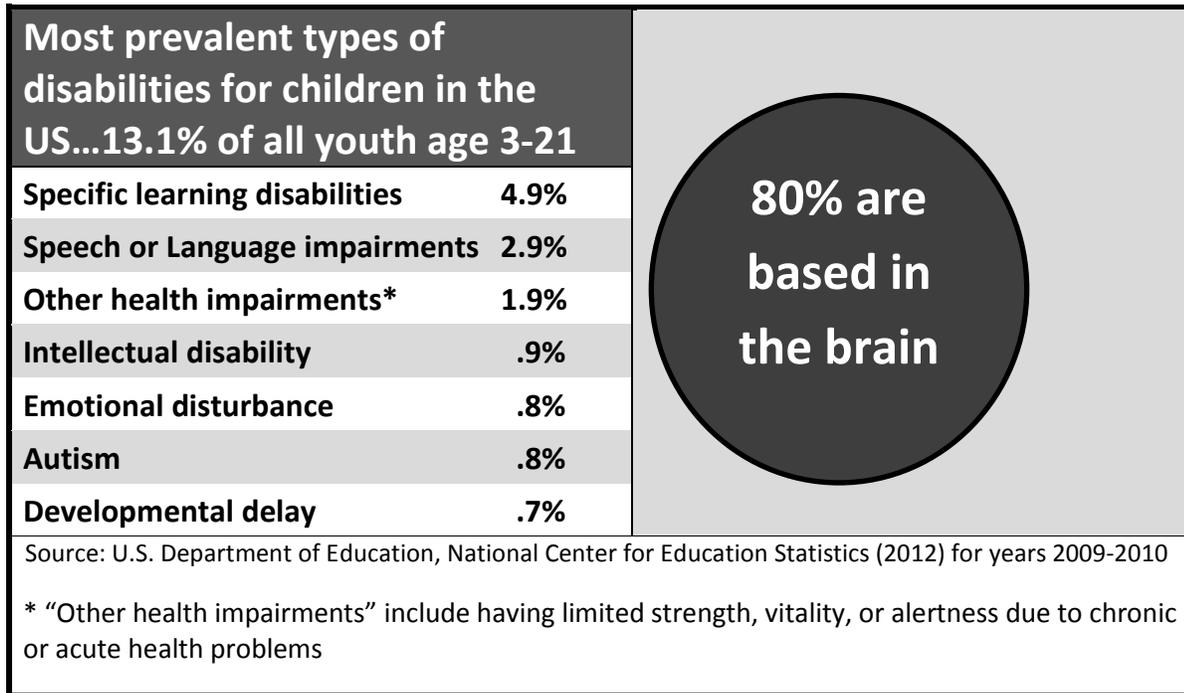
Demographic Overview of Reasons for Disability Today (City, State, Nation)

Nashua Special Education Students by Primary Disability over a 5-Year Period

Disability	2009-2010	2009-2010 %	2010-2011	2010-2011 %	2011-2012	2011-2012 %	2012-2013	2012-2013 %	2013-2014	2013-2014 %
Autism	100	5.0%	109	6.0%	152	7.8%	151	8.4%	161	8.8%
Deaf Blindness	12	0.6%	10	0.5%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
Developmental Delay	247	12.4%	212	11.6%	241	12.3%	222	12.3%	265	14.5%
Emotional Disturbance	145	7.3%	158	8.7%	175	8.9%	162	9.0%	162	8.9%
Hearing Impaired	8	0.4%	9	0.5%	17	0.9%	16	0.9%	17	0.9%
Intellectual Disability	61	3.1%	47	2.6%	56	2.9%	52	2.9%	53	2.9%
Multiple Disabilities	18	0.9%	22	1.2%	23	1.2%	22	1.2%	23	1.3%
Orthopedic Impairment	4	0.2%	7	0.4%	5	0.3%	5	0.3%	2	0.1%
Other Health Impaired	375	18.8%	319	17.5%	359	18.3%	326	18.1%	316	17.3%
Specific Learning Disability	753	37.7%	627	34.4%	654	33.4%	620	34.4%	629	34.4%
Speech Language Impairment	267	13.4%	296	16.2%	264	13.5%	212	11.8%	187	10.2%
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
Visual Impairment	9	0.5%	9	0.5%	11	0.6%	11	0.6%	11	0.6%
Total	1999	100.0%	1825	100.0%	1958	100.0%	1801	100.0%	1828	100.0%



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Playground Sites Under Consideration

The following 10 sites were offered by the City of Nashua in the amended Resolution R-14-023, for review and assessment of suitability for the location of accessible playground equipment. This was so tasked that the city might insure that the future playground is located at a site that is appropriate and provides the best public access.

Potential Sites Listed in Order of the said Resolution:

Greely Park – East side

Greely Park – Existing Playground

Greely Park – Manchester Street

Sargents Ave. – Existing Playground

Lincoln Park

Atherton Park

Southwest Park

Mine Falls Park - Behind Boys and Girls Club

Shady Lane/Kirkpatrick Park

North Common/Four Corners

Suitable Sites Ranked

After a site visit and review, the following sites were determined to be best suited to locate accessible playground equipment compatible with the City of Nashua's wishes as previously stated. The sites are ranked here in the order of their ability to accommodate an accessible playground with the least amount of site work required to gain the maximum benefit to universal, public access. In this list, number one is the highest rank and number seven is the lowest. Sites not included were unsuitable by the criteria of this analysis. Details on eliminated sites may be found at the end of this report.

Site #1. Greely Park – East – South side of access road (Fig. A.)

Site #2. Greely Park – East – Southeast corner, between ridge and softball outfield. (Fig. B)

Site #3. Shady Lane/Kirkpatrick Park – Replace existing playground (Fig. C)

Site #4. Sargents Ave. – Between the Baseball Field and the bottom of the slope. (Fig. D)

Site #5. Sargents Ave. – Replace the Existing playground adjacent to Sargents Ave. (Fig. E)

Site #6. Greely Park – West- Replace existing play area adjacent to the path. (Fig.F)

Site #7. Southwest Park – Parking Lot between Baseball field and Dog Park (Fig. G)

Review and Assessment of Suitable Sites

The site assessments that follow are based on a set of criteria that are most favorable to creating accessible open spaces for people of all ages and abilities. It may be useful to keep in mind that accessibility as it is generally defined for the purposes of this report includes barrier-free access at several scales:

- The ‘city scale’ which includes convenient public transportation and safe vehicular circulation to the site as a whole. For example: Can I visit the site even though I don’t drive anymore? Can I find a place to park even if I have an adapted van?
- The ‘site scale’ which includes the barrier-free circulation of people using all forms of mobility to include walking, wheelchairs, strollers and other assistive devices. For example: Can I easily get from my car to the site if I am pushing a stroller? Is there a bathroom nearby just in case?
- The ‘human scale’ which includes, in addition to the detailed movements of the body across a site, access to the sensory, cognitive and social aspects of a potential site. For example: Is there a comfortable place to wait and watch my grandkids play? Are there swings my child can use?

There are a few specific attributes that one will come across when reading the site assessments that follow. Many of them are obvious advantages to creating a barrier-free public playground. Some of those general characteristics are: Adjacent parking, Low to no slope, Access by bus or on foot, Bathroom facilities, Barrier-free sidewalks and paths that connect all the features, Signage, Soil, Sun, Wind conditions.

One variable that is outside all the base-line criteria used is the existing condition of the site. This has been taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis, with the sites requiring the least amount of change to the existing infrastructure being recommended first. In our experience, infrastructure costs can in some cases be more expensive than the initial goal of the project. **The object was to recommend sites that best achieved a balance between all of the criteria and maintained the highest net-gain equation for the public.**

Site #1. Greely Park – East – South side of access road



Summary: This site is one of two recommended sites in Greely Park East and stood out as the best location in Nashua for an accessible playground due to a number of unique circumstances. The proximity of accessible bathroom facilities, existing recreational opportunities, existing parking, a relatively flat area for construction and the presence of both public transportation and walkability all contribute to the overall suitability of this site. The setting is a hub of complimentary recreational activity, yet at the same time benefits from large nearby trees, a ridge that can protect the site from wind and a scenic park setting that is already a regional destination.

Criteria Met:

- Bathroom facilities (existing)
- Parking (immediately adjacent)
- Low Slope (requiring minimal re-grading)
- Public transportation (Bus)
- Walkable (Accessible by sidewalk on foot)

- Adjacent Recreational/Educational Context (band-shell, horseshoes, tennis)
- Zero Demolition of existing facilities
- Set-back from high speed traffic (adjacent to a paved access road)
- Sun/Shade balance (shade trees present along one edge)
- Soils are adequately draining (no ponding present after rain)
- Clean Site (No landfill or dumping activity recorded)

Criteria Missed:

- No Seating

Considerations:

- Create an accessible route from the parking to the playground.
- Add adequate seating opportunities
- Pedestrian route to bathroom facilities would need to be delineated and made barrier-free.
- Parking during simultaneous, nearby events might be crowded. Accessible spaces should be marked.
- Playground expansion in the future can occur along the base of the slope.
- Consider planting large-growing shade trees where necessary to moderate summer temperatures.
- Keeping Greely Park's natural context consistent would indicate choosing a neutral color pallet for "off-the-shelf" play equipment.



Site #1. Greely Park East. Looking across parking area and site from the access road.

Site #2. Greely Park – East – Southeast corner, bet. ridge and softball outfield



Summary:

This site is the second recommended location for a universally accessible playground, also located in Greely Park East. The existing recreational opportunities, parking potential, and an easily buildable flat area for construction are the primary advantages of this site. Public transportation and walkability, while less convenient are possible. The setting is a hub of complimentary recreational activity, yet at the same time benefits from large nearby trees, a ridge that can protect the site from wind and a scenic park setting that is already a regional destination. The access road is makes getting to this site by car, a breeze.

Criteria Met:

- Bathroom facilities (present in the Park but not near-by)
- Parking (immediately adjacent but would need to be improved)
- Low Slope (requiring minimal re-grading)
- Public transportation (Bus)

- Walkable (Accessible by sidewalk on foot)
- Adjacent Recreational/Educational Context (band-shell, horseshoes, tennis)
- Zero Demolition of existing facilities
- Set-back from high speed traffic (adjacent to a paved access road)
- Sun/Shade balance (shade trees present along one edge)
- Soils are adequately draining (no ponding present after rain)
- Clean Site (No landfill or dumping activity recorded)

Criteria Missed:

- No Seating

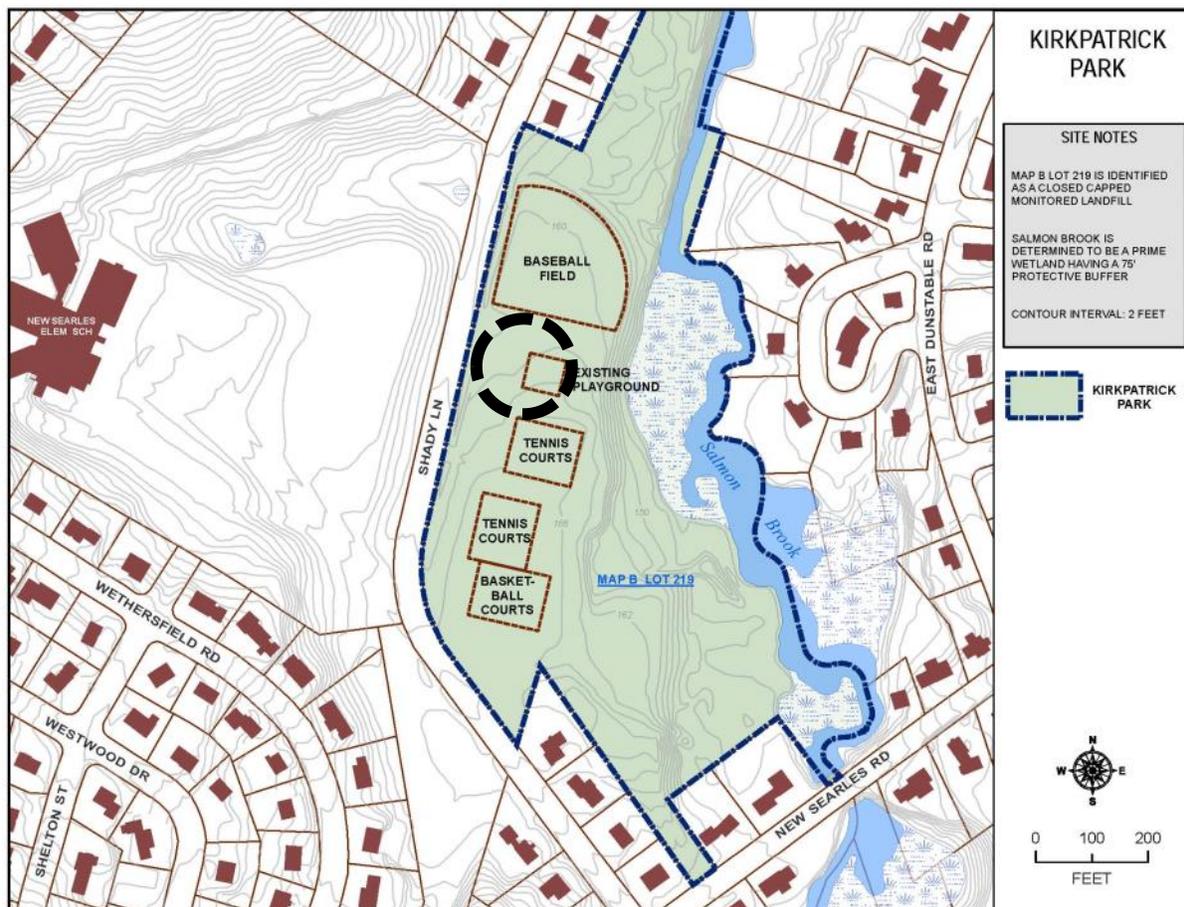
Considerations:

- Create an accessible route from the parking to the playground.
- Add adequate seating opportunities
- Pedestrian route to bathroom facilities would need to be delineated and made barrier-free.
- Parking area is currently unpaved and not delineated. Accessible spaces should be marked.
- Playground expansion in the future is limited unless baseball field were to be impacted. Consider planting large-growing shade trees where necessary to moderate summer temperatures.
- Keeping Greely Park's natural context consistent would indicate choosing a neutral color pallet for "off-the-shelf" play equipment.



2. Greely Park East. Looking across the site toward the access road.

Site #3. Shady Lane/Kirkpatrick Park – Replace existing playground



Summary:

This site at Kirkpatrick Park is situated close to a school, next to the fields of Shady Lane Park, and at the edge of an intact suburban neighborhood, making it imminently walkable and appropriately contextual. The flatness of the site, existing recreational opportunities, abundant off-street parking and near, but not-too-near wetland contribute to the overall strength of this site as a potential playground, despite the lack of existing bathroom facilities. A destination for the local neighborhood, rather than a regional resource, it has the potential to grow to accommodate a larger and more diverse population.

Criteria Met:

- Parking (immediately adjacent and abundant)
- Extremely Low Slope (requiring minimal to no re-grading)
- Walkable (accessible by sidewalk on foot)
- Adjacent Recreational/Educational Context (baseball, tennis, soccer, elementary school)
- Set-back from high speed traffic (adjacent to a paved parking area)
- Soils are adequately draining (no ponding present after rain)

Criteria Missed:

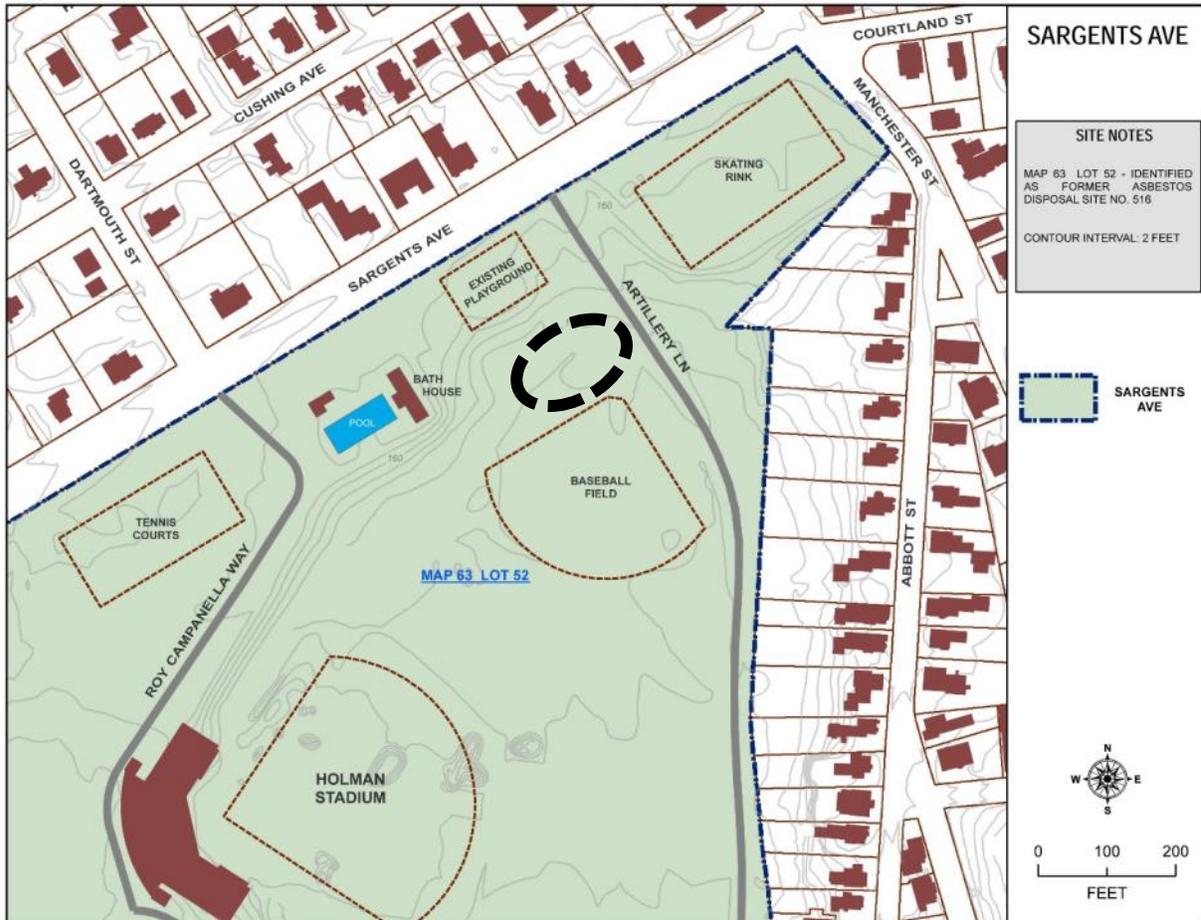
- Bathroom facilities (port-a-potty on site)
- Public transportation (closest stop is several blocks away)
- Necessary demolition/removal of existing playground structure and swing frame
- Sun/Shade imbalance (this is a very exposed site with no trees or wind protection)
- Lack of Seating (bleachers associated with the baseball field are present but do not suffice for the playground)
- Not a Clean Site (Site is a closed capped landfill which may prevent certain construction operations and the planting of deep-rooted woody plant material)

Considerations:

- Consider building bathroom facilities that meet ADA guidelines for accessibility. There is already a temporary toilet on site.
- Create an accessible route from the parking area to the playground.
- Parking during simultaneous, adjacent events might be crowded. Accessible spaces should be marked.
- Add adequate seating opportunities.
- Consider planting large growing trees to create shade and moderate playground temperatures.
- There is limited future expansion outside of this immediate location.
- The adjacent wetlands offer a unique opportunity to develop site-specific sensory explorations, educational programming and even birding.
- Consider connecting Shady Lane Park across the street to Kirkpatrick Park with an ADA accessible path. A path exists but it is too steep to meet code.



Site #3. Shady Lane/Kirkpatrick Park. Looking across the site toward the parking and Shady Ln and the elementary school.

Site #4. Sargents Ave. – Between the Baseball Field and the bottom of the slope**Summary:**

There are two potential sites at this location for a universally accessible playground in Sargents Park. They are ranked #4 and #5 respectively. The overwhelming factor in recommending either of these sites is the outstanding neighborhood context that creates tremendous accessibility by public transportation and walking on foot. Already a destination due to the existing recreational opportunities that include the stadium, pool, tennis, hockey rink in winter, and baseball and football fields, parking is in ready supply. Play equipment already on site looks well used. This site does not impact the existing playground area.

Criteria Met:

- Parking (immediately adjacent)
- Low Slope (requiring minimal re-grading)
- Public transportation (Bus)
- Walkable (Accessible by sidewalk on foot)
- Adjacent Recreational/Educational Context (stadium, fields, pool, tennis)
- Zero Demolition of existing facilities

- Set-back from high speed traffic (adjacent to a secondary road)
- Seating throughout park areas above this location, but this site includes a covered picnic area
- Soils are adequately draining (slightly wet after a rain)

Criteria Missed:

- Bathroom facilities while present are behind a perimeter fence enclosing the pool
- Sun/Shade imbalance (site has few trees but good wind protection)
- Not a Clean Site (Prior asbestos dumping activity recorded)
- No direct accessible route to site from parking

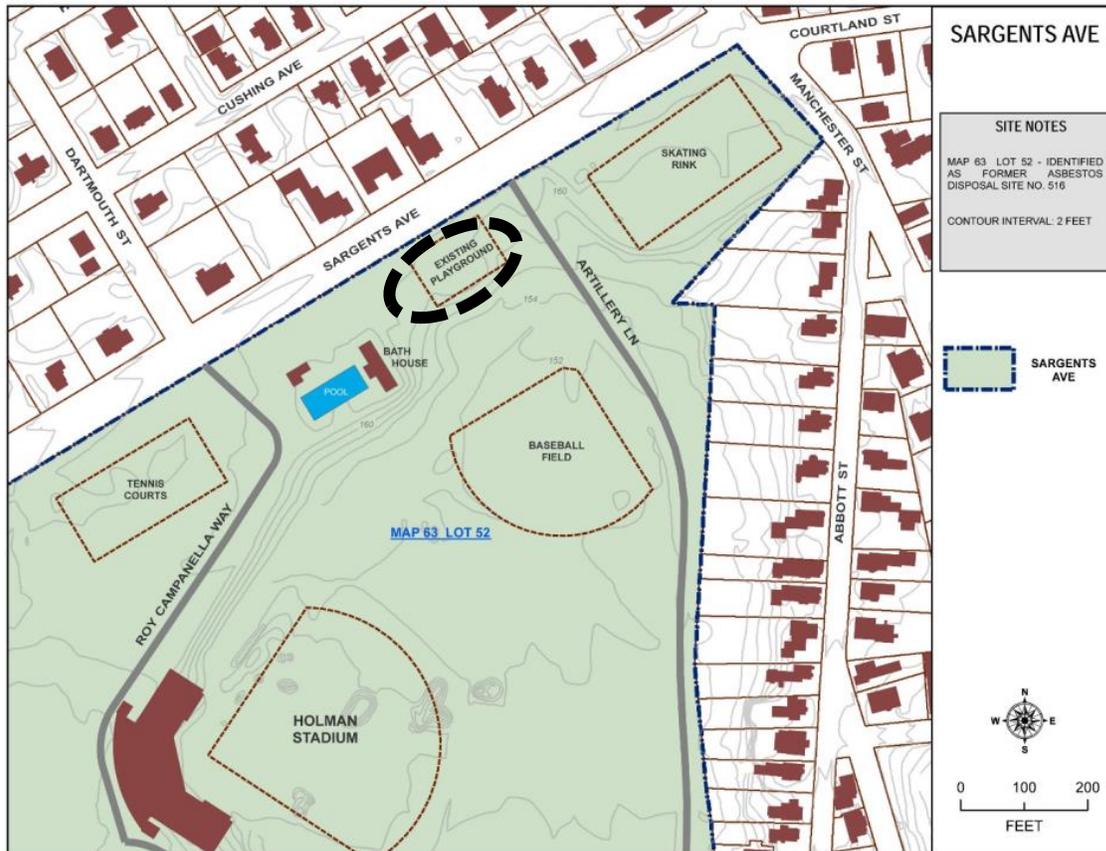
Considerations:

- Consider a separate bathroom facility that meets ADA guidelines for accessibility. There is already a temporary toilet on site adjacent to ball field as well as pool house facilities.
- Create an accessible route from the parking to the playground.
- Parking area is currently on opposite side of the street and not delineated. Accessible spaces should be marked.
- Parking during simultaneous, nearby events might be crowded.
- There is limited future expansion outside of this immediate location.



Site #4. Sargents Ave. Looking across the site toward the parking and winter-time skating rink.

Site #5. Sargents Ave. – Replace the Existing playground



Summary:

This is the second of two potential sites at this location for a universally accessible playground in Sargents Park. They are ranked #4 and #5 respectively. The overwhelming factor in recommending either of these sites is the outstanding neighborhood context that creates tremendous accessibility by public transportation and walking on foot. Already a destination due to the existing recreational opportunities that include the stadium, pool, tennis, hockey rink in winter, and baseball and football fields, parking is in ready supply. Play equipment already on site looks well used despite being no-longer code compliant by today's standards and would be replaced with the proposed playground on this site.

Criteria Met:

- Parking (immediately adjacent and along Sargents Ave.)
- Low Slope (requiring minimal re-grading)
- Public transportation (Bus)
- Walkable (Accessible by sidewalk on foot)
- Direct accessible route to site from sidewalk is possible
- Adjacent Recreational/Educational Context (stadium, fields, pool, tennis)

- Sun/Shade balance (shade trees present but several large street trees are dying)
- Seating throughout park areas
- Soils are adequately draining (slightly wet after a rain)

Criteria Missed:

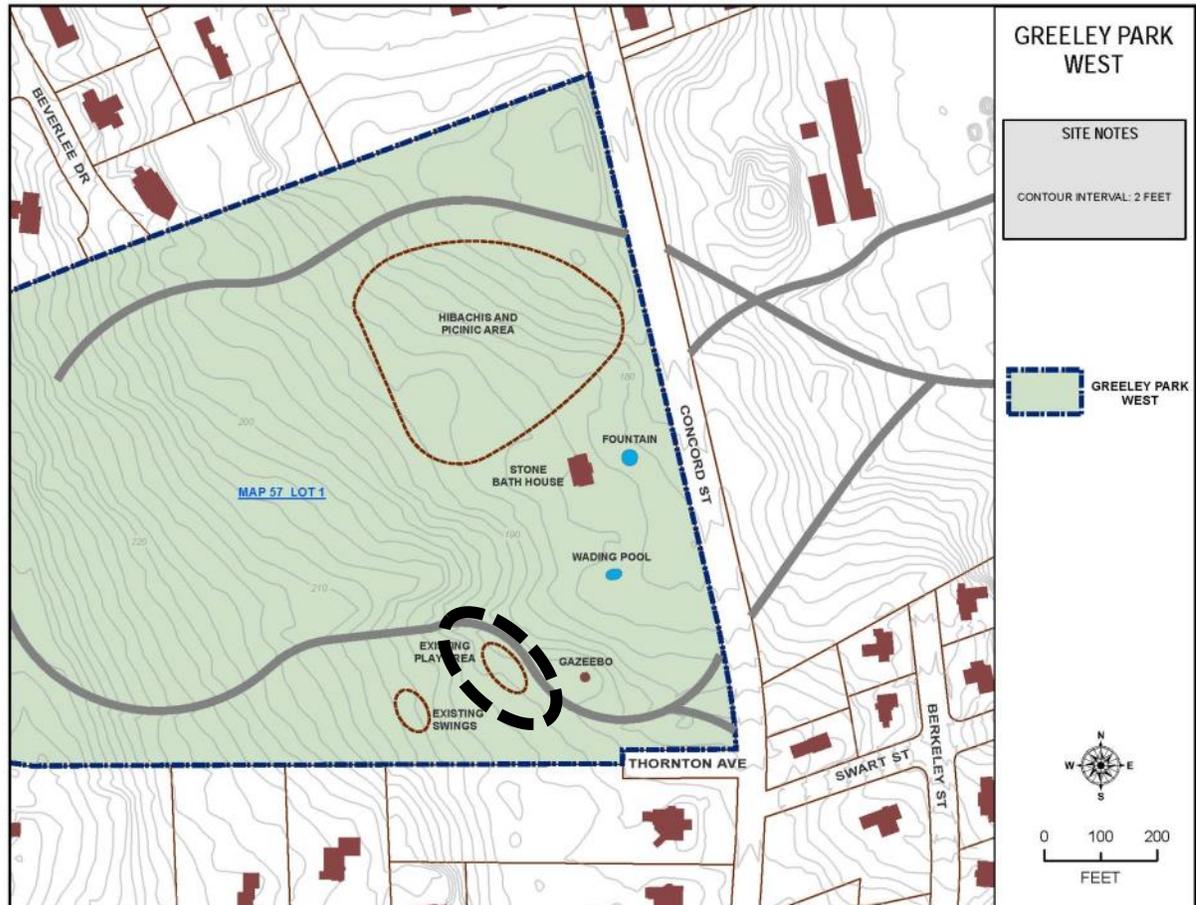
- Bathroom facilities, while present in the Pool House, are behind a perimeter fence enclosing the pool
- Site is not set-back from high speed traffic (it is adjacent to a primary road with parking buffer)
- Demolition and replacing of existing playground equipment would be required
- Not a Clean Site (Prior asbestos dumping activity recorded)

Considerations:

- Consider building a separate bathroom facility that meets ADA guidelines for accessibility.
- Parking during simultaneous, nearby events might be crowded. Accessible spaces should be marked.
- There is limited future expansion outside of this immediate location
- Consider removing the dying and potentially dangerous street trees and replace to create shade and moderate playground temperatures.



Site #5. Sargents Ave. Looking across the site toward the sidewalk along Sargents Ave. on the far side.

Site #6. Greeley Park – West- Replace existing play area**Summary:**

This site is recommended with reservations for the construction of an “off-the shelf” accessible playground due specifically to the unique wooded character of the site and the existing play structures, that while no longer meeting code by today’s safety standards, are obviously very-well used. The near-by recreational opportunities, public transportation and walkability opportunity, and the scenic park setting that already make this a regional destination are clear site advantages.

Criteria Met:

- Low Slope (requiring minimal re-grading)
- Public transportation (Bus)
- Walkable (Accessible by sidewalk on foot)
- Adjacent Recreational/Educational Context (park, wading pool, near-by band shell)
- Set-back from high speed traffic (adjacent to a paved access road)
- Sun/Shade balance (shade trees present throughout)
- Seating throughout park areas including a gazebo

- Bathroom facilities are present in the Stone Bath House nearby bath house
- Soils are adequately draining (ponding present nearby but not in immediate site area)
- Clean Site (No landfill or dumping activity recorded)

Criteria Missed:

- No dedicated parking (street parking only)
- No accessible route to the playground area
- Demolition and replacement of some of the existing playground equipment would be required.

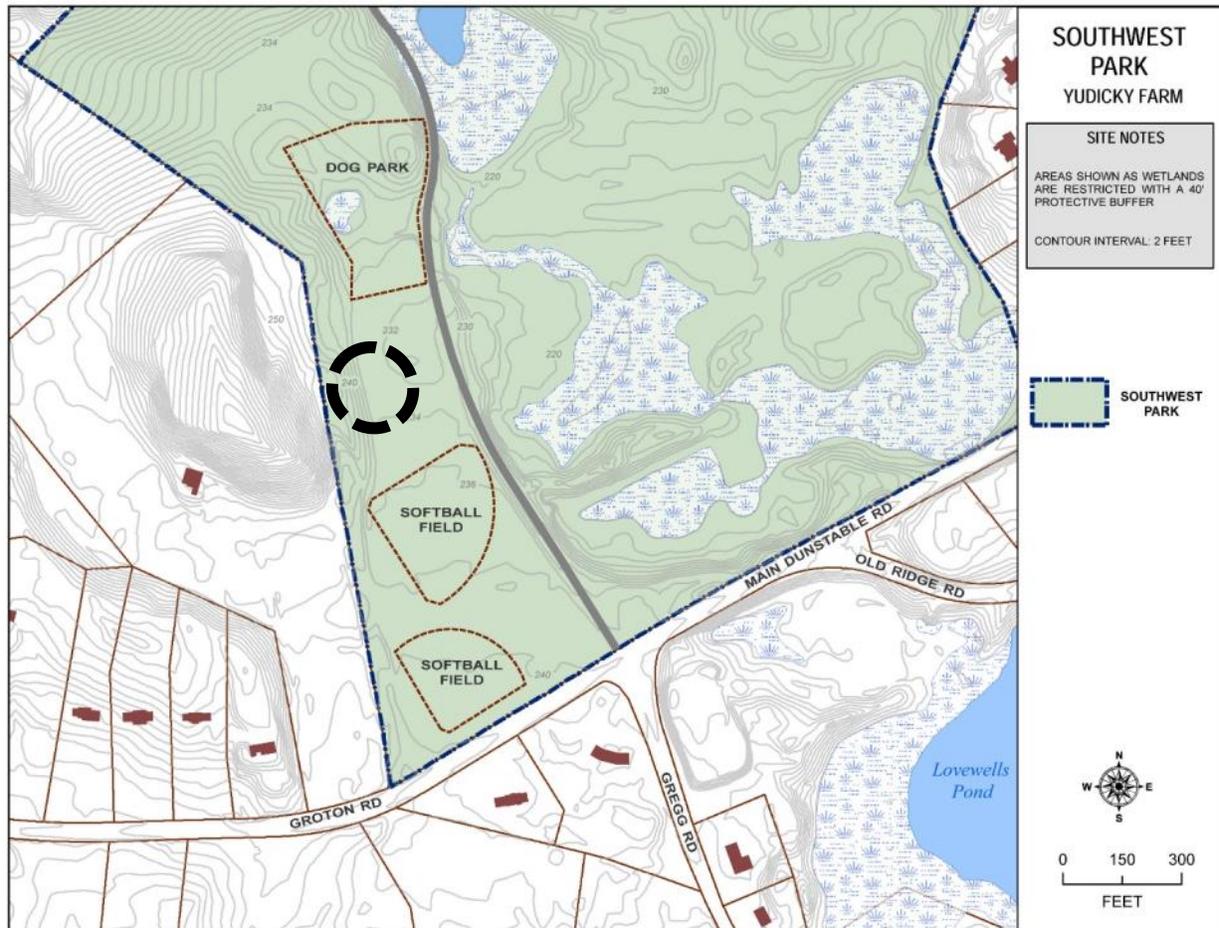
Considerations:

- Consider an accessible route between playground and bathroom facilities.
- Create an accessible route from the sidewalk and street parking to the playground.
- Parking is on the street and not in abundance. Additional parking could be considered. Accessible spaces should be marked.
- Consider carefully the root zones of the existing trees so as not to negatively impact the overall natural patterns with new playground surfacing.
- Keeping Greely Park's natural context consistent would indicate choosing a neutral color pallet for "off-the-shelf" play equipment.
- Consider a universally accessible natural or adventure playground in this location.



Site #6. Greely Park West Looking across the access road towards the site on the left.

Site #7. Southwest Park – Parking Lot between Baseball field and Dog Park



Summary:

This site is the last location to make the list of potential sites for an accessible playground despite being the least centrally located. The existing and unique dog park facility, softball fields, and large parking area contribute to the destination potential of the site, if not by public transportation, than by car. It has no record of prior landfill or dumping activity, and along with the evenly sloped ground it becomes compatible with a catalogue playground. Turning a portion of the gravel pad that is currently used for parking into a play area could help organize the overall circulation and use patterns of the park. Using the ridge as a boundary would be desirable.

Criteria Met:

- Parking (abundant)
- Low Slope (requiring minimal re-grading)
- Adjacent Recreational/Educational Context (softball fields, dog park)
- Set-back from high speed traffic (adjacent to a paved access road)

- Soils are adequately draining (no ponding present)
- Clean Site (No landfill or dumping activity recorded)

Criteria Missed:

- No Bathroom facilities (portable toilet facilities on site)
- No Public transportation (Bus)
- Not Walkable (busy primary road with no sidewalks)
- Sun/Shade imbalance (very exposed site)
- No Seating
- No accessible route to the potential playground area
- Demolition of existing portion of gravel parking lot would be required.

Considerations:

- Consider building bathroom facilities that meet ADA guidelines for accessibility on this side of the park
- Create an accessible route from the parking to the playground.
- Consider planting large growing trees to create shade and moderate playground temperatures.
- Add adequate seating opportunities
- Protect users from nearby parking activities with landscaping and a fence.



Site #7. Southwest Park/Yudicky Farm. Looking across the existing parking area towards the site at the base of the slope.

Sites Not Recommended

The following sites were not recommended because they did not have a favorable balance of criteria met vs. criteria missed. After each site are the main reasons for not recommending them to the list of potential sites for an accessible playground.

Greely Park – Manchester Street (site too steeply sloped with no parking)

Mine Falls Park (transmission lines, unclear shared use/traffic patterns)

Atherton Ave. (steeply sloping with no access, no parking)

Lincoln Park (methane gas lines, prior landfill use, asbestos dump site)

North Common/Four Corners- (overlapping uses, small site)

Accessible Playground Options

Building an Accessible Playground

When planning a project for use by a diverse population of all ages and abilities, choosing an appropriate site is one half of the equation. The other and equally relevant half is the playground itself. The objects, experiences, surfaces, boundaries, and spaces that combine to make-up a playground need to meet the same standards of accessibility that are applied to the site on which it will reside. And just like the site, the playground is neither neutral nor a one-size-fits all proposition. Accessible playgrounds can be as varied as the sites communities choose to locate them upon and in the interest of both consistency and best-practice they deserve the same level critical evaluation.

For the purposes of this brief review, there are two very broad categories into which the majority of playgrounds can be grouped regardless of their accessibility standards: the prefabricated composite structure(s) and the custom-made structure(s). This first category is the recognizable, off-the-shelf variety that is usually ordered from a dealer, installed by the dealers approved contractor, and often designed by the equipment manufacturer to include the playground surface, the peripheral features such as benches or picnic tables, and boundary fences. The second category comprised of custom structures is less easily defined and can include what are called playscapes, nature-based playgrounds, and adventure playgrounds, each having the common characteristic of being built to fit their respective site and presenting unique play experiences.

Accessibility is not exclusive to either one of these types of playgrounds. In fact, it is often when these model hybridize to become a third type, that the benefits of play for gross motor, fine motor, inclusive social interactions and sensory experiences, are truly maximized. There is an aggressive commercial “accessible playground market” that is predominantly populated with the first type of playground described, the prefabricated, composite, all-in-one project. The geographic pervasiveness of these playgrounds can create

misleading assumptions about how to create an accessible playground and the quality of play available. Because of these misunderstandings and disproportional focus on a small population of mobility-challenged children, the hybrid model that uses the best of both worlds and maximizes accessibility for children of all abilities is sadly left off the radar.

The benefits of these hybrid playgrounds, playscapes, and adventure parks, are many and go beyond the accessibility spectrum. These projects are often aesthetically more pleasing because they directly respond to the conditions of the site and reflect the contextual landscape in a more logical way. Rather than looking for one large, flat and “empty” field on which to locate an equally large, conspicuous and cumbersome object, a hybrid playground can be a collection of unique play experiences, connected with an accessible path and incorporate existing features of the site, like slopes, trees, rocks and turf. This model creates not just a playground for children but is capable of including accessible experiences for all ages.

What follows are two case studies, examples of playgrounds that do not follow the commercially driven trend toward a one-size-fits-all play experience. These precedents are presented here in this document to balance what may otherwise be perceived as a monolithic approach to creating an accessible place for people of all abilities and ages to play. In addition to the case studies, examples of individual play experiences are also presented here to broaden the scope of what is possible in an accessible playground setting that is not limited by a single manufacturer’s catalogue or supplier chain.

Case Study Playgrounds

Alexander W. Kemp Playground, Cambridge MA

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Parks/commonkemp.aspx>

“The redesigned Alexander W. Kemp Playground at the Cambridge Common was completed and opened in summer 2009. It has a variety of play features to stimulate challenging physical activity as well as creative, exploratory, imaginative and social play for kids of all ages. It builds on the idea that playgrounds are places where children grow and learn about themselves and the world around them.” Cambridge Community Development Department All images J.Brooke





“...We assembled a team of top designers and shared our vision. We asked for and received help from many. The playground went from dream to reality. We are thrilled with the outcomes, and invite you to come enjoy it with your family. We know you will find that a well-designed inclusive play area is truly better... for everyone! We are proud that Harper's Playground promotes more play for more people. We embrace these three powerful and important forces for a better world; COMMUNITY - INCLUSION - PLAY!!!”

April and Cody Goldberg/ Founders Images are from PLACES LLC, designers credited for this project





Individual Play Elements (For Reference Only)

SLIDES



BALANCE



SWINGS

