

Ed Caddell/SC: But we do have a couple of questions. We will be responding to all these, we'll post the answers to our questions on the social engagement website and on the Freedom Park Conservancy Web site.

And I believe that I've made it to where everyone can see these questions to begin with. So, I'll start with the first question from Wesley Hall. I'll just throw this out to the Freedom Part Conservancy Board and at SWA.

How can we bake public safety into the park's design and planning?

(Question by Wesley Hall)

Scott McCready/SWA: I'll start with that, I think public safety is the starting point for all of our work. It's the highest priority, actually. We talked a little bit about that today with some of the mobility discussions about crossing points. And, you know, there's instances where you can get off a bus where you have to cross a busy blind corner to get to the Carter Center or things like that. So, I think tackling those issues will be a high priority. The other piece is about really understanding visibility and usage. You know, sort of eyes on the park, eyes on each other is so critical to any park safety. And that is also a fundamental tenant of any good urban design, specifically something that we will be not just embedding, but really talking about in the masterplan itself. And that relates to how you do planting and how you do sightlines, and lots of other things. Lighting is the last thing. It's about having enough light since we're in a residential community. We don't want to... overwhelm the park. So, it's really about telling people where the places are that are more or less open at night because there is a lot through-traffic and really working with the city [towards] a program and think about, depending on where the program of the park goes, how nighttime usage is, [and how it is monitored]... thinking about police ... [having] access to these places and sightlines into them. But also... some parks will scale down their lighting at certain times of the day or close off portions of [them]... So anyways, we'll be getting into a lot of those kind of details as well.

Ed Caddell/SC: Sorry. The next question we've got is from *Doug he is asking:*

***Is there a way to link the gateways to our local businesses and artists?
Food trucks from Old 4W + Inman Park businesses? Or some of the
vendors from Freedom Farmers market? I'd love folks who come to
Jackson Bridge learn and then come back to our neighborhoods?***

(Question by Doug Shipman)

Natalia Beard/SWA: Yeah. Very cool proposal, in fact, that's building on what we touched on today with the idea of loops through the neighborhoods. I think that preliminary loops that we charted through the neighborhoods as it stands now, is kind of a place-holder to create a routing that's very relevant to local businesses. I think we can ... basically study where some of these precise locations [are] and include them.

Scott McCready/SWA: Yeah. And, you know, like [for] food trucks... infrastructure becomes important... Figuring out designated locations, but also ... where do you plug in and that kind of stuff. So that's what needs to be sorted through. And then you talked about art, ... local art in particular. I think ... Freedom Park really needs to be [a place with room for international art] and that kind of thing, but there also really needs to be a tie,

strong [tie] to the local community. And this is an Atlanta park. This is [an Atlanta's] community park in many ways. So ... those are all things that we will be diving into.

Ed Caddell/SC: All right. We've got a question from *Abigail*. *It is kind of a maybe more of a suggestion*. She mentions:

Sculptures or sculpture parks that could be skater friendly. We know we've got the skate park along the belt line. Any thoughts on incorporating something like that? (Question by Abigail Dunlay)

Scott McCready/SWA: I'll just say that skaters are really important part of cities. The community, I should say, ... in terms of age, just everything. And there's a lot of tension, obviously, between skaters and ...[and other activities] [it's the nature of urban skating] ... So, I think ... it's a really good idea, actually. And there are [there are things you can do with trails]. You can do all sorts of things that encourage certain types of usage in certain locations where it can be safe and there's less conflict with other people. Certainly, we have the Beltline [that] has the skate park [and the right] infrastructure related to that, making stronger connections to that will be important.

Natalia Beard/SWA: But then, ...skate-able art is definitely a trend.... I mean, the collaborators that we work with on [skatepark] designs, [often times say] it's almost like a preferred condition where skaters don't have a designated bowl or skating environment. They feel like it's, you know, we're in the plaza, we are skating the plaza. And ... art will be part of the plaza. So, I think that ... can be a very unique and interesting [environment], potentially [with] distributed conditions where you can skate on smaller art features in the park as opposed to [having] one kind of centralized destination.

Scott McCready/SWA: [It has] to be in appropriate locations. You know, you want to be sensitive to other types of users and what [they do]... If it's a quiet, placid place, [there should] not [be] the sound of skateboards against concrete constantly or so forth. [But overall], yes, definitely a good, good idea.

[01:06:27] I can ask a question about the results of the art gallery question. I can't access that right now in the meeting, but we'll definitely have these posted for everyone to see in the next couple of days. *Doug asked another question. He says*

I also have a question re: businesses connecting to the park. When Field Day Restaurant allowed picnics during Covid on the greenspace in the park, it was an energetic public event. Can we find a few pockets where that is developed and encouraged? Condessa and Field Day both have shown how cool a business-park connection can be done well. Any thoughts on that one? (Question by Doug Shipman)

Scott McCready/SWA: Yeah, I mean, one thing that Covid has done for all parks across the country is really [demonstrating] how people adapt and will find the use of public space. And picnicking is a big, big part of what we're seeing. In places ... like ... hot environments [of] Atlanta and ... Houston, where we're from, ... often times that isn't what comes to mind first. People have really adapted to that. So, yeah.

Natalia Beard/SWA: It's symbiotic because it's supporting businesses that ... cannot maybe invite as many visitors inside. I think yeah, it's absolutely ... a [great] idea.

The whole ... uniqueness of the park is this synergetic potential with all of its adjacencies. And I think that business success of the park, you know, and business success of the [businesses] adjacent to the park ... depend on each other.

Scott McCready/SWA: Yes. Those cultural trails, and those neighborhood trails become part of that. But I think they're going to be a lot of other smaller examples [for] your business [that] is not right on the trail. And I still want that visibility to become important, maybe some digitally, maybe [through an app], or you can kind of find the whole walking distance [to] restaurants and things. So, yeah.

Ed Caddell/SC: ***Got a question from Jenna who's curious on hearing thoughts on the seating options brings up a good point about Playground's. She says she would like to see a playground on the east side, but she also worries about collecting groups that may be less child friendly. Any thoughts on this one?*** (Question by Jenna Panagopoulos)

Scott McCready/SWA: So, so, yes, the idea of ... playgrounds is kind of like [what we were] talking about before in terms of safety. You're talking about groups, you know, a playground that's well-sited and well-utilized, and has consistent usage patterns will be safer. If you're worried about different types of groups that are less child-friendly, I think that a lot of it has to do with adjacencies and understanding [demand and access]. How you get there you know, whether it be on foot, or by car, by bike. So, all those things have to be thought through.

And then you talk about seating options. You know, again, I think we've talked about that. It takes many different shapes. There's ... a lot of human psychology [involved], enough seating has to be in, generally people like to sit on the edges and observe other people, [for] people, you know, comfort in the sun in the wintertime and then shade in the summertime becomes really critical. Seating can be benches. It can also be walls. It could be ... on a blanket, on a slope or something like that. So, there's a lot of ways we think about what it means to be seated. And then... I think play and activities like a playground, also has support activities: are there restrooms nearby? Do there need to be restrooms, ... other things like food, or there's just an open lawn [of kind]? Is it multigenerational? We have to design all that together or not think of these things as individual pieces, and if you do that, then you can have a really vibrant place that addresses a lot of these issues.

Ed Caddell/SC: And one final question from *Maria*.

Would you ever consider an outdoor rink for hockey and or a roller-skating event? (Question by Maria Mejica)

Scott McCready/SWA: I want to put that on top of the ice bridge. Makes sense. You know, that's a great question. Like, it sounds outlandish. And yet ... if you think about [it] like a trail...

But if you think about a trail like a bike trail and you think a "loop" and there's examples of this in parks, oh gosh, you know, in Chicago, they built a park, was more of a play park, but they did this loop thing that becomes an ice-skating rink in the wintertime. And it becomes roller skating ring in the summertime. It's not, unlikely, I should say. There are ways you could do that in a park like this that wouldn't be inconsistent with the usage that we're talking about. I think the challenge becomes about like, so what are you introducing in terms of levels of activity? Are you actually going to promote hockey games or is [it] just

a place for people to kind of casually roller blade or something like that? And then, you know, a lot of those sports,... to use other examples, like pickup games of street hockey can take place in parking lots or small plazas, you know. So, there's a lot of ways. We always look for ways to overlap uses and be creative and really let the community decide what's appropriate, what's not appropriate. I think there's a big difference between sort of casual use and really sanctioned like clubs and infrastructure. So, I think it's finding that right balance there. And I think that's a really fundamental question for Freedom Park that we've already started delving into. And we've gotten some feedback today, and I think that will continue on.

Ed Caddell/SC: All right. Well, thank you, everyone, for your time and your questions and for participating today. We got a lot of great feedback. We will be posting the video of this presentation, as well as the Q&A session. We're going to take your comments from the chats. And we'll be considering those. And stay tuned. We've got our Web site up as well as our e-mail address, if you have any questions, concerns, comments. In the meantime, we do have another public meeting scheduled in a couple of months. We're aiming for December 16th. And the details of that will be on our engagement site, on the Freedom Park Conservancy site.

**Note: This transcript has been edited for clarity*