

Metro Nashville Board of Parks and Recreation

FANNIE MAE DEES PARK MASTER PLAN

A GUIDE FOR THE CONTINUING GROWTH OF A NEIGHBORHOOD TREASURE



A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

As recently as the 1970s, the land on which Fannie Mae Dees Park sits was filled with houses. They were demolished for an urban renewal project that was bitterly opposed by residents of the Hillsboro - West End area including Fannie Mae Dees, who fought until her death to save her home. When the redevelopment project did not occur, the land was purchased by Metro as a public park, and named to honor the neighborhood activist.

Located in one of Nashville's first ring suburbs, Fannie Mae Dees Park is within walking distance to Hillsboro Village, Vanderbilt University, and the Midtown business district. The park is host to the yearly Dragon Parade and has become a destination for neighborhood residents as well as families from across the county.

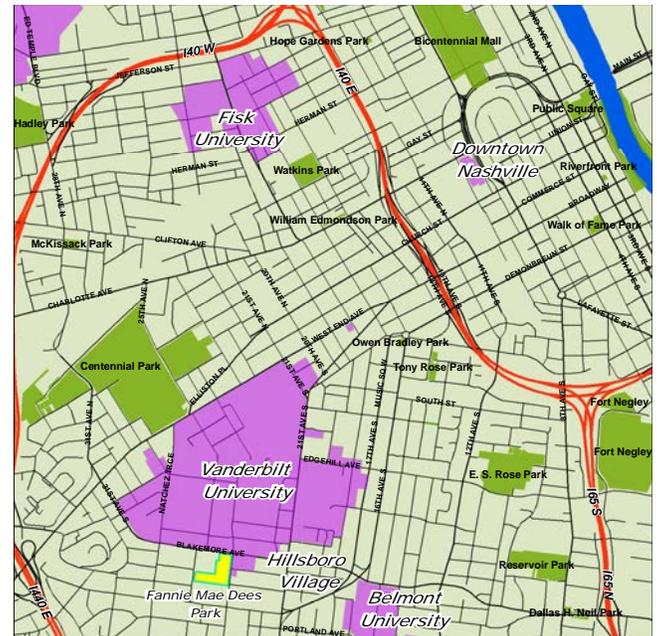


Fannie Mae Dees

THE PARK is over seven acres and sits within a city block that is also home to Harris-Hillman School, Eakin Elementary, and the Martin Professional Development Center - all Metro Schools properties. The park has many amenities including tennis courts, picnic shelters, and open areas for tossing a ball or sunbathing. The playground and stone fort are favorites for children.

The park's nickname, **Dragon Park**, is due to the combined efforts of the Tennessee Arts Commission, Vanderbilt University and other local businesses, who brought New York artist Pedro Silva to design the Sea Serpent sculpture that occupies the center of the park. Local artists helped to design individual mosaics, which include a portrait of Fannie Mae Dees on the loop nearest the tail.

Lily's Garden playground is fully integrated and sensory rich with features for all developmental levels. At least seventy percent of the activities can be enjoyed by children with physical disabilities without having to leave their support equipment behind. The playground was designed to stimulate every child. Most importantly, Lily's Garden is a place for all children to play and grow, together.



Context Map

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION The Fannie Mae Dees Park Master Plan process got underway when a group of neighbors asked Metro Parks to partner on a plan that could guide continued investment in the park. A working group consisting of representatives from the Hillsboro-West End Neighborhood Association, Metro Schools, the Ruby events space and several neighborhood residents formed to lead the process. The group wrote and distributed a community survey, which was available at the Dragon Parade in May 2012 and online. After compiling the survey result, Metro Parks and HWEN hosted a neighborhood meeting to present the survey results and get further feedback on specific suggestions for park improvements and maintenance issues. Parks staff then worked on a draft master plan and presented it to the community in the fall of 2012 for further feedback. A final revised plan is presented here.



The Sea Serpent

THE PLAN

The exact design, including materials, precise placement and style of elements is not specified as part of this plan, but will be determined as individual improvements are undertaken.

Fannie Mae Dees Park serves many different user groups, ages, and abilities. This plan was developed with these different groups in mind. There are spaces for active play, open and shaded picnicking, sunbathing, walking and more.

The Dragon Lawn is an open area that can be used during the Dragon Music Festival and other community events - additional tree planting should avoid this area to maintain the open lawn.

The existing berm that occupies the picnic area between Harris-Hillman and the multi-use field could be reshaped to create a more level area, but extra attention is needed to insure it does not create stormwater issues.

Edge enhancements will define and buffer the park, especially on the heavily trafficked Blakemore Ave. Additions such as trash cans, lights, hose bibs for watering new plantings, and water fountains will all enhance the existing park.



JOGGING TRAIL EXAMPLE



PLAYGROUND FENCING EXAMPLE



SIDEWALK BULB-OUT AND CROSS WALK ENHANCEMENT



MULTI-USER DRINKING FOUNTAIN

VISION

Fannie Mae Dees Park has always been a place for neighbors to come together. The master plan makes a special effort to provide spaces for all types of users: different age groups, activity levels, and those with different interests.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Recognize Dragon Park is a neighborhood park
- Celebrate the park's history and unique character
- Be good stewards of the natural environment
- Embrace diversity of users and activities
- Improve access and connectivity with a focus on pedestrians and cyclists.
- Create a safe and welcoming atmosphere

PRIORITIES

Community priorities were determined through a series of public meetings and the input of the Master Plan Committee. The priorities are a guide for master plan implementation as funding becomes available.

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

- Install fence at playground edges.
- Replace existing water fountain and install additional new multi-user fountains.
- Have NES install lights on existing poles and/or new poles for additional light coverage.
- Winterize existing bathroom.
- Plant trees near the playground for better shade.
- Install water spigots closer to Blakemore Avenue.

NEW PARK FEATURES

- Enhance entrances at Belcourt, Blakemore and Acklen Avenues.
- Install new plantings along driveway and to screen bathroom

MAINTENANCE

- Maintain open sight lines around playground
- Reseed grass on stone fort
- Keep trees limbed up.
- Move doggy bag dispenser from the middle of the multi-use field.

FANNIE MAE DEES PARK MASTER PLAN

Fannie Mae Dees Mast Plan - 2013

In December of 2000, the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council approved the entire block containing the park and Metro School properties as a certified arboretum. Since that time, efforts to maintain the arboretum status have suffered, but a majority of the trees species remain, and the certification can be restored with some commitment - specifically restoring the identification signage. As trees are added to the park, new species should be selected, especially those native to Tennessee and the Southeaster United States.

Neighborhood Project - Fannie Mae Dees Arboretum