



TOWN OF LINCOLN

Middlesex County...Massachusetts

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

16 Lincoln Road
Lincoln, MA 01773
Tel 781 259-0784
Fax 781 259-1333
www.LincolnRec.com

DATE: May 14, 2014

TO: Jonathan Dwyer, Parks and Recreation Committee Chairperson
Jennifer Glass, School Committee Chairperson

FROM: Daniel Pereira, Parks and Recreation Director

RE: Strat's Playground

HISTORY:

Strat's Playground was built in 1989 as a Memorial to a Lincoln resident who passed away prematurely. It was designed and manufactured by Leathers and Associates, Inc. out of Ithaca, NY and installed by a large volunteer effort by the Lincoln community with the help of the Army Corps of Engineers. It was considered a state-of-the-art playground, and a number of similar structures were installed in communities across Massachusetts around the same time.

In 2001, an inspection of the playground found a large number of priority one hazards (potential for life-threatening injury) which forced the town to temporarily close the playground. A committee of employees and residents spent 12 months designing a plan to make the necessary repairs and modifications to reopen the playground, although changes in playground safety standards determined that the playground was appropriate for ages 5-12 only.

Because the entire structure was made of pressure-treated lumber, which contains a pesticide labelled *chromated copper arsenate* (CCA), the town also began a practice of sealing the playground with a product called "Deck and Shake", as recommended by the manufacturer. The product provides a protective seal to reduce exposure to users.

In 2009, another inspection to assess the degree of wood rot below grade determined that the wood was in good condition and that the structure was stable. The report also cited design elements that no longer met playground code. Modest repairs were made at the time, and the Parks and Recreation Department began long-range planning for a major project at Strat's Playground, as that appeared to be the most reasonable long-term solution. Ballpark estimates to renovate or replace the site led us to schedule a request for appropriation of \$150K in FY2016.

This winter we put together a small team representing the major interested parties (Lincoln Preschool, Magic Garden, LEAP, and Parks and Recreation) to develop a process to determine the future of Strat's Playground. Nancy White of Playground Inspections of New England, LLC was contracted to perform an inspection in April, and she determined that due to the number of priority one hazards, the playground should be closed immediately and removed. Upon review of the inspection, the team agreed to close the playground effective Monday May 5, 2014.

CURRENT ISSUES:

The inspection is available for review online at www.LincolnRec.com, and is relatively brief. The important highlights are:

1. There are numerous head entrapment issues throughout the playground. These issues relate to an opening where an average child's torso can fit through an opening, but their head cannot. Playground safety standards specify that all potential openings on a

playground meet criteria to prevent this. Strat's was designed in 1989, and these standards did not exist at the time.

2. The wide support footings on each component create tripping hazards, as do the transitions from platform to play element (slide, bridges, etc.), because they are not flush. Again, this is a design element that could not have been anticipated back in 1989.
3. There are some use zones issues where there is not enough safe distance between non-connected structures.
4. Due to their diameter, the tops of each post are technically considered a "platform", (unless they are chamfered) and would require their own railings... I do not jest.

Beyond the inspection, other issues exist:

1. The playground is no longer ADA compliant.
2. The playground is not designed or suitable for preschool-age children, but due to changes in the use of the Hartwell Administration Building, is now located next to two preschools.
3. The playground is made of pressure-treated lumber, which degrades over time causing rot and splinters and contains the pesticide CCA cited above. This requires over \$3K every other year in product and labor.
4. Due to the size of the playground, safety surfacing is very expensive to maintain. We estimate \$10-13K, which is more than double the average playground in Lincoln.

PROCESS:

The team assembled to address this issue has completed the following to date:

1. Contacted the resident responsible for the original Strat's Playground Project to ensure that we are being sensitive to the playground as a memorial.
2. Reached out to the Leathers and Associates, Inc. to see if any of their products (installed in the late 80's) still exist in Massachusetts. They are only aware of structures in Wareham and Bridgewater. Most neighboring communities (Concord, Wayland, and Lexington) have removed theirs already.
3. Received an estimate of \$16,200 to repair what we can of the existing playground. See attachment.
4. Received a very rough quote from Leathers and Associates to replace the structure (reducing it by 1/3) of \$135-\$160K, not including installation. This is a data point only. See attached.
5. Will be receiving an estimate to remove the existing playground should we choose to replace it fully (forthcoming).

FEEDBACK?

PETER M. MURPHY
General Contractor
General Carpentry • Roofing • Remodeling

INVOICE

P.O. Box 462 • Southborough, MA 01772
508-954-3708

Date: MAY 14, 2014

To: TOWN OF LINCOLN
PARKS & RECREATION
LINCOLN, MA. 01773

DESCRIPTION	PRICE
<u>ESTIMATE ONLY</u>	
1.) CUT ALL EXISTING 2"x2" TO A 45° CUT	
2.) REMOVE EXISTING TEEPEES & SUPPORTS	
3.) REMOVE EXISTING OVERHEAD LADDERS (2 SETS)	
4.) REMOVE 1 SET OF "D" RINGS	
5.) RAISE TO PROPER HEIGHT 1 SET OF "D" RINGS	
6.) INSTALL PROPER SUPPORTS UNDER EXISTING PLATFORMS	
7.) REMOVE 3 SETS OF EXISTING SWINGS INCLUDING SUPPORTS	
8.) INSTALL LATTICE ON ALL BRIDGES ON BOTH SIDES	
Please pay from this invoice	
Thank You	TOTAL

PETER M. MURPHY
General Contractor
General Carpentry • Roofing • Remodeling

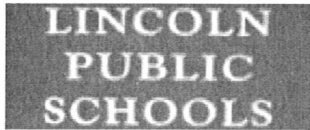
INVOICE

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Date: May 14, 2014

To: TOWN OF LINCOLN
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DESCRIPTION	PRICE
ESTIMATE ONLY (CONT.)	
9.) REPAIR ANY PROTRUDING HARDWARE SCREWS, NAILS, BOLTS ETC.	
10.) REPAIR METAL SLIDE SUPPORT	
11.) REMOVE EXISTING TIE SWINGS	
12.) INSTALL HAND RAILS ON ALL LANDINGS	
13.) INSTALL TIMBERS TO PREVENT ANY HEAD ENTRAPMENTS AROUND ENCLOSED SLIDES & REMAINING STRUCTURE	
14.) REPLACE 8"x6" TIMBERS AROUND PERIMETER OF PLAYGROUND AS NEEDED	
TOTAL COST LABOR & MATERIALS	\$16,200.00
Please pay from this invoice Thank You	TOTAL \$16,200.00



Dan Pereira <dpereira@lincnet.org>

cost estimate for playground

2 messages

Barb Dominie <bdominie@leathersassociates.com>
To: "dpereira@lincnet.org" <dpereira@lincnet.org>
Cc: Kyle Cundy <kcundy@leathersassociates.com>

Thu, May 8, 2014 at 11:46 AM

Dan,

We would estimate \$135,000 - \$160,000 to re-build your playground at about 2/3 the original size with a bigger focus on a tot area. This is using all of the latest recycled plastics (no wood), plastic slides, metal swings and overheads and assuming engineered wood Fibar for the safety surfacing. It's also assuming utilizing the community-built process.

The only older Mass playgrounds I have had recent contact with are Wareham, MA (Fall 1987) and Bridgewater, MA (Spring 1991). Have a great day!

Barbara J. Dominie

Leathers & Associates, Inc.

225 South Fulton Street

Ithaca, NY 14850

607-233-4322 (direct)

877-564-6464 (toll free)

607-277-1433 (fax)

www.leathersassociates.com

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