Play and Healthy Communities

VISIONING VOICES PRESENTATION
March 8, 2018
Joy Kuebeler Landscape Architect, PC

- Started firm in 2003
- Human Experience in the Landscape
- Interested in science of play
- Strong history in designing play environments
- Developed community engagement through play
- First playground concept design was for college students at Cornell
Nature Based Play

- Curriculum based
  - Math
  - Science
  - Art
  - Music
  - Language arts
  - Physical education
- All plants and features meant to be touched
- Planned as a daily experience for all students
- Play and learning interwoven

School 90
Nature Based Play

- Play based
  - Equipment nestled into landscape
  - Gardens surrounding
- Rolling hills
- All plants and features meant to be touched
- Afterhours play for neighborhood

School 61
Nature Based Play

- Curriculum based
  - Pond
  - Stream
  - Field
  - Forest
  - Mountain
- Every element planned as curriculum requirements
- Planned as a daily experience for all students
- Respite is play

School 197
Recreation/ Exercise Play

- Adult focused, kid friendly
- Inner and Outer loop of activities
- Seating integrated for those waiting or watching

Como Lake
Community Play in a Public Setting

- Active and Passive Play
- All ages oriented
- Adjacent to high traffic boardwalk
- Offers respite
- Water view

Beach at Canalside
Community Play in a Public Setting

Massachusetts Avenue Park

- Multi-Generational
- Diverse Community
- Active and Passive Play
  - Skate park
  - Basketball
  - Playgrounds
  - Splash pad
  - Soccer fields
  - Vegetable gardens
  - Pavilions
- Multiple neighborhood connection points
- Unique adjacencies of uses to support cross interaction
Community Play in a Public Setting

- Pop Up Community Free Play
- Kids use real tools and real materials
- Kid directed
- Adult support and side by side play
- Moves throughout community

Pop Up Park
Play as Process

- Trying it on for Size
- We temporarily built out design to test in real time and to gauge public interest
- Created a festive atmosphere and hosted variety of events both evening and day time
Play as Process

- Created a Commercial District to try for one day
  - Restaurants
  - Bakery
  - Grocery
  - Barbershop
- Community Art project
- Box City kid station
- Live music and entertainment

Lackawanna
Play as Process

- Creation of a Placemaking Masterplan
- Leveraged existing model to look at circulation patterns
- “Values” cards
- Character Creation, who uses this campus

Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
Life Long Play and Public Health
Value of Play for Kids

- **Fundamental to all humans**
  - Imagination
  - Dexterity
  - Physical strength
  - Cognitive development
  - Emotional strength

- **Practice for adult roles**
  - Social relationships
  - Conquer fears
  - Share and negotiate
  - Decision making
  - Problem solving

- **Brings JOY**
  - Explore interests
  - Peacefulness
  - Connection

Mind Body Spirit
Value of Play at other ages

- Mind
  - Imagination
  - Life long learning
  - Maintain cognitive strength
- Body
  - Increases physical activity
  - Decreases stress
  - Increases dexterity
- Spirit
  - Brings joy with no need for a purpose
  - Empathy with others
  - Sense of connectedness
Value of Play at Community Level
Community Play
Identity
Play through the ages

- 1920s - 1950s Culture
  - Labor laws change
  - Kids have more freetime
  - Kindergarten
  - Kids have a travel range of several miles without adults

Community Play Identity?

What was the prevalent Community Play Identity?
Play through the ages

What was the prevalent Community Play Identity?

- 1960s - 1990s Culture
  - Rise of suburbia
  - Collective parenting/ oversight
  - Kids have a travel range of several miles without adults
  - Toys being marketed

Community Play Identity?
Play through the ages

- 2000s - Today Culture
  - Rise of home play experiences
  - Kids have less freetime, more restricted travel without adults
  - Fears of safety
  - Extreme experiences
  - Digital

- Community Play Identity?

What was the prevalent Community Play Identity?
Play through the ages

- Future?
  - Tech rather than physical
  - Global rather than neighborhood
  - Inside rather than out
  - Independence?
  - Need for risk?
- Community Play Identity?

What was the prevalent Community Play Identity?
Compare and Contrast
Seeing Something there, that wasn't there before
Analyzing our Assets

What assets do we have that are:

- Abundant
- Underutilized
- Adaptable

All the places we COULD play
What could Play do for OUR community?

- Create something that wasn’t there before
  - Connectivity, new relationships to one another
  - New Engagement with surrounding spaces
  - Foster healthier people and communities
Discussion
Getting Started
Who Plays?