

‘Active-passive’ mix urged for Schiller Park

By Beth Bohley
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GERMAN VILLAGE — Schiller Park and Recreation Center need to be upgraded and improved without changing the delicate balance between passive and active space, residents said last week.

About 20 residents, an architect and a city official met last week to discuss the park master plan.

Several people at the meeting proposed using facilities and grounds at local schools to lessen the competition for space in the 23-acre park, which is one of the busiest in the city.

Master plan project manager Brian Kinzelman of Trott and Associates asked residents how they perceive Schiller Park, “as a pas-

sive grove or a recreation facility?”

Most residents agreed both aspects are important.

“I enjoy the mix of those two things. There is a passive area to stroll and an area for activity going on around the building. I see the activity as an asset to my safety if I am choosing to stroll,” said village resident Connie Swain.

Kinzelman said, “At times the passive open space is in direct conflict with the active space. We will attempt to design a compromise situation that will be in keeping with German Village, architecturally and aesthetically.”

German Village Foundation President Fred Holdridge said, “We can’t live with a passive park.

It has to be a combination. The activity should be hidden from the street to avoid noise for the neighbors.

“There hasn’t been much done here in 20 years, and what has been done has been mostly wrong. The parking lot is the biggest eyesore, and the city never thought of planting another tree here until the Friends of Schiller Park.”

Holdridge said the city should plant some trees larger than 3 feet tall in the park. “Some of us can’t wait for those trees to grow,” he said.

German Village resident Sue Fauber said, “We should look at how we can make the park attractive instead of an eyesore.”

Kinzelman told residents he is

trying to gather historical pictures and information on the park. Anyone with photos or information should contact Kinzelman at 221-1469. He said photos would be returned.

Researching the park’s history is important, Kinzelman said, because anything done has to respect and acknowledge the past.

Janet Druen of the Friends of Schiller Park said, “This park has a wonderful story going back to the 1840s when it was known as Stewart’s Grove. That is what we have to capture.”

Kinzelman is also gathering input from residents on:

- What park facilities they use most.
- What they like and dislike about the park and recreation center.
- What improvements are most needed.

• If they prefer a more active or passive setting at Schiller Park.

Once most of the research is complete, Kinzelman said an architect will be on site at the recreation center one day a week drawing plans for the project.

Trott and Associates has spent much of the past year gathering information on current usage and conditions of the park and center, researching the history of the park and determining recreation trends and future space needs.

Kinzelman said the master plan will include cost estimates and a priority list on how to implement the plan.

The \$54,000 master plan is being funded by the Columbus Foundation, the Leo Yassenoff Foundation, the Friends of Schiller Park and the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department.

Local doctor joins medical review firm