PROPOSAL FOR
PROFESSIONAL DESIGN SERVICES
FOR

MASTER PLAN OF
LINWOOD AVENUE PARK
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
ARDMORE PA

16 November 2007

SUBMITTED BY:
STUDIO GAEA LLC
SALT DESIGN STUDIO
HUNT ENGINEERING COMPANY
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Dear Ms. Taylor,

We are pleased to submit the enclosed Proposal for Professional Design Services for the Linwood Avenue Park Master Plan in Ardmore. This park project is of particular interest to our team because we are long-term residents of this community ourselves and share Lower Merion's commitment to preserving open space. Following your review of our proposal, we hope to have the opportunity to introduce our team and discuss our design approach in greater detail at a personal interview.

For your project, the landscape architecture firms of Studio Gaea LLC and SALT Design Studio will collaborate in a joint venture, with civil engineer Hunt Engineering Company, to provide a multi-talented and highly accomplished team. Studio Gaea will serve as the chief contact with the Township. Our team brings a broad range of local and regional urban design experience, working with diverse communities to create public parks, restore ecological systems and renovate recreational spaces. Our collective abilities in neighborhood planning and strong project management will enable us to respond thoughtfully and effectively to both the Township and the community groups. As a team, we bring together the community facilitation expertise of SALT Design Studio, the innovative urban design strategies of Studio Gaea and the responsive environmental engineering of Hunt Engineering Company.

Our team’s philosophy integrates ecological principles within a historical and cultural site framework to create dynamic and ultimately, sustainable landscapes. Our planning process depends strongly on close participation and dialogue between client, consultants and stakeholders to enable a design that will be embraced by the community and by the Township. Our strength is in our experience, our proven commitment to communicating clearly with our clients and within our team, and our ability to provide beautiful and functional site design.

We would welcome the chance to bring our energy, talent and passion to working with the Township of Lower Merion and the neighborhood community in a creative and imaginative process that fully explores the exciting opportunities for the future Linwood Avenue Park.

Sincerely,

Kimberlee Douglas, RLA
Principal

Sara Pevaroff Schuh, RLA
Principal
2  Project Team

Who are Studio Gaea and SALT Design Studio? We are practitioners, teachers, builders and listeners. We are big picture thinkers. Our firms have enjoyed an ongoing collaborative relationship that strengthens our creative process, and brings imaginative and successful results. We share a genuine respect for process and for place-making that is inspired by ecology and rooted in a strong sense of community.

We seek work on local projects that offer the opportunity to develop high-quality, meaningful, context-driven design solutions. We want to assure the Township that the team we present in this proposal is the team who will work with you through the duration of the project.

We have prepared a work schedule that meets the timeframe outlined in the RFP and have accommodated the budgetary constraints for design fees expressed during the pre-proposal meeting.

**Kim Douglas, RLA – Principal of Studio Gaea**
Kim will serve as primary client liaison and Project Designer, managing the project on a daily basis, conducting interviews with stakeholders, preparing project deliverables and ensuring the delivery of planning work products within the prescribed timeframe.
Kim is a registered landscape architect.

**Sara Pevaroff Schuh, RLA – Principal of SALT Design Studio**
Sara will serve as key community facilitator and Project Designer, conducting interviews with stakeholders, facilitating community meetings and charrettes, and preparing project deliverables.
Sara is a registered landscape architect

**Tyrone Hoffman, RLA – Associate, SALT Design Studio**
Tyrone will serve as Staff Designer, bringing his background in park planning and experience with urban recreational issues to the project.
Tyrone is a registered landscape architect.

**Bert Wescott, PE – Senior Civil Engineer, Hunt Engineering Company**
Bert will assist the design team and participate at select junctures throughout the planning process, bringing his 20 years experience in environmental engineering to design discussions and stormwater management solutions.
Bert is a registered professional engineer.

*Our offices employ the latest technologies available for drafting, graphics, printing and web-based communication.*
3 Project Approach

As planners and designers, we consider our role to be creative translators; listening to the ideas, concerns and interests of the community and then translating that information into an engaging physical place endowed with cultural and ecological meaning. The Linwood Avenue Park should reflect the character of this specific community and its varied environs.

Our team proposes a true participatory planning process that addresses Ardmore’s immediate need for additional neighborhood open space within the context of a Township-wide green framework. We believe that a unique and environmentally sensitive design solution for each individual site arises from involving the client and community directly in the planning dialogue. Our master plan process will give community stakeholders the chance to envision multiple futures for the Linwood Avenue Park, engaging residents of all ages and backgrounds in different forums. Community residents will be able to participate through public meetings, charrettes, interviews and an interactive website.

We use the term charrette to describe a collaborative design effort involving the project team and key stakeholders in generating preliminary designs that express a collective vision of the neighborhood. While a charrette is both participatory and creative, it is also structured to produce a real product – a workable and sustainable design with a wide consensus.

Our proposal features two timely ideas that enrich the outreach component of our process:

- **Interactive Web Site** offering online access and feedback on planning work products and community process
- **Charettes with neighborhood children**; they are equal stakeholders and tomorrow’s caretakers

We understand and share the Township’s interest in an innovative and distinctive landscape, one not found in Ardmore Park or the Spring Street playground. Central to north Ardmore and situated between several recreational venues of varying scales, the proposed park site offers the potential to create both human and biological networks within the urban fabric. We see the potential for pathways for people and corridors for wildlife. We imagine water elements that capture and harvest rainwater, manage site runoff and serve as educational tools. Our team considers this park initiative the chance to integrate a core message about environmental responsibility in all aspects of its design.
4 Work Schedule

Phase I: Inventory & Analysis
Our Master Planning process begins with an in-depth inventory of the park and its surrounding environment. Our design process includes situating the park in the larger regional context, studying both neighborhood and Township connections, and subsequent impacts on the park site. We will analyze the neighborhood landscape, the natural, historical, cultural, and social resources of the surrounding community and of the site itself, including pedestrian and recreational patterns. Initial efforts in this first phase will focus on collecting basic data regarding the site and significant physical features, as well as carefully reviewing relevant Township and County documents, including the Montgomery County Open Space Plan and the Township Open Space & Environmental Resource Protection Plan.

Integral to our process will be the development and use of an interactive website, accessible through the Township’s website or Salt Design Studio’s website. The site will feature planning workproducts generated during each phase, and allow community members to post comments and feedback throughout the planning process.

Through site visits, interviews with the community and key stakeholders, and public meetings, we will explore the potentials of the site, analyze existing conditions, and identify the range of critical issues.

Tasks for Phase I:

1. Kick-Off meeting with Township and project team to review project schedule, community process, project study committee and protocols, and interactive project website. **Proposed date:** Week of January 7, 2008

2. Review background materials pertaining to site, such as historical data, prior planning or development efforts, and primary environmental data, including soils, hydrology and vegetation.

3. Preparation of a base map.

4. Production of Inventory drawings and diagrams, including natural resources, such as vegetation patterns and connections, soils, hydrology and watersheds, as well as pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns, parking, access, neighborhood adjacencies, historical and cultural information, and user groups.

5. Interviews with community members, including local or neighboring institutions, such as churches and schools, Township staff and other key stakeholders as identified by Township or community representatives.

6. Prepare Analysis drawings, including daily use patterns, historical and cultural significance of site and area, opportunities and constraints diagram of park and surrounding neighborhood, possible regional or neighborhood connections to existing pedestrian or bicycle routes, and other area recreational venues, such as Ardmore Park or Spring Street playground.
4 Work Schedule

7. Preparation of Questionnaire 1 to be distributed at Public Meeting and returned to Township for analysis by project team.

8. Public Meeting with Community to present Inventory & Analysis drawings and Precedent Studies for similar scale park designs, and solicit comments, ideas and concerns through public Questionnaire. Proposed date: Week of January 28, 2008

9. Post inventory and analysis drawings, precedent boards, and community feedback to project website.

Phase I Deliverables:
- Project website
- Questionnaire (A) for community members
- Inventory and Analysis Drawings
- Precedent Boards

Phase II: Site Program & Conceptual Design
Phase II will focus on translating the community’s interests and ideas into a physical infrastructure. Utilizing the information gained from the questionnaires, public meetings and interviews, we will develop a draft Site Program. Following a series of community charrettes, our team will develop conceptual design alternatives for review with the study committee.

Some key questions to be considered in Phase II will be:
- What types of spaces are desired (active vs passive recreation, gatherings spots, amphitheater, small pavilion, water element, etc.)
- What environmental issues need to be addressed (water runoff, lack of vegetation, is sound mitigation necessary, health of existing Oaks on site)
- Is there a neighborhood language of materials in the surrounding landscape?

Tasks for Phase II:

1. Site Visit with Study Committee
   Proposed date: Week of February 25, 2008

2. Preparation of Site Program, which could include: a site model, three dimensional program elements, site plans and spatial diagrams. These work products will be presented for review and revision during the Community Design Charrette.

3. Community Design Charrette – this is envisioned as a half-day event where we break the community participants into 3-4 smaller groups depending on attendance. Facilitated by the design team, each small group will discuss and generate ideas based on the proposed Site Program. Groups will have opportunity to present to participants and receive feedback on proposed ideas.
   Proposed date: Week of March 3, 2008
4 Work Schedule

4. Post drawings and community feedback to project website.

5. Based on feedback and ideas from Community Charrettes, our team would refine and produce two (2) Conceptual Design alternatives for review and discussion with Study Committee. Work products may include plans and sketch perspectives.

6. Design Work session with Study Committee to evaluate Conceptual Designs alternatives and address community concerns.  
   **Proposed date: Week of March 24, 2008**

7. Based on Community Charrettes and Study Committee feedback, our team will make revisions to Site Program and develop one (1) selected Conceptual Design. Preparation of Questionnaire (B) regarding Conceptual Design.

8. Public Meeting to present Site Program & Conceptual Design. Questionnaire (B) will be distributed for response and return at end of public meeting.  
   **Proposed date: Week of April 7, 2008**

9. Post drawings and community feedback to project website.

**Phase II Deliverables:**
- Site Program
- Drawings from Community Design Charrette
- Two (2) Conceptual Design Alternatives
- Material & Planting Palettes
- Selected Conceptual Design
- Questionnaire (B) regarding Conceptual Design

**Phase III: Development of Selected Design Concept**
Building on the consensus reached in the second phase, emphasis in this final phase of the planning process will be on fleshing out design ideas and giving the Township and community members a sense of the vision and energy in the proposed park through illustrated drawings.

1. Development of Design Concept. Work products may include plans, sections, sketch perspectives.

2. Community Workshop with neighborhood children for input on Design Concept.  
   **Proposed date: Week of May 5, 2008**

3. Meeting with Study Committee to review Design Concept. Discussion of site materials, budget parameters, phasing if necessary and potential funding sources. Discussion of community process.  
   **Proposed date: Week of May 12, 2008**

4. Post drawings and feedback to project website.
4 Work Schedule

5. Development of Draft Master Plan and initial opinion of probable costs.

6. Meeting with Study Committee to finalize Master Plan. During this work session, Study Committee and our team will select two areas of park for illustration in greater detail for marketing and fundraising purposes. Proposed date: Week of June 2, 2008

7. Prepare rendered perspectives for two (2) areas in the park.

8. Prepare opinions of Probable Construction Cost for park.

9. Preparation of final Illustrative Master Plan. The final Master Plan will be mounted for the Township and reproduced electronically.

10. Preparation of one (1) DRAFT Master Plan Report, including reduced sized reproductions of illustrated Master Plan, written description and supporting drawings, Site Program and discussion of planning process, for review by Township.


Final Master Plan Deliverables:

1. Regional Map showing Park context
2. Illustrative Master Plan at 1” = 30’ (or greater if agreed upon with Working Committee)
3. Illustrated Perspectives of two Areas
4. Planting & Materials Palettes
5. Phasing Plan (if agreed upon with Study Committee)
7. Electronic files (pdf format) of above products for use in marketing and fundraising purposes