

Staff Report

PLANNING DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOODS

To: Salt Lake City Historic Landmark Commission

From: Katia Pace

801 535-6354 or katia.pace@slcgov.com

Date: February 1, 2018

Re: Proposed Liberty Park Fitness Court

Approximately 600 East 900 South

Minor Alteration - PLNHLC2017-00924

MINOR ALTERATION

PROPERTY ADDRESS: approximately 600 East 900 South

PARCEL ID: 16-07-427-001

SALT LAKE CITY LANDMARK SITE

ZONING DISTRICT: OS (Open Space) Zoning District, Historic Preservation Overlay

MASTER PLAN: Central City Master Plan, Community Preservation Plan **DESIGN GUIDELINES:** Draft Historic Landscape Design Guidelines

REQUEST: The Salt Lake City Parks and Public Lands Program is requesting to locate a Fitness Court on Liberty Park. The Fitness Court is an outdoor gym that is designed for multiple body weight exercises and fitness routines. The court includes several fixtures that are secured in place on a rubber surface on top of a concrete pad 38 feet by 38 feet. The request is to locate the fitness court in the vicinity of the playground located in the northeast area of the park. Liberty Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) and is also a Salt Lake City Landmark Site. The site is in the OS (Open Space) zoning district

RECOMMENDATION: Based on the analysis and findings listed in this staff report and the proposal presented, I recommend that the Commission approve this application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to locate a Fitness Court in Liberty Park subject to the following conditions:

- 1. That any revisions are delegated to staff for subsequent review and approval; and
- 2. That no signage be placed on the wall of the fitness court.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Development Plan Set
- C. History
- **D.** Photographs
- E. OS Zoning Ordinance Standards
- F. Standards for Altering a Landmark Site
- **G.** Public Process and Comments

BACKGROUND:

The park currently contains approximately 80-acres and includes a variety of activity areas, landscape features, and open space. The park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) and is also a Salt Lake City Landmark Site.

Historic Significance

The property where Liberty Park sits was originally owned by Isaac Chase, a pioneer who farmed the land and constructed a grist mill on the site that is now Tracy Aviary. The mill and park land were sold to Salt Lake City, which commenced development of the park the following year. The original designs included Victorian influences. Later improvements were influenced by the City Beautiful movement.



Liberty Park 1912

Periods of Significance:

- 1847 Established as an agricultural site.
- 1881 Land purchased and original improvements by Salt Lake City with Victorian influences.
- 1910s Improvements implemented according to City Beautiful influences.
- 1920s -The park was known for its large shade trees, lawns, floral displays, lakes, playgrounds, tennis courts, concerts and the municipal zoo located at the present Tracy Aviary site.
- 1930s Tracy Aviary was established.
- 1940s -Existing park features were improved and some new features were constructed. A swimming pool and bath house opened in 1949, which remained in use until 1994.
- 1950s Four new tennis courts and a club house were constructed in 1955. The structures and buildings of this area were designed to echo earlier elements.
- 1960s -Improvements implanted in contrast to original concepts and ideas. The park became negatively perceived by the public and use declined.
- 1970s New features such as the merry-go-round and amusement park elements were established departing from the historic design elements of the park.
- 1980s -A series of improvements undertaken in part to re-establish and strengthen the park according to original ideas including the closure of 600 East to vehicular traffic

Character of the Park

Historically, Liberty Park reflects a diversity of uses. The park provides for both active and passive recreation. The design of the park is characterized by naturalistic areas and open space as well as more formally landscaped and planted areas that now include large, mature trees that obscure city views from inside the park and provide a sense of remoteness, even in an intensely urban area.

Liberty Park is organized into the following distinct areas:



The northern portion: consists primarily of open space, with a few pavilions, buildings and playgrounds.

The central **portion:** contains more programmed spaces for active recreation, including tennis courts, a swimming pool, basketball courts, bocce ball courts, horse shoe pits, the Youth City program building, the Seven Canyons water feature and the Rotary All-Abilities Play Park. The Chase House and carnival rides are also located in the central area.



The eastern side of the central area: contains picnic tables and grills as well as open space, including the low hill-form known as Mount Gust that overlooks the southern part of the park.



The southern portion: is mostly occupied by Tracy Aviary in the west and Liberty Park Pond in the east.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The proposed Fitness Court is an outdoor gym that is designed for multiple body weight exercises and fitness routines. The court would be 38' by 38' concrete pad with a rubber surface and several exercise fixtures secured in place and in one of the sides there would be a 6 foot wall that would hold additional exercise equipment.

The wall would be concrete and on the outside it would be blank but on the inside besides holding exercise equipment the wall would have diagrams showing how the exercises should be done. The wall would be place at an angle to minimize the visual impact.

The color of the rubber surface would match the brown and green children's playground adjacent to it. The following is a list of the proposed exercise equipment:

- Rings for pull-ups, push-ups, etc.
- Boxes in 6 different sizes
- Pull-up bars
- Several variations of other bars for pull-ups/push-ups
- Lunge boxes
- Back/core bend boxes
- Squares for fast feet exercises
- Padded mat area for other exercises

Along with the court there would be an application that users could listen for fitness training related to the exercise equipment available.

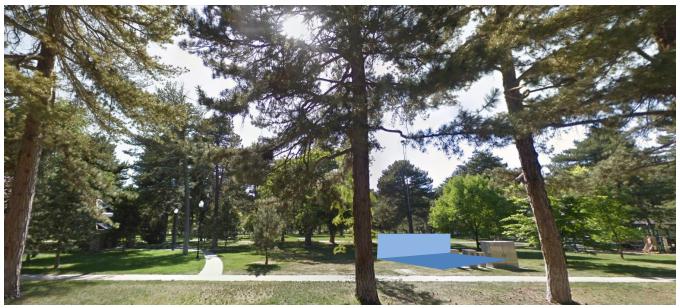
On July 2017 Salt Lake City Parks and Public Lands applied for and was awarded a \$10,000 grant to construct the court in Liberty Park. Final acceptance of the grant is contingent upon site location. Parks and Public Lands would like to place the fitness court in Liberty Park because of its prominence and fitness oriented uses.



An example of a Fitness Court in San Francisco

The proposed location would be in the vicinity of the playground located in the northeast area of the park. The proposed site was picked by the applicant because of its proximity to the running/walking

PLNHLC2017-00924 Liberty Park Fitness Court path that could be used in conjunction with the court. The location is near trees for afternoon shade and light fixtures for evening use. The applicant feels that the proposed location would have good visibility and would encourage use and consequently decrease the potential for vandalism and increase safety of users.



Proposed site for the fitness court



Proposed site for the fitness court

KEY ISSUES:

From an analysis of the proposed development in this report the following key issues are identified.

Issue 1: LOSS OF OPEN SPACE

Liberty Park constitutes a physical, as well as a visual respite for Salt Lake City residents and visitors. It is a contrast to the surrounding built environment and it is important for park users as well as passersby to see and to experience the open and green space the park offers. Open space is not space not in use, it offers areas for people to gather as well as activities that requires vastness.

Originally, Public Lands and Parks suggested and alternative site for the fitness court, seen below as Site #2 generally located in the vicinity of the Rotary playground located in the northwest area of the park. Staff response to Site #2 was that it was not appropriate because the northern portion of the park consists primarily of open space, with a few pavilions, buildings and playgrounds. The proposed Site #2 would be carving out some of the open space that is a historic characteristic of Liberty Park.



Site #1 - Proposed site for Fitness Court, Site #2 - Alternative site for Fitness Court

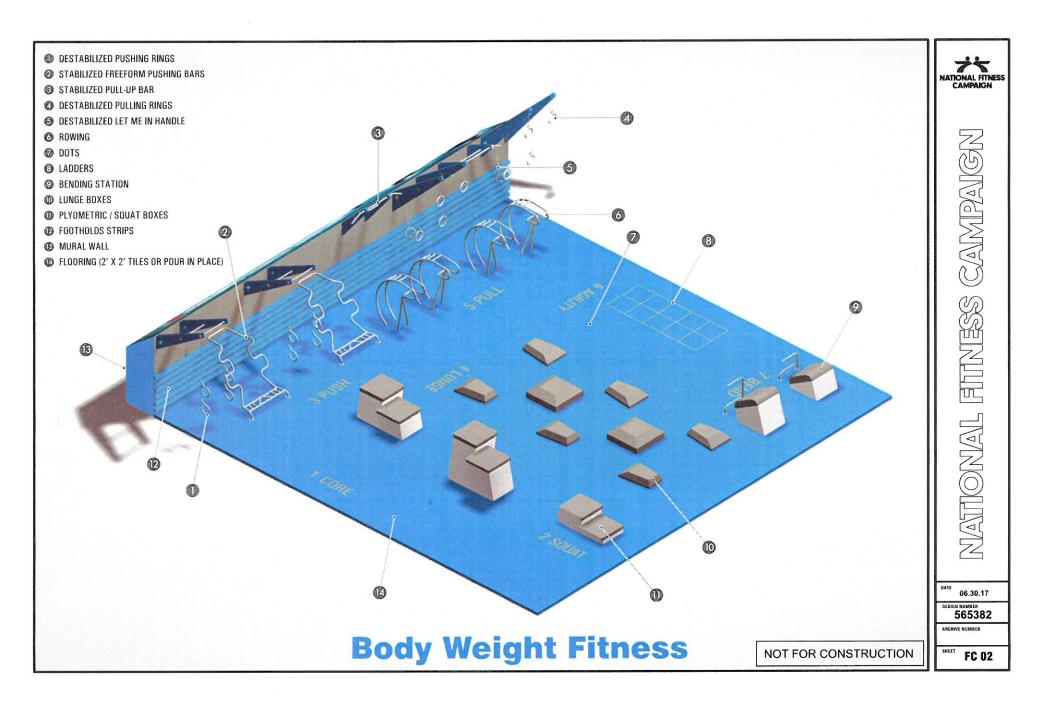
Staff suggested to the applicant that the court be located on the west central portion of the park where other programmed spaces for active recreation, including tennis courts, a swimming pool, basketball courts, bocce ball courts and horse shoe pits already exist. However, the applicant felt that the west central area would lack visibility, and consequently would be unsafe for users and would encourage vandalism and crime.

Issue 2: CREATING EQUALITY

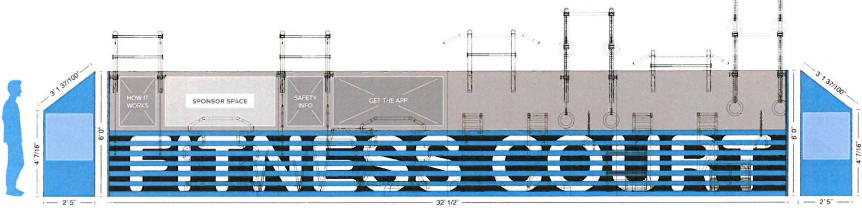
One of the primary uses in Liberty Park is the running/walking path which could be used in conjunction with the court. The public fitness court would provide a space in which all Salt Lake City residents have equal access to fitness facilities, enhancing the City's social equity goals.



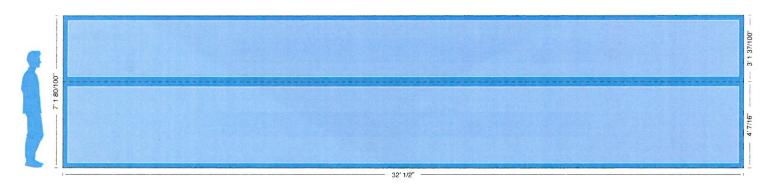
ATTACHMENT B: DEVELOPMENT PLAN SET



Front and Side Wall Elevation



Rear Wall Elevation



NOTE: SPONSOR RECOGNITION, SIGN DESIGN NOT STANDARD - SHOWN FOR REFERENCE ONLY. ADDITIONAL DESIGN FEE MAY APPLY.

NFC FITNESS COURT SCHEMATIC ELEVATIONS

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

NATIONAL FITNESS CAMPAIGN

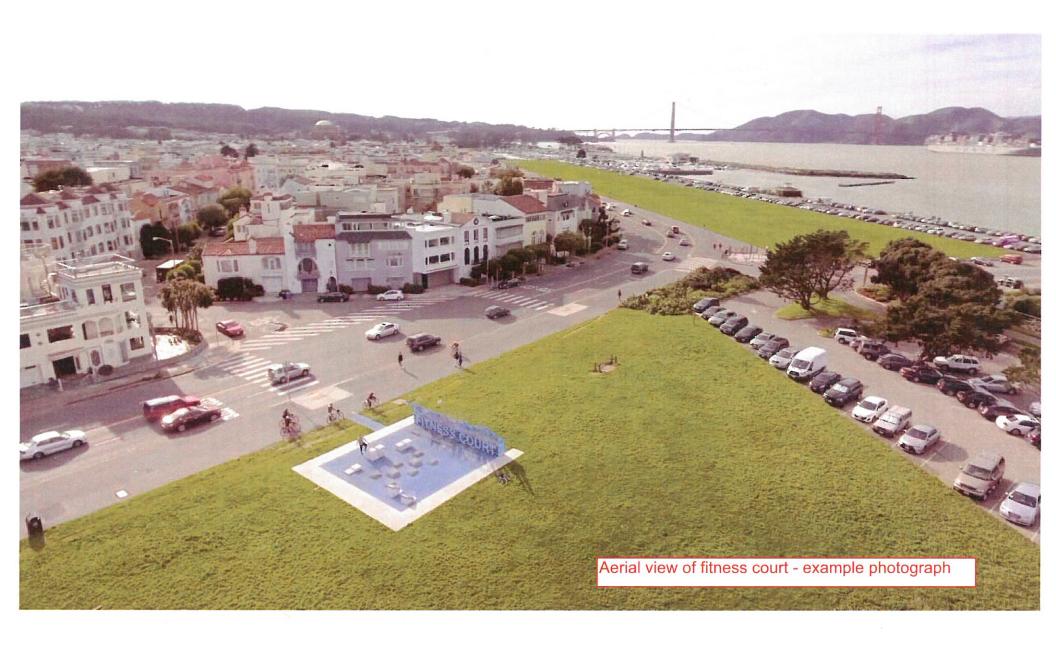
06.30.17

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ARCHIVE NUMBER

FC 03





ATTACHMENT C: HISTORY

United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only received JAN 2-3 1980 date entered DEC 1-1 1980

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

4 8:				
<u>1. Nam</u>	<u>1e</u>			
historic Li	berty Park			
and/or common				_
2. Loca	ation			
street & number	Bounded by Fifth and Thirteenth S	East, Seventh East outh Streets	, Ninth South	not for publication
city, town	Salt Lake City	vicinity of	congressional district	
state	Utah co	ode 049 count	y Salt Lake	code 035
3. Clas	sification			
Category district building(s) structureX site object	Ownership _X public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted X yes: unrestricted no	<pre> entertainment government</pre>	museum mu
4. Own	er of Prope	erty	and the specific	or to the
name Salt	Lake City Corporat	ion	S St	. 70
street & number	City and County Bu	ilding		
	Salt Lake City	vicinity of	state	Utah
	ation of Leo	gal Descript	_	
			nty Building, County	Recorder's Office
street & number	City	and County Buildir	ng	
city, town		Lake City	state	Utah
	resentation	in Existing		
	State Historic Site	es Inventory has this p	property been determined e	
date 1978			federal st	ate county loca
depository for si	urvey records Utah Sta	te Historical Socie	ety	
city, town	Salt Lak	te City	state	Utah

7. Description				:	
, 1					-
Condition excellent	deteriorated	Check one unaltered	Check one X original sit	te)
X good	ruins	_X_ altered	, moved	date	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Description

Liberty Park is one of the largest urban parks in Utah. It includes an area of 110 acres, from Ninth South to Thirteenth South and from Fifth East to Seventh East streets. The original vehicular circulation is basically intact, including a large oval loop road and a central axis road running from north to south on the line of Sixth East Street. The park includes the building and grounds of the Isaac Chase Mill, built in 1852 (National Register).

Originally the park included several pavillions, a bandstand, a small lake and several informally landscaped walkways. With the large oval road and central axis road and these informal planted areas, the park combined a formal plan with the then popular style of picturesque Victorian garden design.

The park has experienced the problems of many large urban parks, especially the addition of uses not compatible with the original passive recreation of the park. These include an aviary, a small zoo, tennis courts, a small building which serves as a police radio transmission station and a carnival. The large size of the park minimizes the impact of most of these uses.

Beginning in the 1970's, the city and the neighborhood association have been working on a master plan to remove the most incompatible uses and restore some elements of the original park design. These are expected to include the removal of the carnival, the regrading of the lake and the removal of most of its concrete edging, the renovation or reconstruction of a bandstand, and additional landscaping.

8. Significance

1400–1499	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture architecture art commerce communications		X landscape architectur law literature military music t philosophy politics/government	re religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates		Builder/Architect		

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Liberty Park is significant as one of the earliest and largest urban parks in Utah. Originally purchased by Salt Lake City in 1881 from the estate of Brigham Young, it is Utah's best example of the "central park." It documents the spirit of reform of the second half of the nineteenth century, when parks were seen as important factors in civilizing America's increasingly industrialized cities and improving the moral character of their inhabitants. Many American cities followed the pattern of New York City's Central Park, which was designed in the late 1850's. Liberty Park is laid out on the site of a mill and farm established by Isaac Chase (the Isaac Chase Mill is listed on the National Register).

Liberty Park was established on the site of the Isaac Chase Farm and Mill. Chase had been assigned a plot in the original "Big Field Survey" of 1847, which distributed farm plots to the first settlers of the Salt Lake Valley. Because of the mill and the large trees on the farm, it was locally known as Forest Park, the Iocust Patch and the Mill Farm. The farm and mill were purchased by Brigham Young in 1860, who traded Chase for property in Centerville in Davis County, which Chase never occupied. Brigham Young reportedly expressed the desire that the property be purchased by the city "for the lowest price" after his death. On April 20, 1881, the city paid the Brigham Young estate \$27,500 for the farm.

Iocal newspapers reported that the "locust patch is the only grove within miles of the city and is located about three blocks from the First Ward street car tracks. This grove is large enough for all the purposes that can ever be required....The farm contains as much ground as will be needed for a park for Salt Lake in the next two generations at least, and there is so much that it will never be necessary to keep the grounds like a lawn, as would be the case were it but a ten acre block. The whole can be made to appear rural and rustic, can be sufficiently developed and still give ample room for picnics, for ponds, for walks, for driving and for all other purposes for which parks are used."

The dedication of the park was originally scheduled for July 4, 1881. Because of the assasination of President Garfield, the celebration was postponed. Although the city waited until the following summer for the dedication, they did not wait until the Fourth of July but instead had the celebration on June 17, 1882, the anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Major Bibliographical References Salt Lake Herald, July 2,3, 1881; June 14, 1882 Desert Evening News, June 17, 1882 Daily Utah Chronicle, September 28, 1977 Utah State Historical Society, "Liberty Park" file **Geographical Data** 10. Acreage of nominated property Salt Lake South, Sugarhouse Quadrangle scale 1:24,000Quadrangle name **UMT References** 112 4511113 |4 |2 |6 |4 |8 |0 | Verbal boundary description and justification Boundaries of Liberty Park as originally purchased by Salt Lake City in 1881: Fifth to Seventh East, Ninth to Thirteenth South Streets List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries code state county code state code county code Form Prepared By name/title Karl T. Haglund, Architectural Historian date December 1979 organization Utah State Historical Society street & number 307 West 200 South 801 533 6017 telephone Salt Lake City Utah city or town state State Historic Preservation Officer Certification The evaluated significance of this property within the state is: X state national local As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Melvin T. Smith, State Historic Preservation Officer date January 7, 1979 For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register Keeper of the National Register Attest: Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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RECEIVED JAN 2 3 1980
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

The dedicatory procession formed at the City Hall and included Mayor Jennings, ex-mayor Little (who had presided over the purchase of the property), Wilford Woodruff and numerous other city, state, and Mormon Church officials. Music was provided by Croxall's Silver Band, the Union Glee Club and the Sixth Infantry Band. The remarks of the speakers reflected the popular importance of the new large park. Mr. Ben Sheeks concluded one of the orations by saying that the park "gives to the poor a feeling of interest in his country, and to the rich a satisfaction which ever follows the act of giving to those who needs. And who will say that the man, woman or child does not need the opportunity of enjoying a pleasant walk--of beholding the beauties of art or nature--even as they need bread. Let us ever remember that sometimes "the beautiful is as useful as the useful--perhaps more so."

A greenhouse was buit in 1903, and tennis courts added about 1915. The large entrance piers at Sixth East and Ninth South were added in 1920. The bandstand was built about 1911, and a bandstand shelter added in 1949. A swimming pool was constructed in 1949. An appropriation for a zoo was made in 1914, and the zoo remained open until the establishment of the Hogle Zoo in 1931. Russell Tracy donated his collection of birds to the city in 1938, with appropriations for its construction matched by Tracy in 1938 and 1939.

A master plan has been proposed by the city, which plans to spend four million dollars during the next ten years improving the facilities and landscaping.

ATTACHMENT D: PHOTOGRAPHS

Proposed Site: 1

North Playground



700 East Side

ATTACHMENT E: OS ZONING ORDINANCE STANDARDS

Existing Condition

Historically Liberty Park reflects a diversity of uses. The park provides for both active and passive recreations.

OS (Open Space District)

The purpose of the OS open space district is to preserve and protect areas of public and private open space and exert a greater level of regulation over any potential redevelopment of existing open space areas. This district is appropriate in areas of the city where the applicable master plans support this type of land use.

Master Plans:

Plan Salt Lake, adopted 2015

GUIDING PRINCIPLE (page 27)

Protect the natural environment while providing access and opportunities to recreate and enjoy nature.

INITIATIVE (page 27)

Protect and enhance existing parks, recreational facilities, and trails allowing for modifications to enhance usability and promote activity.

Central City Community Master Plan, adopted 2005

Preserve the historic integrity and character of parks that are located in historic districts or have their own historic designations. Encourage festivals and activity use but discourage uses such as aquariums, museums, planetariums, and storm water detention basins. (page 14)

H Historic Preservation Overlay District – Standards for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Alteration of a Landmark Site (21A.34.020.G)

In considering an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for alteration of a Landmark Site, the Historic Landmark Commission shall find that the project substantially complies with all of the general standards that pertain to the application and that the decision is in the best interest of the City. The proposal is reviewed in relation to those that pertain in the following table.

The Planning Division, with help from the Salt Lake City Parks and Public Lands Program, is currently working on a draft for Historic Landscape Design Guidelines. The purpose for the Historic Landscape Design Guidelines is to provide direction needed to make informed decisions on design, maintenance, or other changes.

Standard	Analysis	Findings
Historic Purpose 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be used for a purpose that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment;	Historic Purpose Historically Liberty Park reflects a diversity of uses. The park provides for both active and passive recreation. Liberty Park has numerous playgrounds, sports courts and open fields, many of which appear to have been upgraded and modified over time, possibly in the general location of the original features.	The purpose of the Fitness Court is recreation which is harmonious with the purpose of the park. Staff finds that the proposed fitness court complies with this standard.
Retain Historic Character 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided;	Retain Historic Character The northern portion of the park consists primarily of open space, with a few pavilions, buildings and playgrounds.	Staff finds that the proposed location for the Fitness Court would be in proximity to the existing playground and would have less impact on the open space.
Of Their Own Time 3. All sites, structures and objects shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create a false sense of history or architecture are not allowed;	Time & Contemporary Design The proposed fitness court would be a product of its own time.	Staff finds that the proposed design complies with this standard.
Historically Significant Alterations / Additions 4. Alterations or additions that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved;	Historically Significant Alterations/Additions This standard does not apply in this case.	Complies
Preserve Historic Features 5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of	Preserve Historic Features	Staff finds that the proposed fitness court interrupts the open

PLNHLC2017-00924 Liberty Park Fitness Court

craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved;	It is important for users and passers-by of Liberty Park to see and to enjoy the movement, colors, sounds, and shade of the vegetation as well as use it for active recreation.	space, a distinctive feature of Liberty Park. However, the interruption will be minimal since the court is not enclosed. The six foot wall will be placed in an angle to minimize the visual impact.
features 6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced wherever feasible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures or objects;	Deteriorated Architectural Features This standard does not apply in this case.	Complies
Chemical or physical treatments 7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible;	Chemical or Physical Treatments This standard does not apply in this case.	Complies
Contemporary Design 8. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archaeological material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment;	Time & Contemporary Design The fitness court would be a type of playground. Playground equipment is dictated by safety and the latest technology.	Staff finds that the proposed design complies with this standard.
Reversibility, Differentiation & Compatibility 9. Additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or	Reversibility, Differentiation & Compatibility The fitness court includes several fixtures that are secured in place on a rubber surface	Staff finds that the proposed design complies with this standard.

alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible in massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment;	atop a concrete pad. The materials and design of the fitness court will not try to replicate a historic element and will be able to be removed in the future without impacting the integrity of the historic park. No trees are proposed to be removed.	
Materials Prohibited 10. Certain <u>building materials</u> are <u>prohibited</u> including the following: Aluminum, asbestos, or vinyl cladding when applied directly to an original or historic material.	Materials Prohibited This standard does not apply in this case.	Complies
New Sign 11. Any new sign and any change in the appearance of any existing sign located on a landmark site or within the H historic preservation overlay district, which is visible from any public way or open space shall be consistent with the historic character of the landmark site or H historic preservation overlay district and shall comply with the standards outlined in chapter 21A.46 of this title.	New Sign This standard does not apply in this case. Signage was not part of this request.	Complies

ATTACHMENT G: PUBLIC PROCESS AND COMMENTS

Notice of the public hearing for the proposal include:

- Notice mailed on January 18, 2018.
- Agenda posted on the Planning Division and Utah Public Meeting Notice websites on January 18, 2018.
- Staff Report posted on website on January 26, 2018.
- Property posted on January 22, 2018.

Comments:

Three comment were received concerning this request as of the date of publication of this staff report.

One email that stated the following:

"I believe this is one of the worst ideas that I have ever heard to place an adult weight and exercise are(a) right next to the children's playground. In my opinion, this give those who might be prone to kidnapping or pedophile too close proximity to the children's playground. Second, people who may be working out, may wear loose clothing that could expose parts of their anatomy to young children. To even consider this being built in that area, is unacceptable."

Two comments over the phone:

- 1. That tax payers should not pay for the fitness court.
- 2. That the city should not invest money on the fitness court until the fountain at Liberty Park be renovated.