

Huntington Park Community Survey: Overview

STIMSON

Dates Open: Sept. 10th - 24th, 2020

Total Responses: 74

Overview:

Throughout the survey, the 74 respondents provided ample feedback through preference and priority rating questions, image ratings, and open response questions. On average, respondents spent approximately 15 minutes on the survey. Through all question types, respondents often wrote many sentences or even paragraphs expressing their opinions, concerns, or excitement. Given the huge volume of text, we have worked to pull out themes/concerns and summarize the responses to each question. For the raw survey data and all individual responses, please see the SurveyMonkey Survey Results.

Recurrent Themes Throughout Survey:

- Strong interest in events, concerts
- Interest in coming to the park with family, children
- Interest in having activities/elements for both adults and children
- Interest in tying park and library visits together
- Lots of references to fairy houses and searching for fairies – this seems to be a favorite activity of parents with their children
- Strong interest in the proposed plantings, though there are many comments questioning if the library or city will be able to maintain the large number of new planting areas

Recurrent Concerns Throughout Survey:

- Concern about the amount of maintenance the park will require
- Concern that there are too many elements in the design and that the park may be overwhelmed
- Concern that too much lawn has been removed
- Lack of bathrooms when the library is closed
- Many stated concerns had to do with the specific aesthetics of images used in the image rating questions – concerns seemed less to do with the theme or element and more to do with either aesthetic preference or not understanding how the element fits within the park design
- Minimal concern about noise or the level of activity that adding a play area would bring to the park

STEPHEN STIMSON ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, INC.

288 NORFOLK STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

T 617 876 8960

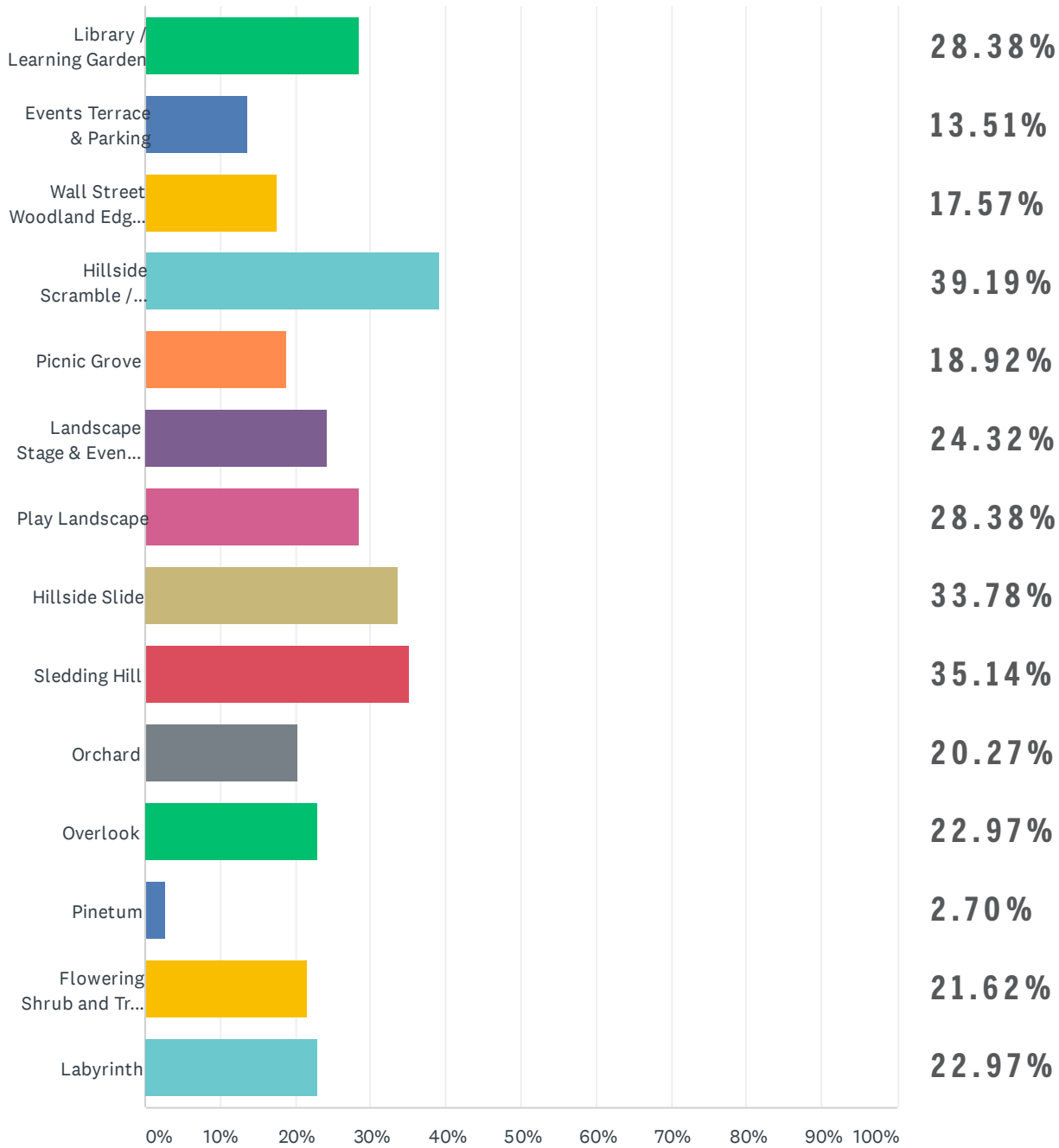
2 MOUNTAIN ROAD
PRINCETON, MA 01541

T 978 464 5200

Huntington Park Community Survey: Overview



What proposed zones or features are you most excited about at Huntington Park?
Please choose your top three:



STEPHEN STIMSON ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, INC.

288 NORFOLK STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

2 MOUNTAIN ROAD
PRINCETON, MA 01541

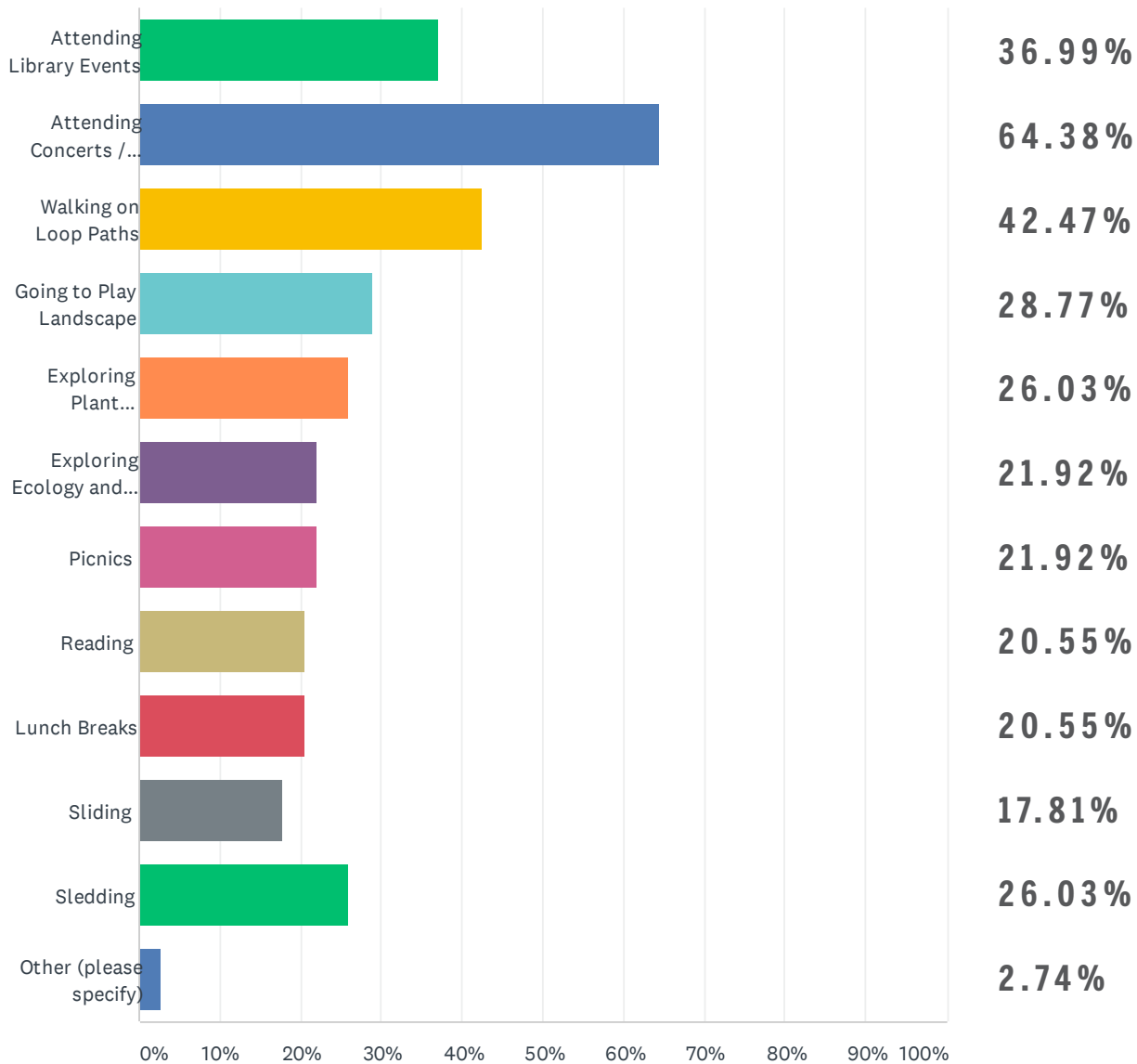
T 617 876 8960

T 978 464 5200

Huntington Park Community Survey: Overview



What activities would you be most excited to do at Huntington Park?
Please choose your top three:



Other: (1) "people watching" (2) "I am now 90, no longer live next door to the park (and haven't since 1946), so sliding, sledding and anything else in the park are out for me!"

STEPHEN STIMSON ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, INC.

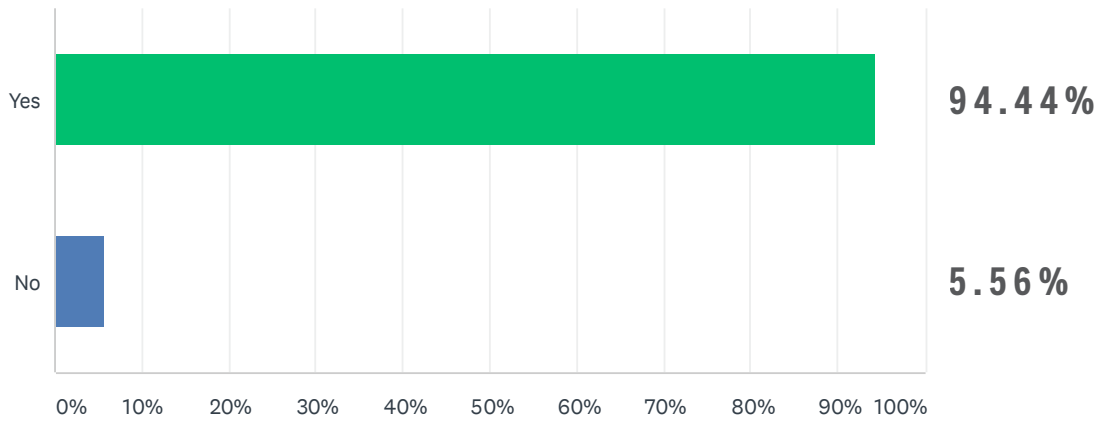
288 NORFOLK STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

2 MOUNTAIN ROAD
PRINCETON, MA 01541

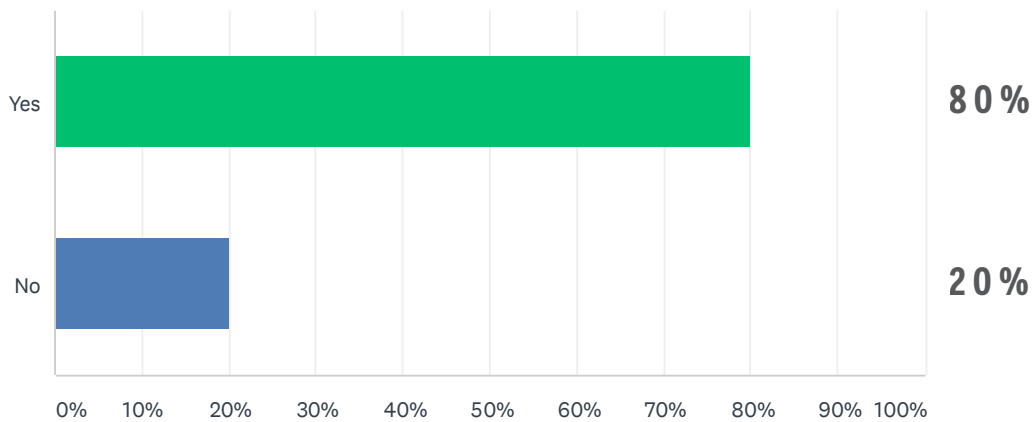
T 617 876 8960

T 978 464 5200

Do you support a sledding hill in Huntington Park?



Do you support a slide in Huntington Park?



Favorite Memories:

- Outdoor events
- Music
- Walking/passing through
- Spending time with family, especially children and grandchildren
- Sledding
- Library events
- Being amongst the trees
- Looking for fairy houses
- Picnics
- Wildlife
- Reading, relaxing

Perfect Day at Huntington Park:

- Reading
- Exploring and wandering through gardens
- Concerts and events
- Dog walking
- Bringing kids to play or enjoying the park with family
- Coffee, picnic, food, or snack – picking up something downtown and coming to the park
- Sitting on a bench
- Sledding
- Post church or wedding photographs
- Quiet contemplation
- Tying in with visits to the library
- Looking for fairy houses
- Photography
- Enjoying fall color
- Walks with family
- Sitting under mature trees
- Seeing the smoke bush in bloom
- People watching

STEPHEN STIMSON ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, INC.

288 NORFOLK STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

T 617 876 8960

2 MOUNTAIN ROAD
PRINCETON, MA 01541

T 978 464 5200

What type of activities, programs, or elements would interest you in the play landscape?

- Elements that could also be used for adults
- Small, simple
- Natural elements that encourage play and activity
- Some interest in more traditional play features, like swings
- Elements that allow kids to be inventive
- Inclusive, accessible
- Tree house
- Benches, tables, and other areas for parents while their kids play
- Slide
- Climbing
- Visibility is important
- Elements for a range of ages of children
- A design where the full play area is not seen or understood from a single vantage point
- Nature exploration that could be tied to a library program/story
- Interpretive signage on plants, geology, history, or the Huntingtons
- Sculptural elements

What type of activities, programs, or elements would interest you in the library/teaching gardens?

- Variety of plantings, including herbs, flowers, natives, pollinators, vegetables or edibles,
- Exploration of plants through sight and smell
- Plant signage/interpretation to encourage learning
- Programs by master gardeners/Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Programs that explore history
- Educational programs and workshops – book discussions, crafts, astronomy, botany, horticulture, talks by local authors and scholars, etc
- Places to read or work
- Connection to wifi from library
- Shaded story space, outdoor story time
- Plantings inspired by literature
- Maintenance free plantings
- Comfortable seating
- Areas for seclusion and reading
- Areas for library group meetings
- Displays by guest artists
- Tables for reading/writing/classes
- Environmental education
- Connections between nature, the library, and park via a nature explorer program
- Outdoor classroom/amphitheater with chalkboard

STEPHEN STIMSON ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, INC.

288 NORFOLK STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

T 617 876 8960

2 MOUNTAIN ROAD
PRINCETON, MA 01541

T 978 464 5200

What would make you feel more comfortable in Huntington Park?

- Many people feel safe throughout Oneonta and the park, day or night
- Improved lighting
- Wide paths
- Concern regarding light pollution if lighting is increased
- Better sightlines, greater visibility
- The park would feel safer if more people utilized the park – “eyes on the street”
- Less undergrowth
- More police patrols
- Safer, less steep paths (especially in winters)
- Emergency call box
- Lighting at the sledding hill, especially at the base of the hill
- Sturdy and numerous garbage cans (squirrel proof)
- Make sure play equipment for children is safe
- Consider adjacent homes when designing new lighting
- More places to sit

What do you see as the biggest issue within the park today?

- Garbage and dog waste, lack of trash cans
- Lack of defining features, doesn't feel inviting or have elements to hold interest of visitors
- Safety; illegal activities and loitering
- Lack of accessibility; steepness
- Users that make the park seem unsafe
- Some like the park as is and want minimal changes
- Public perception
- Underused space
- Unsafe vehicular exit
- Lack of programming, activities, and things to do
- Lack of family activities
- Poor lighting
- Unattractive parking lot
- Lack of seating
- Feels broken up between upper and lower level – lacks unity
- Seems a “pass through” rather than a place to spend time
- Maintenance

STEPHEN STIMSON ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, INC.

288 NORFOLK STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

2 MOUNTAIN ROAD
PRINCETON, MA 01541

T 617 876 8960

T 978 464 5200

Additional Comments:

- Very positive feedback, overall
- Maintenance concerns
- Interest in focus on people over 50, especially regarding parking and activities
- Interest in preserving existing plantings
- Interest in transparency of budget, phasing, construction, maintenance costs and responsibilities (mainly a concern that this will raise taxes)
- Add bike racks
- Appreciation of the connection to the park's history - "celebrating the past while addressing current and future needs"
- Make sure maintenance is part of the long term budget
- Consider connections to Main St. and Neahwa Park
- This redesign would help businesses downtown
- Some interest in preserving the fence, even if it is just a small segment moved elsewhere in the park
- Suggestion to partner with local garden clubs, master gardeners, scouts, 4H, or colleges to help maintain the plantings
- Several comments about use of the park by pet owners – this seems to be a popular area for people to walk dogs
- Consider connections to the broader streets and neighborhoods – make suggestions to the city for future development