

Environmental Impact Assessment
For
Green Aces Park
Accessible Playground Project

Borough of North Plainfield
Somerset County, New Jersey



Prepared by

GROTTO ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, L.L.C.

77 Brant Avenue

Clark, NJ 07066

November 25, 2024

1. Description of the Proposed Project

The project entails the replacement of an existing aging non-ADA Accessible playground in Green Aces Park located off of Rockview Terrace in the Borough of North Plainfield. The existing playground equipment will be removed and the proposed playground will be ADA accessible, and an ADA parking space and signage will also be added. Additional improvements will include rubber safety surfacing, benches, landscaping, fencing, asphalt walkways and a gazebo.

The Project objectives are:

- Provide a safe, updated playground that is ADA accessible for the residents of North Plainfield and other municipalities.
- To minimize any impacts on riparian zones
- To minimize impacts to trees and wildlife

Multiphase Projects- None

2. Description of the Environment

The area in question consists of an existing playground area with wood mulch. Beyond the playground and wood mulch is grassed areas and some mature trees.

Critical Habitat- None

Threatened and Endangered Species:

- Great Blue Heron
- Bald Eagle

With the proposed project, the species will not be disturbed due to not removing any trees and limiting the disturbance of any lawn areas.

Geology- Underlying geology is from the Mesozoic period Jurassic series with underlying siltstone, shale, sandstone and conglomerate.

Soils- The Soil is Bowmansville Silt Loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes.

Water and Hydrology- flat land with the Stony Brook passing thru the park and a pond adjacent to the playground area. Some meadow low lying areas.

Site Access- is from the park access driveway off of Rockview Terrace.

Historic Preservation- The Park is not located in the North Plainfield Historic District.

Surrounding neighborhood- The area in question is surrounded by single family residential homes and parklands. A pond is also present within the existing park.

3. Environmental Impact Analysis of Proposed Action:

All impacts of the proposed construction present very limited disturbance to the surrounding and underlying features for this project. A limited amount of lawn vegetation will be temporarily disturbed during the construction. It is the intention not to remove any mature trees, but to work around them. It is understood that since the park currently exists that no permits are required. If anything, the improvements would be covered under the NJDEP "Permit by Rule" requirements for the installation of the new playground equipment and the safety surfacing. Since no large trees will be removed, habitats will be preserved, and the existing ground will only be excavated to remove the existing wood mulch and the grade will remain largely unchanged. The project will not impact and environmental habitats or features. Long term impacts would be vehicles entering the park and pedestrian traffic that currently exists within this area. Short term impacts would be limited to the disturbance during construction. Over time, residents and park goers will utilize this playground more as it will be more accessible.

4. Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Alternative No. 1- No Action- This action is not feasible as the playground is not currently ADA accessible and it cannot be utilized by all residents. Therefore this alternative should not be considered.

Alternative No. 2- Remove the current outdated playground and put back lawn area.

Alternative No. 3- Current Proposed Project- This project approach is the most advantageous from both a cost perspective and ADA Accessibility perspective. There is really no other alternative to consider.

5. Mitigation Measures:

Due to the limited nature of the work involved not much mitigation would be required. Silt fence, tree protection and limited areas of disturbance will be required and made part of the bid documents for contractors to adhere to.

6. Author and Qualifications:

David Testa, P.E is currently the Borough Engineer for the Borough of North Plainfield. He has over 15 years of experience as a municipal engineer and over 34 years of experience in civil and environmental engineering. He has prepared several permit applications for Land Use, Historic Preservation and DOT permits.