

Special Recognition

POD Design

Category: Landscape Architecture Constructed

Client: The City of Dublin and The Miracle League of Central Ohio

Contractor: Duke Construction (services donated)

Engineer: Burgess & Niple (services donated)



Plan

Inspired by one resident's vision, the league's mission was to raise funds to build a unique field for the +\-20,000 children in the area with disabilities. The City of Dublin donated the land; the field was designed and constructed almost entirely with funds and in-kind donations from area residents, professionals, and corporations.

The Miracle Field, in Darree Fields Park, is the first of several park projects planned in an area designated to be fully accessible. Other proposed improvements include celebration plaza, covered picnic area, and playground. Every element within this park area will be universally accessible and designed to promote social interaction between all kids.

The LA was involved at all stages of the design and construction process, gladly donating significant time developing the initial perspective rendering for fundraising, master planning, construction documentation, materials selection, and construction observation. A Dublin-based commercial developer volunteered as construction manager and had the project completed in less than 8 months.

One goal of the league is to allow players to experience the sensation of a 'big-league' ballgame. Uniforms are designed to match real MLB teams, each player's name is announced over a permanent PA system, many games are played under the lights with game statistics shown on an electronic scoreboard in the outfield. The field itself is scaled down with 100' outfield fences enabling many of the players to hit real homeruns.

Every detail related to field design was scrutinized for conformance to the special needs of the children; the most scrutinized item being the selection of proper field surfacing. Since the field must accommodate children who are either visually impaired, wheelchair or walker restricted, or who use various mobile devices, a smooth surface was necessary. Previous fields had used an expensive synthetic surfacing or a cheaper recycled rubber tile product both of which were less than ideal from a long term maintenance perspective, often requiring complete resurfacing, and creating potentially hazardous playing surfaces. The LA worked with a company to develop a seamless poured-in-place, UV-resistant colored rubberized surface. The field surface selection was the first of its kind among Miracle League Fields and is being considered for similar projects in Ohio.

Other unique features of the field include oversized dugouts designed to match existing structures, chilled drinking fountains, and barrier-free/ specially designed backstops with an angled wing to protect from foul balls or errant throws. Additional site features include a parking lot with ample handicap parking spaces, flush transitions to adjacent walkways, large player drop-off zone, raised planter for a future bronze sculpture, and donor recognition including an aluminum bat rack sculpture displaying the primary contributors to the project.

Whether the players get a hit, a homerun or just round the bases, they experience America's national pastime, just like any other kid. Every child deserves a chance to play baseball; Miracle Field allows that to happen!

"It's not just about playing a game. It's not just about winning. It's about making new friends...building self esteem...being like other kids... dreams coming true..."

-the vision of MLCO

Figure A: Illustrative Site Plan – showing ball field, parking areas, concession stands and future adjacent accessible playground.

Figure B: Primary Donor Recognition – showing planter and aluminum bat rack sculpture displaying the primary contributors at the Miracle Field.

Figure C: First Pitch – for Miracle League of Central Ohio in August 2005.

Figure D: Batter Up – player participation during a season game.

Figure E: Batter Up – player participation during a season game.

Figure F: Running the Bases – showing a player (with a "buddy") rounding third base.

Figure G: Secondary Donor Recognition – showing donor recognition pavers along the entry walk to the Miracle Field.



Figure A



Figure B



Figure E



Figure C



Figure D



Figure G



Figure F