

Playgrounds

Out with the Old, in with the Fun!

Landscape architecture by Seamon, Whiteside + Associates



Top: At the center of the Palmetto Islands Playground in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina is an expansive live oak. Surrounding trees are a mix of water oaks, gums and live oaks. The poured-in-place safety surfacing is by DuraPlay. The play structures provide new and improved age-appropriate areas for 2-5 year olds and the 5-12 kids.

Above: Individual shade structures were designed along with each of the surrounding benches for additional sun protection for parents. Climbing rocks, sand play and a misting pole (far right) by Most Dependable Fountains are additional elements.

IMAGES: SEAMON, WHITESIDE + ASSOCIATES (SW+A)

The Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission (CCPRC) was created in 1968 as a special purpose district by an act of the South Carolina legislature. The commission is charged with developing the countywide park system, providing park and recreation services, but not to duplicate services provided by the other municipalities and special recreation districts in the area. From climbing walls and fishing piers to equestrian centers and water parks, CCPRC has throughout the years had a reputation for making great recreation opportunities for Charleston County residents. CCPRC takes pride in using the South Carolina Lowcountry's great natural resources to their fullest.

With this in mind, when the landscape architecture and civil engineering firm of Seamon, Whiteside + Associates (SW+A) was hired by CCPRC, they realized the replacement for the popular yet dated playground at Palmetto Islands County Park in Mount Pleasant needed to be one-of-a-kind.

Tucked within the park's wooded tropical setting, and partially bound by a tidal creek that snakes its



Playgrounds *(Continued from page 19)*



Above, Top & Bottom: The equipment includes net climbers, enclosed slides, climbers, a spinning ring, a surfboard-like piece for balancing, a spinner and a modern version of the seesaw.

IMAGES: SEAMON, WHITESIDE + ASSOCIATES (SW+A)

way throughout the park, the site offered great opportunities for a unique facility. Existing trees serve the dual purpose of uniting the playground with the remainder of the park, providing needed shade for the long, steamy days of summer. Individual shade structures were designed along with each of the surrounding benches for additional sun protection for on-looking parents. A misting pole tops it all off, making sure every visitor stays cool and kids have a chance to get as wet as they please!

Cameron Liebetrau, land planner and project manager for SW+A, worked closely with Patty Newshutz, CCPRC's project manager, and park manager Jim Hoy on the park redevelopment. The team made every effort to make the innovative playground as safe, imaginative, comfortable, eco-friendly and as ADA-accessible as possible. The playground surfaces and structures are made from sustainable materials and recycled content. Porous and resilient, the safety surfaces are low-maintenance and the colorful design mimics the surrounding water and marsh, encouraging the interaction between the playgrounds and the park's own natural areas.

The new playground boasts a modern look with a multitude of play options and physical challenges to stimulate the senses and creativity in ways not normally accomplished in your typical neighborhood playground. The play structures provide new and improved age-appropriate areas for kids aged 2-5 years and 5-12 years. Both sections have many opportunities to climb, swing, slide, run, spin, dangle, twirl, and above all else, imagine!

The result is an exciting new adventure at Palmetto Islands County Park. Already a hit with kids and parents, the playground has become a shining jewel in the already popular park.

"We are very pleased with the playground design and the popularity of this park feature," said Patty Newshultz "We believe that it more than exceeded the public's expectations. It meets the social and physical challenges as a great playground should, but also encourages children to interact with nature as well as provides a comfortable setting for the caregivers. CCPRC was pleased that the major goals for this project were accomplished, which has resulted in its becoming a popular feature in the park once again."

About the firm

Seamon, Whiteside + Associates brings together top professionals in landscape architecture and civil engineering. The firm has offices in Mount Pleasant and Greenville, South Carolina. 

