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St. Petersburg Launches International Competition for New Zaryadye-Style Park

By Daniel Kozin

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St. Petersburg opened an international competition Friday for designs of a new park in the city center that local officials say will rival Moscow's award-winning Zaryadye Park.

Plans for the new park — to be located on an abandoned lot along the Neva River in the heart of the city — were first announced last April by then-interim governor Alexander Beglov and supported by President Vladimir Putin. Hundreds of locals voted to name the park "Tuchkov Buyan" after the area's historic name.

The new park will help "unite the main landmarks, pedestrian areas and green zones of the city into a single route and will open a unique panorama view onto the historical center of St. Petersburg," vice-governor Nikolai Linchenko announced at a press conference Wednesday.

The 13-hectare park will be located on the Petrogradsky side along the Little Neva River.

On Thursday, several dozen local residents participated in the first of a series of public hearings about the new park.

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Diana Lobadanova, 32, told The Moscow Times at the meeting that she worries the authorities won't consider locals' opinions when choosing the winning design for the park.

“I’m afraid that they’ll include all the things we told them that we don’t want — a hanging bridge, art objects and a stage — and it will become yet another tourist attraction instead of a place for locals to relax,” Lobadanova said.

“But I’m a runner who lives nearby, and since running is becoming popular I’m guessing they’ll add a running track. So from a functional point of view it will be great for me, and of course 1,000 times better than the abandoned lot that’s been there for years.”

Proposals for the park will be accepted from bureaus until Jan. 15, 2020, after which a jury will award eight teams $60,000 each to further develop their proposals.

The competition is organized by the federally financed DOM.RF foundation and run by the Strelka consulting agency.

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