



## Centre Region Council of Governments REGIONAL PARK PLANNING COMMITTEE

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*Serving the Borough of State College and the Townships of College, Ferguson, Harris and Patton*

### Whitehall Road Regional Park – Master Site Plan Community Meeting #2 on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2009 WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS

**For those unable to attend or those wishing to provide additional input, written comments were accepted for one week following the meeting (through 5 PM on Monday, March 1, 2010).**

Street numbers have been removed in the interest of privacy.

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From: Jeffrey Brownson (Ferguson Twp. Resident)  
Assistant Professor, Penn State Dept. of Energy and Mineral Engineering  
Date: January 28, 2010  
Dear CRPR Team,

I see that the dog park will be larger than the "shelter"- but unfortunately it appears to be only 1.8 acres. Hence, I still strongly emphasize the importance of a suitable dog park for medium to large dogs (for example, Tudek is too small for the number and size of dogs in our area). From my experience, Madison WI dog parks were >5-10 acres on average, with walkable path - parks in the range of 80-160 acres outside of town (links below). Benches, trails and waste disposal units were standard, and the parks were fenced, so that play could continue without worry of cars (or wandering spirit pups). It was also great exercise for us! In our complex alone there are Great Danes, German Shepherds, Labs, Samoyeds, and various small to large mixed breeds.

[http://www.quann4dogs.com/about\\_quann.html](http://www.quann4dogs.com/about_quann.html)

[http://www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/prairie\\_moraine.aspx](http://www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/prairie_moraine.aspx)

I serve on our Townhouse Community Board, and the park was brought to our attention for attendance of the Feb. 23rd meeting. I hope to continue seeing constructive comments from our neighborhood.

Again, by combining the dog park with the "Mountain View Picnic Grove", you would give dogs a space closer to the space they need to socialize. Considering the increasing number of medium to bigger dogs in the neighborhood, a bigger dog park would be highly advisable and well received by those of us who are active in the dog community.

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From: Jeffrey Deitrich  
Date: Monday, February 22, 2010  
RE: Parks Planning Reply

Thanks once again for the opportunities that have been provided during this parks planning process to give input. Not only are the parks going to be better for it, but you will also, I think, find much broader community support because of it. During the Feb. 16 Sport Group Leader Meeting, you asked us to reply to your proposal in three ways. Here are the responses from the Centre Region Coed Softball League.

(Con't.)

**Attend the 2/23 Community Meeting:** I will attend; I've asked our managers to attend and invite their teams / families / friends.

**Provide Suggestions for Basic Needs:** The proposed parks would, it appears, provide all of the basic space needs for our league;

The most frequent complaint currently is field maintenance (grass cutting frequency and quality of the infield/batters box). We ask that a good maintenance plan be implemented and followed.

A secondary complaint is timing of field assignments. These have been getting to us later and later. In the past two years, I've had a very short window in which to make up the schedule after receiving our field assignments, so that the teams did not know their schedules until about a week before the season began. Timeliness of this scheduling would be helpful.

**Suggestions for Funding the Parks:** Our league has no treasury and would need to either increase league fees or do a pass-the-hat fundraising push in order to provide cash. We have no other funding sources, although I did suggest to the managers that in-kind contributions as well as corporate donations and grant sources would be sought.

It was suggested at the meeting that we might partner with various groups, like hospitals. I learned this week that Geisinger is currently doing a series of focus groups in order to start some kind of weight loss/healthy weight program in the area. Perhaps a partnership could be forged there.

Our community could sign on to existing initiatives, such as NFL Play60 ([www.nfl.com/play60](http://www.nfl.com/play60)), to show the community that this is a broad-based, well-thought-out partnership. Perhaps Play60 or other initiatives might also provide direct contributions.

Likewise, I'd expect that a local fundraising effort should take place. Perhaps an accomplished local athlete (Larry Johnson and Eric Milton spring immediately to mind) would be willing to co-chair an ad hoc fundraising effort – or provide direct support themselves.

In either case, having a volunteer fundraising committee may be a great idea. Someone needs to do the legwork and arm twisting associated with raising funds from individuals, corporations, grants, etc., and we doubt that your staff has the time or expertise required.

Tournaments should be required to provide a portion of their revenues toward paying the bond issue that would be required—or tournament revenues should be factored in to their expected league contribution. Those are the initial thoughts from our group. If we find other suggestions, I will pass them along. Thanks!

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From: Thomas L. Smith, xxxx Northampton St., State College, PA 16803  
Date: February 24, 2010

As someone who at 77 years of age plays tennis between four and six times each week (depending on the season), but didn't learn how to play tennis until age 45, I fully understand and appreciate both the mental and physical benefits of the game for adults.

For that reason, I support the intention to include tennis courts - both indoor and outdoor - in the plans for Whitehall Road Regional Park.

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From: Jordon & Judith Finkelstein, xx Toms Lane, Port Matilda  
Date: Wed, Feb 24, 2010

Please support the tennis court construction at the Whitehall Road site.

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From: Scott Thompson, State College Borough resident  
Date Wed, Feb 24, 2010  
RE: Suggestion for Whitehall Road Park  
To: The Regional Parks Planning Committee

The Water Conservation Tract north of the proposed Whitehall road regional park offers an opportunity to expand the walking and hiking opportunities in the vicinity of the park. Although the Conservation tract may not be developed as a park, and is not within the boundary of the park, it is still worth planning for access to activities which are permitted in the conservation tract, such as walking and bike riding. The "future trail connection" indicated in the current master plan should be retained.

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From: Glorie & Steven Josephs, xxxx Gwenedd Lane, State College, PA 16801  
Wed, Feb 24, 2010  
RE: Tennis in the Park!

Please add Glorie and Steven Josephs names as supporters of the proposed center tennis facility! Our son, Cooper Josephs, is a 9th grader at State High and is a USTA tournament player. He is a ranked middle states player. Practicing his sport is challenging with the limited use and availability of the Penn State Tennis Center. Obviously, by the time this facility will come to fruition, he will be in college! For future tennis players, I am hopeful a new facility will be built. Thank you.

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From: Toby Short, xxxx Cambridge Drive, State College, PA 16803  
Date: Thu, Feb 25, 2010  
RE: Comments on Whitehall Soccer Field Plans  
Dear CRP&R and COG;

Please include and address the following points in your revisions to the Whitehall Road Region Park master plan.

1) Phased Development

Building to the master plan in stages is the only realistic option. . FIRST create a basic flat space - grade, seed and lay a minimal gravel road and parking. PLACE SIGNAGE THAT PROMOTES THE MASTER VISION. This will build a committed constituency for future development. Few people notice or care about development until the bulldozers show up - this minimal development will do more to draw committed attention to the plan than anything else you could do.

Rank each usage unit below by some cost / benefit metric and build accordingly. For example, it may be most cost effective to build a large multi-purpose indoor facility that could generate user fees to support additional development. Simple rectangular field space that supports multiple sports would serve more people for less money than more expensive picnic facilities or courts that require more preparation and support structures.

2) Revenue Generating Ideas

Do NOT over commit to regional tournaments and corporate events in order to raise funds. Any resulting usage restrictions or conflicts would be very damaging to public relations and alienate locals.

3) Multi-purpose

As much as possible try to make each area serve as large a constituency as  
(Con't.)

possible. For example, indoor tennis courts whose net hardware could be extended for volleyball or badminton, or removed entirely for indoor court games. Basketball is problematic. Retractable hoops often interfere with indoor games.

4) Maximize flexibility

Minimize interruptions between grassy areas. Windbreaks and boulevard trees are beautiful and functionally important BUT as much as possible LEAVE THE PLAY AREAS OPEN. For example, if you do not put in permanent home-run fences, the ball field outfields can host small, low-impact 5-8 year old soccer fields in the off season.

Benches, bleachers, berms and ditches that force lining fields in one direction will generate dead spots. Football / lacrosse / soccer field areas that can be lined at various angles and situations fore and aft will save tremendously on wear and tear.

5) Traffic

Internal and external bicycling should be carefully considered. Multi-purpose paths connecting all the major functional areas are a must. Connection to the regional bikeway grid is important as is encouraging local development to build and connect foot / bike paths to the park.

Bike parking should be small decentralized units at EVERY functional unit. No kid will leave a bike in some large lot and hike to his or her game. Bikers young and old will want to park within sight of their activity. CONSULT WITH LOCAL BIKE CLUBS.

The long-straight sight line of the central street needs to be broken up so not to invite a drag strip. INSTALL SPEED CALMING DEVICES - including humps, narrowings, raised and visually delineated pedestrian crossings, and drop-off roundabouts (such as the one shown by the indoor facility). ALLOW FOR A SECOND, SPECIAL-USE, DEDICATED ENTRANCE AND EXIT. A facility this large will be used for tournaments and festivals. Building the emergency access road so that it may be opened for such special occasions IS A MUST. Thank-you,

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From: Jessica Clothiaux, xxx S. Sparks Street, State College 16801  
Date Fri, Feb 26, 2010  
RE: Whitehall Road Park

I have followed the Whitehall Road Park development with interest. I like the idea of developing the park in stages according to budget. Please consider the possibility of establishing the crushed gravel bike path that will connect to Shingletown Gap early on in the process. It seems it would be relatively inexpensive and would allow the park to be used for biking and walking during the development process. Thank you for your consideration.

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From: Frank Ritter, State College Borough resident  
Date Sat, Feb 27, 2010  
RE: Whitehall soccer fields

It would be nice to have more soccer field space, and also nice to have more indoor space.  
Cheers.

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From: Andy Arndt, xxxx Bayberry Dr., State College, PA 16801  
Date: Sun. Feb. 28, 2010  
RE: Whitehall Road Regional Park Plan - Comments  
Hello,

I was unable to attend the recent meeting when the Whitehall Road Regional Park Plan was reviewed. I have looked at the plan online and it looks very nice. If cuts need to be made, I'd like to see the tennis complex included in the final plan.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely

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From: Stephanie Arndt, xxxx Bayberry Drive, State College, PA  
Date: Sun, Feb 28, 2010  
RE: Whitehall Road Park Project

My husband Andy and I live on Bayberry Drive across from Orchard Park, so the Whitehall Road/Blue Course Drive Park Project is very near to us. We are very excited about having a new park on that site! The plans look wonderful!

We are especially excited about the possibility of outdoor ice skating! We definitely think that should be included in the plan - there really isn't anything like that in public parks in this area!

We are also very much in favor of the tennis courts. We live right across the street from the tennis courts in Orchard Park, and can testify that they are in CONSTANT use when the weather permits. There is definitely a need for more tennis courts in this area. Also, connecting to existing bike paths and incorporating bike paths into the design would be awesome!

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From: Sherry Skelton, xxxx Broadmoor Ln., State College PA 16801  
Date Sun, Feb 28, 2010 at 10:16 AM  
RE: Park suggestion

When I lived in Ca. they had places for the children to skate board. They made a pit with a wall around it. It kept them from skate boarding on the side walks and roads. I was quit impressed with this. The children where happy and so was everyone else. I really don't see a lot of people using the tennis courts. I feel instead of more things that aren't really being used that much very important. If the teenagers have a place for skate boarding that it would give them another outlet of things they like to do. Thank you for your time.

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From: Helen F. McDermid, xxxx Sleepy Hollow Drive, State College, PA  
Date Sun, Feb 28, 2010  
RE: Master plans

Thank you for accepting input after the meeting and thank you for the diversity of interests included in the plan to truly make these parks for the entire community. Here are some comments:

- 1) Thank you for considering green roofs. That is truly a visionary, progressive decision that has considerable long-term benefits.
- 2) Thank you for the consideration of green parking.

(Con't.)  
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- 3) Are the various sized ball fields suitable for single-location tournaments?
  - 4) With adding Hess Fields to the plan, is there consideration to group ball fields according to use?
  - 5) There is such a shortage of community garden space, I like the amount offered here.
  - 6) A large dog park is great!
  - 7) Is there an option for storage of community sporting equipment near the fields?
  - 8) Larger scale native plant inclusion to assist with run-off concerns
  - 9) Trails long/wide enough for cross country skiing?
  - 10) I see the surveys list basketball courts pretty high but I do not see any included, could summer basketball courts be a skating rink in the winter?
  - 11) I know nothing about model plane airfields but I remember seeing one in Philadelphia and there being an amazing mix of children/adults/older adults participating and watching. That addition would set these parks apart from an average park.
  - 13) I hope considerations are made to recognize potential long-term dangers of fertilizers and pesticides with wetlands and conservation areas so close.
- Thank you so much for the efforts you have made to seek input.
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From: Sylvia Feldman, 2548 Sleepy Hollow Dr., State College, PA 16803

Date: Sun, Feb 28, 2010

RE: Whitehall Road Regional Parklands

Dear Centre Region Council of Governments,

I would like to add a brief comment regarding the proposed Whitehall Road Regional Parklands.

Please add my voice to the group of people who are very much in favor of having community garden space represented. If possible, I'd also like to see a natural area designated for flowers to attract native pollinators much like the butterfly garden at Tudek Park. I'm also in favor of the proposed dog park.

The designs for the proposed parklands look great. Keep up the good work!

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(Con't).

From: Carol Zeiss, xxx Beaver Branch Rd., Pennsylvania Furnace, PA 16865  
Date: Sun, Feb 28, 2010

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional input on the regional parks project. I attended the Feb 23 meeting and I am very excited about the opportunity to make such a dramatic improvement in the parks of our region.

1. I support developing all three parks simultaneously.
2. If I had to prioritize the parks, I would say that the Whitehall Road park is the most important because it would have the greatest overall impact.
3. However, I think it's extremely important that CRPR purchase Hess Field & keep it functioning for softball.

The main suggestion I have for changes to the Whitehall plans would be to reduce the number of diamond shaped fields & increase the rectangular fields. Especially if all three parks are developed, the diamond shaped fields at Oak Hall & Hess will go a long way toward improving the availability of those fields. The rectangular fields will be used by multiple sports, during multiple seasons; it's important to build as many as possible, while balancing the needs of all groups.

As a taxpayer, I am willing to help finance this major improvement for our community. Thank you.

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From: Terrence Guay, xxx Claremont Avenue, State College, PA 16801  
Date: Mon, Mar 1, 2010  
RE: Whitehall Road Park  
Dear COG/CRPR,

I am writing in support of the proposed Whitehall Road Park project. As I have been in China the past several days, I have been unable to access the minutes from last Tuesday's meeting. However, I did read the article in the CDT the following day.

My family and I are willing to support the planned park development, even if the cost ultimately reaches the \$19-20 million range, and especially if the new park includes year-round tennis facilities. I am an avid tennis player, but have difficulty finding sufficient indoor court time in State College. My two children (ages 8 and 10) have developed an interest in the sport over the past year or so, but have even more difficulty playing during the 5-6 months when outdoor play is not possible. I am aware of other communities around the US where municipal parks contain indoor multi-sport complexes, including tennis courts. I see little reason why the CRPR could not do likewise, and tennis would be an excellent sport to start with.

I urge the COG to commit the resources necessary to develop the Whitehall Road Park to include year-round tennis facilities.

Regards

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From: Trisha Lang, Director of Planning & Zoning, Ferguson Township  
Date: Tue, Feb 23, 2010 at 9:05 AM  
RE: Whitehall Road Park Meeting comments

I am the Director of Planning & Zoning for Ferguson Township but do not live in the Centre Region so, I am not certain if my comments "count" but I wanted to bring two items to your attention. I will likely not be able to make tonight's meeting as I had no idea prior to late yesterday

that a meeting had even been scheduled. I am in and out of the COG building on a regular basis and actually watch C-Net but saw no announcements in either location. As a result, the Township was unable to “get the word out” through its website or C-Net contract. If, as a Township employee I had no notice about the meeting, it is likely that many others have had insufficient notice as well.

In looking for some information on C-Net, I found that the small but vocal group of “tennis people” in the Region, actually identified the date, time, and location of the public meeting as THEIR meeting – encouraging all those with interest in tennis to attend – with no mention that this was a meeting open to ALL to discuss the full range of facilities that might be provided at the regional park. Again I find it VERY unfortunate that this small group has managed to co-opt and literally monopolize the public input process. I ask you to consider that while this group may represent a majority of those in attendance at any one meeting, they most certainly do NOT represent a majority of the residents of the Region. It is perhaps unfortunate that other groups with sports interests are not so well organized as I fear their needs could be overlooked when the opportunity for public input is not well advertised.

We have now provided a link to the CRPR website (where much of the regional park information can be found) from our township website, and will make it available through the comment period. However, I feel that with a little more cooperation, we could have been far more instrumental in the success of tonight’s meeting. I hope you will keep that in mind as the planning process moves forward. Thank you.

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PART 2 – Feb. 24, 2010

Thanks for your response. I am glad to hear that you had such a great turn out. I only read the CDT online and am rarely home in time to see the news, so apparently I just missed all of your advertising efforts. Keep us in mind as a partner when holding future events – we can use the newsletter, website or C-Net to help out.

So far, I am excited about the design concept that seems to have the most support. This will truly be a great asset to the Township and the Region.

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End of Compiled Comments