



Centre Region Council of Governments REGIONAL PARK PLANNING COMMITTEE

2643 Gateway Drive #1 • State College, PA 16801-3885 www.crpr.org
Phone: (814) 231-3071 • Fax: 814. 235.7832 • E-Mail: crpr@crkog.net

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

WHITEHALL ROAD REGIONAL PARKLANDS MASTER SITE PLAN

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY MEETING #2

Tuesday, February 23, 2010, 7 – 9 PM at the Mt. Nittany Middle School, Cafeteria

Welcome and Introductions *(with 78 residents in attendance plus 5 staff and 2 consultants)*

Ronald J. Woodhead, Director CRPR, welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave some basic information and history about the project and the forming of the COG Parks Capital Committee.

Ad Hoc Regional Park Committee: Dan Klees, College Township Council

Centre Regional Recreation Authority:

Sue Mascolo, Chair, Ferguson Township;

Roy Harpster, Vice-Chair, Harris Township

Donna Conway, State College Borough;

Staff: Ronald J. Woodhead, Director CRPR; Jeff Hall, Recreation Supervisor-Sports & Fitness; Jim Steff, COG Executive Director; Diane Ishler, Office Manager; Sam Thompson, Intern

Project Consultants: Jim Pashek, Dan Jones

Note: Updates regarding the park planning process are posted at www.crpr.org. Suggestions emailed to crprlive@gmail.com through 5 PM Monday 1 Mar 2010 were also included as part of the meeting records (and compiled in a separate document).

Mr. Pashek, using a PowerPoint presentation, explained the Master Site Planning Process. He told the group that the plans are not finished but need input from everyone. That input will be taken back to the committee so the Master Site Plan can be finalized. A Master Site Plan is not a construction document and what actually gets developed sometimes changes depending on funding, priorities, etc.

Mr. Jones thanked the people for coming to the meeting and for trusting them (the consultants) to prepare the Master Site Plan for both regional parks. He indicated that the Whitehall Road Site is relatively flat with one woodlot.

Mr. Pashek asked what should be placed in this park? Interviews were held previously with sport group leaders and CRPR staff to find out what the needs were. He reviewed the sports field analysis of field demand and supply. Later in the planning process, tennis was added as that group made their needs known. He reviewed the approved Oak Hall Master Site Plan and what they discovered through the process of developing the plan. At that time, it was assumed that Hess Softball Field Complex would still be in operation with their 4 softball fields. When it was announced that the fields at Hess might be lost due to being sold, a review was done and the thinking is comparing the costs per field, it is a good investment for providing the needed softball fields (rather than building new).

Mr. Jones started with the Whitehall Road Capacity Diagram was prepared in the process of developing a Master Site Plan for Oak Hall. The capacity drawings only showed how many fields were

thought to be able to fit in this park, not what they thought it should look like. The goals of the project have been to respect the environment, accommodate as much as possible, be cost effective and have a great identity. The mission of the regional parks is to provide needed athletic facilities with complimentary items (roads, maintenance facility, keep circulation simple, etc.). He reviewed the most recent Master Site Plan for the Whitehall Road Parkland.

Mr. Pashek then went over the costs for these parks - assuming that Hess Field was acquired and the 25 acres adjacent to Whitehall Road Parkland was acquired. The total to develop all three parks is \$18,950,000. He proposed that the sports groups could raise \$1,000,000; the naming of different portions of the facilities could raise \$1,000,000; there is currently \$1,700,000 in the regional parks fund; and the balance (\$15,000,000) could be a bonded over 20 years. This scenario would have all three parks built within 3-5 years. He talked about the funding and how everyone must work together if these parks are to be developed.

He then asked the people at each table to work together to look at the plans and discuss what they like about the plan and what they don't like about the plan. Each table took about 15 minutes to consider the plan and the questions. At the end of 15 minutes, Mr. Pashek asked a person from each table to share what the others had said about the plans. A listing of those suggestions / comments is attached.

After each table provided their input, Mr. Pashek reminded everyone that a tax increase to pay for these parks would not be popular; each municipality is fighting tight budgets and reduced government funding. This means people who are interested in these parks being built must attend the official meetings of their townships, COG, etc. and express interest in seeing the parks developed.

Mr. Klees explained as an elected official and also as a member of the COG Parks Capital Committee, that funding is tight and it will take everyone working together and some creative ways to finance these parks.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Meeting Summary prepared by Diane Ishler, CRPR Office Manager

Attachment A	Items Liked / Items That Can Be Improved (from each Group Spokesperson)
Attachment B	Roster of Attendees
See Website	Written Comments submitted by 5 PM on 1 Mar 2010

APPENDIX A – Suggestions Provided by Each Group (Compiled)

<u>Plan Items Liked / Good</u>	<u>Plan Items Needing Improvement</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access, Circulation Plan • Interim Plan for Use • Tennis Complex (year round) • Meet Community Needs • Bring Visitors to Region • Financial Potential • Winter Sports Use • Community Gardens • Picnic Groves • Hess Field (Critical that we buy) • Indoor Tennis (Revenue Generating) • Layout of Park • Specialty of each park • Flexibility of fields • Separation of Passive Uses • Balance of Uses • Little League Support • Rectangular Fields • Artificial Surface • Hess Field (Volunteers) • Indoor Tennis (can use for volleyball & fitness classes) • Softball & indoor tennis are revenue generators. • Cost per person seems reasonable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More storage • Dog park – too large / too small • Was a demand assessment prepared for the fields? Yes • Cost per person/family • Bike path connections • Secondary (non-sports) uses for kids • Public / private partnerships • Lights at Hess Field • Flexibility of Diamond fields • Number of Diamond fields • Increase Court Games • Needs to be affordable • Support by the hospitality sector? • Balance of Public / private needs / use • Flexibility of fields each year/season • Need speed control through the park • Connections of local and regional trails • Widen the perimeter path for use by bikes • Traffic signal needed at Whitehall Road • Level off fields & seed for play until parks are developed. • Add lights on the tennis courts • Did not see need for Community Gardens • Asked for play areas /play areas on plan • Asked about the tree shadows – would it bother ballplayers? • Need adult areas – tennis all year would be good for adults • Asked how people of Patton Twp. feel about parks being far away? • Hess Field should remain for adults & youth • Play surfaces in tennis building should allow multipurpose use. • Asked about winter sports (at Oak Hall) • Develop a sequence and start the visualization • Don't forget basketball and lacrosse • Prioritize cost benefit of different units • One access for large events • Make Hess Field more productive • Parking – paved or not? • Allow space for less-organized sports • Lights at Oak Hall • Did not like “All 3 parks or Nothing” development plan. • Should include a multi-purpose building

APPENDIX B – Roster of Attendees

78 Residents Signed the Roster
(plus 5 staff & 2 consultants)

Barbara First	Eric Spielvogel
Stanley Stone	John First
Richard Mandel	Dean Amick
Frank W. Schmidt	Patricia Mandel
Betsy Brett	Rick Tetzlaff
Mary Ann Harvey	Kelly DiMuccio
Jim Eckess	Taylor Greer
Mike Brett	Tobin Short
Scott Thompson	Laura Adams
Shawna Doerksen	Fran McDermid
Kathy DiMuccio	Bill Keough
Elizabeth Goreham	Ron Weis
Maria DiMuccio	Allan Swope
Rod Frazier	Pat Trimble
Mary C. Schmidt	Matthew Musser
Jonathan P. Mathew	Rick Rex
Karl Mierzejewski	Kim Pro
Brian Hatman	Patty Craig
Carol Zeiss	Bill Drawl
Blake Gall	Bruce Rittenhouse
Mike Nierle	Rachel Schwab
Ron Smith	Bob Fedorchak
Jann Duck	Jill Gomez
Elizabeth First	Malissa DeLong
Sam Phillips	Margie Swoboda
Barry Evans	Judy Covalt
John R. Clayton	Bobbie Hayes
Carol Oliver	Paul M. Rittenhouse
Linda Gall	Mary Conner-Righter
Cheree Jones	Chris Kiratzis
Jeff Deitrich	David Conron
Jeffrey Brownson	Misty Simco
Mike Herr	Craig McMullen
Pete Kauffman	Rick Hall
John Marsden	Cynthia Koss
Diana Farr	Ann Parry
Jerry Fisher	Dick Mascolo
Dan Klees	Sue Mascolo
Donna Conway	Roy Harpster