



## Centre Region Council of Governments REGIONAL PARK PLANNING COMMITTEE

---

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

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

### SUMMARY OF SPORT GROUP LEADER MEETING

Tuesday, February 16, 2010, 7 PM at the COG Building, Forum Room  
The Whitehall Road Regional Park Master Site Plan

---

#### Welcome and Introductions

Ronald J. Woodhead, CRPR Director, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the groups for all they do. The agenda listed the following goals for the meeting:

- ▶ What's the big picture? Learn about the facilities planned for Oak Hall Regional Park, Whitehall Road Regional Park and for the Hess Softball Field Complex (if acquired).
- ▶ How can these new park facilities improve the services your group provides to the community?
- ▶ How can we work together to build and operate the new park facilities?

He explained that the groups are listed on the agenda as partners because he believes that this partnership is important to recreation in the Centre Region. He recognized the two CRRA members present (Sue Mascolo and Roy Harpster). Those present included (*22 sport group leaders from 11 groups in attendance, plus 5 staff and 2 consultants*):

#### Sports Groups:

State College Area Softball Assoc. – Dean Amick and Jann Duck  
Our Lady of Victory School/RC Church, Sports Program – Chris Rogan  
Coed Softball League – Jeff Deitrich  
S. C. Little League – Greg Korn and Jerry Fisher  
Babe Ruth Baseball – John Snyder  
Centre County YMCA / SC Branch – Scott Mitchell and Howard DeLong  
Centre Lacrosse – Mary Ann Harvey and Jim DeLong  
Centre Bulldogs Youth Football Program – Bryan Kuruzovich and Scott Storll  
Centre Region Community Tennis Assn. – Laurene Phillips and Carol Oliver  
Centre Soccer Assn. – Bob Langton, Jason Pritts, Brian Hartman  
S.C. Area School District – Ron Pavlechko (Athletic Dir.), Jim Pawelczyk (Board Member)

**CRPR Board:** Sue Mascolo, Roy Harpster

**Project Consultants:** Jim Pashek, Dan Jones

**Staff:** Ronald J. Woodhead, Director CRPR; Jeff Hall, Recreation Supervisor-Sports & Fitness; Greg Roth, Parks Supervisor, Jim Steff, COG Executive Director; Diane Ishler, Office Manager

Other sports groups invited but not in attendance: Faith Baptist Church Softball, Grace Lutheran Church Softball, Halfmoon Little League, State College Stars Softball, Lemont Ducks (Centre Co. Baseball League), American Legion Baseball, SC Lions Youth Football Program, Baileyville Field Leagues.

Each participant was provided with an Agenda and three plans that included (1) the approved Master Site Plan for Oak Hall Regional Parklands, (2) the draft Whitehall Road Regional Park Master Site Plan and (3) the Hess Softball Field Complex Plan. Mr. Woodhead explained that there are three tasks he would ask of those present – and to reply within 30 days of this meeting.

1. To attend the Community Meeting and encourage the group's members to attend.
2. For the groups to take plans home and suggest changes.
3. To let the CRPR staff know if your group can contribute to make sure these projects become a reality.

He stated that the Master Plan Process consists of two parts: First, to finalize the park plan what we are working towards. Second, prepare a funding plan to get there. While the two parts are related, we must be careful that the cost discussion does not block the development of the best plan for the future.

Mr. Woodhead then turned the meeting over to Mr. Pashek who indicated this meeting was to help gather information and input. He would like a dialog from the group instead of lecturing them. He explained that he will be presenting information to the General Forum on Monday, February 22, 2010 and then collecting more information at the Public Community Meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2010. He reviewed the original field needs that were developed several years ago and those from more recent meetings with different sports groups. He explained that tennis was not one of the original sports that had been interviewed but the interest shown by tennis in the meetings has been extensive.

Mr. Jones then reminded everyone that the goal for developing these fields was to accommodate serious athletic programs while being responsive to the environment, keep the parks beautiful, and have a good return on the investment. Using the handouts and the overheads, he reviewed the Oak Hall Master Site Plan that was approved by COG in October. Then he discussed what has been suggested so far for the Whitehall Road Parkland Master Site Plan. He referred to the Hess Softball Field Complex drawing. Mr. Woodhead explained that the COG is currently being asked to consider purchasing the Hess Complex. The Parks Capital Committee has been investigating the possibilities and within the next 2 – 3 months, the recommendation to purchase should go before the General Forum for their decision.

For the purposes of the discussion at this meeting, Mr. Pashek asked that the groups pretend that Hess has been purchased with all four fields (since the continued operation of those fields was included in the field planning report, Oak Hall with 3 diamond (softball) fields, and Whitehall with 5 diamond fields and 9 rectangular fields. He reviewed some of the plans being proposed. He opened the meeting for comments:

- Is there storage available at the park? (c/o Lacrosse) Mr. Pashek indicated provisions for storage can be included. For example, a portion of the pavilion building contains storage but maybe more should be planned.
- How much does CRPR want to get involved in these sports? (c/o Football) Mr. Woodhead answered that CRPR would facilitate the use of the fields but the agency is not interested in running the operation of the groups' activities. He noted how CRPR programs have now moved to more niche-areas since the sport groups are taking care of those activities.
- Is the indoor facility shown on the plan for tennis heated? Mr. Pashek indicated that he thought the indoor facility would be heated and that it would be specific to tennis since tennis did not lend itself to a multiuse facility due to the surfaces of the courts.

- What about other indoor areas for other sports? (c/o Football) They need indoor space for cheerleading and for other sports.
- Suggestions were made for outdoor batting cages and bullpens. A discussion followed as to the quantity and desired locations. The smaller fields could share those support facilities, but the larger fields should have their own.
- Mr. Pashek asked how much storage would be ideal. Baseball indicated an 8'x10' shed. Storage would be needed for lacrosse, baseball, soccer, and maybe some for football.
- A comment was made that field lights would be a concern problem at Whitehall Road for the planned development shown along the park entrance road. The comment was made that it is not known when the houses would be developed and that the only sure place for lights is Hess Field (since one field there already has lights).
- If some of the fields have lights, is there going to be security lights along the driveway or parking areas? Mr. Pashek indicated there would be some. A discussion was held about lights and the effect on surrounding areas. It was noted that the new lights today do not shed much light outside the field area.

Mr. Pashek then turned the discussion to funding these projects. He reviewed different ways to pay for these projects: reduce the scope of development; donations of in-kind services; grants; contributions from sports groups; corporate donations – fund raising and naming rights; annual contributions from the participating municipalities; and maybe others.

-A suggestion of naming benches to raise funds was made by Ms. Harvey.

-Ms. Oliver (c/o Tennis) suggested that since this is exercise and there are organizations who are striving to get America heart healthy, perhaps some support could come from those organizations, hospitals or other government organizations.

Mr. Pashek suggested that one way to fund the projects was to raise \$1 million in donations, \$1 million from the sports groups, use existing funds \$1.7 million and finance the balance through a bond. He used a chart to show what municipalities would have to contribute and reviewed several funding scenarios.

After reviewing the Cranberry Township sports park as an example, he was hopeful that the sport groups would support the plans. He wants the groups to be happy with the plan, encourage their members to attend meetings, and to let various elected officials know how important these projects are to the community. Mr. Pashek indicated there will be limited state grant funds available this year and probably next year, but people should still let their representatives know this is important.

- The question was asked, "What is the game plan?" If we had \$19 million, where would we start? Mr. Pashek indicated that he probably would start with the Hess Field renovations since it is already developed. If enough money was not raised to complete the 3 parks, he would focus on one park.

- It was mentioned that a sports group who donated could get priority scheduling. What does that mean and how much money would you have to donate to get this priority scheduling? The groups felt it would be easier for them to approach their members and following if there were some guide lines as to what the donations would mean. Mr. Woodhead indicated that this is new territory for CRPR and it is a relationship that should be defined so it could be fair to both the public and the sport groups. A suggestion was made to find out what other areas have done to make it work.

- A comment was made that private citizens may not want to invest in a park that has its usage already scheduled to sport groups, it needs to be a community park. Mr. Pashek emphasized that there is a lot in the park that is for the community beside the fields. Also, priority scheduling would not mean exclusive uses; community uses would remain important.

- One group leader noted that when these fields are completed and games are being played there, it frees other municipal park fields that are currently overbooked.
- A question was asked about concessions: Can a sport group set up a concession to sell in these parks? As is the current practice, the answer was yes, only by permit. There was some discussion about providing space for concessions that could be used by all sports and park visitors (and operated by the sport groups).

Mr. Woodhead thanked everyone and reminded everyone there were three things that they were being asked to do:

- To let their members know about the meetings especially the Public Meeting on Tuesday, February 23, at the Mt. Nittany Middle School from 7 -9 PM. and to attend the meeting.

- To make suggestions for the plans,

- To make a commitment to talk about what their group can do to help the projects

In the next 30 days, please write or email any comments and suggestions so they can be included in the plans. If you cannot come to the Community Meeting #2 on Tuesday, February 23, please mail or email your comments (within 7 days of that meeting) so they can be included in the record of that meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Meeting summary by Diane Ishler, CRPR Office Manager

*Notes:*

- *Updates regarding the park planning process are posted at [www.crpr.org](http://www.crpr.org).*
- *Suggestions may be emailed to [crprlive@gmail.com](mailto:crprlive@gmail.com) or [crpr@crcog.net](mailto:crpr@crcog.net)*