

IX. Appendices

- A. Public Input Summaries**
- B. Previous Report Summaries**
- C. Community Attitude and Interest Survey – Survey Instrument**
- D. National Benchmarking from Survey**
- E. Ohio Community Benchmarking Survey Results**
- F. Land Acquisition Tips**
- G. How You Can Help**

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

By: Patrick Hoagland, ASLA

**BRANDSTETTER CARROLL INC.
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS**

February 13, 2008

Approximately 30 people attended the first public workshop for the Liberty Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Patrick Hoagland provided a summary of the Master Plan process and then engaged to the group in floor questions. The questions and responses are as follows:

1. Where do you go for Parks and Recreation Activities?

- Dudley Park on Yankee Road with a trail
- Smith Park in Middletown
- Dudley Woods for the trails
- VOA Park
- Fort Liberty Play Land
- Mason Pool and Recreation Center
- Cherokee Park
- Beck Park in West Chester for Baseball
- Wetlands Park
- LSO and Schools
- Wilhelmina for Cross Country Skiing
- Liberty Park for events
- Reserves Park for Geocaching
- Bike Trail
- Maud Hughes Incline for exercise
- Allen Park
- YMCA
- Sharon Wood
- Keehner Park

2. What do you like about Liberty Township Parks?

- Close to home
- Not too crowded
- Connectivity to the neighborhoods
- Natural and wooded areas
- Well maintained and clean
- They are free to use
- Playland
- Diversity of parks
- Flora and fauna
- Feel safe in the parks
- Family events
- Picnic shelters

3. What do you not like or what is missing in Liberty Township Parks and Recreation? What can be improved?

- Too much honeysuckle
- Need nature education programs
- Need better parking and handicap parking Need nature education programs
- Need water play features
- Need a universal/boundless playground
- Some areas are isolated
- Need parks where the residents live
- Vandalism
- Need lights to extend the use for the parks and security
- There is very little active recreation space
- Need adult recreation activities and for seniors, such as basketball courts, tennis courts and other activities
- Need more planned programs
- Need fishing and boating area
- Need disk golf
- Need sand volleyball courts
- Need to complete the bike paths
- Need community gardens
- Need an Arboretum
- There are no funds
- Need to generate revenue
- Unauthorized uses in the park
- Skate boarding in the wrong areas
- Need a dog park
- Need to celebrate history of the area
- A lack of public awareness of the parks
- Need involvement for hobbyists
- Need a band shell, possibly in Liberty Park

4. We then asked the group to divide into three smaller groups. They were to pretend that it is the year 2018 and they are extremely pleased with the Parks and Recreation facilities and services that are offered by Liberty Township. What has happened and what is available to make this system so successful? Each group listed the ideas on index cards which were then taped on the wall and categorized into similar items. The following are the categories and the items that were mentioned by the groups. The group's priority for the item is indicated in parentheses.

Trails

- Connectivity with more access (1)
- Safe walk and bike connectors throughout the Township (2)
- More bike path facilities such a pedestrian paths (4)

Awareness of Parks

- Awareness (1)
- Safety (1a)
- Signage such as entrance and directional sign (1b)
- Yearly calendar published on activities (1c)

Park Security

- Secure Parks (10)

Park System Funding

- Outside the box fund raising (1)
- Combine funding sources to get bigger results (2)
- Get needed land through donation and zoning requirements (7)

New Facilities

- More fields for organized sports (3a)
- Nature and history education (3b)
- Multi-use facilities (3)
- Facilities improvement (3)
- Every street with a path or sidewalk street (3a)
- More emphasis on nature and peace and quite hiking (3b)
- Interactive water features (3c)
- Vending machines and snack bars (3d)
- Amphitheaters (3e)
- Active multi-purpose fields (5)
- Amphitheaters (9)

Open Space

- Open space for unorganized sports (4)
- Open space with more woods and less structure (5)

Activities

- Activities (4)
- Nature center and programs (4a)
- Letter box/geo-cache (4b)
- Dog park (4c)
- Frisbee golf (4d)
- Ice skating (4e)
- Nature Program (6)
- Community of inclusion-handicapped friendly (6)
- Historical events and programs (7)
- Educational gardens (8)

Destination Parks

- Destination draw of the park (2)
- Partner with Metalex for events (2a)
- Signature events such as marathons, soccer tournaments, etc. (2b)

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
WILHELMINA PARK AREA NEIGHBORS
PROJECT NO. 07125**

By: Patrick Hoagland, ASLA

**BRANDSTETTER CARROLL INC.
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS**

December 5, 2008

Liberty Township mailed invitations to the residents with addresses on Wilhelmina Drive as well as residents within 250 feet of the proposed Wilhelmina Park. They also sent notices to the surrounding neighborhood associations to publicize the meeting. Approximately 30 residents and neighbors of the area attended this meeting. Andy Meyer started the meeting with an introduction of the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process. Patrick Hoagland then provided a summary of some the public input generated to this date and discussed how Wilhelmina Park will be one of the first projects of the Master Plan because it is land that the Township owns. He asked the audience a few questions.

The first question is: What do you like about the current park space? Most of the people in attendance had visited the site. Items that were mentioned include the following:

- Beauty
- No apartment buildings were developed
- The open space
- It is level
- The serenity
- Wildlife
- Limited access
- It is quiet
- Wetlands

We then asked, what are some of the issues and concerns that the neighbors have regarding potential development of the park? The following are the comments:

- Parking on the street
- Traffic
- Safety
- Need a buffer to the homes
- The gas line that goes through the site.
- Need privacy at their homes
- Prefer no athletic fields on the site
- The ATVs that currently use the site
- Some gun and bow shooting on the site

The discussion then turned to some of the desires for the park which included the following:

- Need a place for adults
- Pet friendly
- Prairie and wetlands area
- Indoor fitness facilities (Mr. Hoagland stated that the committee has determined that the Parks and Recreation in Liberty Township would focus on outdoor facilities).
- A nature center
- Restrooms
- Lighting in the park for security
- An all access playground
- A skate park
- Access to Princeton Road, especially if there is to be a lot of traffic. Avoid a cut through if there is access to Princeton.
- Preserve and add to the wooded areas
- A fishing lake
- Trails
- An amphitheater

Mr. Hoagland then presented three concept plans, A, B, and C each with varying levels of development. Concept A included four baseball fields, four soccer fields, access to Princeton Road, picnic areas, an amphitheater, playgrounds and walking trails. There was a lot of parking along Wilhelmina Drive.

Concept B included no athletic fields, but most of the other activities with less parking and no access to Princeton Road. Concept C had two baseball fields and two soccer fields with the other elements that were included and without the access to Princeton Road. The group was very determined that there should not be any baseball fields or soccer fields on this site because of the noise, the privacy, and especially the amount of traffic they would generate. They were very concerned even though there are two ways out of this neighborhood, one is pretty narrow and there are several stop signs and children playing on the streets in this area. So the group overwhelmingly preferred Concept Plan B, which had no fields. They also suggested that some of the parking that is shown parallel to Wilhelmina Drive should be more perpendicular extending into the park area so that it is not right across from their homes. Some other items that were mentioned as possibilities for inclusion in the park included an area for pet exercise, a pond and other improvements. The wetlands in the area would remain as they are in an undisturbed state. There was discussion of utilization of the detention area. It was designed as detention for the 440 apartment units and the drainage from the neighborhood goes into this area. Therefore, in the more detailed Park Master Plan Phase, we will look further into whether an amphitheater could be developed down in this bowl area.

**CONFERENCE MEMORANDUM
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP, OHIO
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Present: Liberty Township Master Plan Steering Committee
Wayne Bain

By: Patrick D. Hoagland, ASLA

**BRANDSTETTER CARROLL INC.
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS**

July 30, 2008

The purpose of this meeting was primarily to discuss the future of parks and recreation in Liberty Township. Prior to this discussion, the group discussed the contents of Technical Report #3 which includes the following:

1. Update of the inventory.
2. Discussion of benchmarking to other area communities.
3. Review of the Comprehensive Plan Recommendations.
4. A discussion by John Granville of Butler Metro Parks regarding the recently unveiled Enhancement Plan for VOA Park.
5. The discussion of the future vision for Parks and Recreation in Liberty Township.

The Following are the items that are included in the vision:

- Residents of all ages and abilities (physical and financial) can go to play and exercise, relax, and enjoy nature within the Township.
- Ability to interact with the environment.
- Foster and enhance nature education for our children.
- Physical health of the community is enhanced by the green space.
- Property values and quality of life are improved in the Township.
- Collaboration and partnership to maximize the efficiency and opportunities for parks and recreation.
- Community access to parks for all residents.
- Preserve the past and plan for the future.
- Create destinations that nurture friends and family.
- Unique and scenic park and recreation opportunities.
- Sustainable financially.
- Foster appreciation of nature.
- Get people active and outside.

- A walkable community.
- Engage residents to volunteer in activities.
- Foster community identity.
- Developers provide usable park land.
- Adequate parking and support facilities at all parks.
- Appropriate design to accommodate all ages and abilities.
- Use grants and comprehensive funding strategies to implement the plan.
- A wide variety of active and passive activities available.
- Use “Friends” organizations to support implementation of the Master Plan.
- Special events generate revenue such as sponsorships and vendors.
- Partnerships with Butler MetroParks.
- Economy of scale
- Efficient and economical as possible.
- Provide services and facilities that other organizations will not provide such as the YMCA, private fitness clubs, etc.
- Planned native planting program such as a tree inventory for all Township owned park land.
- Identify resources that are unknown such as a private arboretum, the state listed hickory tree, etc.
- Land for both active and passive parks.
- Expand parks in the western portion of the Township to allow for good geographical distribution of parks.
- Awareness, marketing of the communications is improved.

Other Discussion Items

1. With apparent need for more soccer fields, softball fields, etc. in the future, and the fact that more organizations are requesting the use of the fields, the Township needs to reconsider a field use policy.
2. It is important to gather information from other communities regarding their field use policies.
3. The Township currently has a “Friends of Liberty Parks and Recreations”. The current group is not actively pursuing fund raising. The group needs to be regenerated.
4. It is the opinion of several members of the Committee that indoor recreation facilities such as the YMCA, private indoor fitness facilities and schools meet the need for indoor recreation in the community.

5. It was also indicated that residential pools are meeting the outdoor aquatic needs.
6. Liberty Township should focus more on nature education, trails, and reforestation.
7. Areas we must consider in the future:
 - a. The Township's largest demographic is the children in the community. We must not ignore the need of additional active needs.
 - b. A priority is ball fields, however, there needs to be a better geographic distribution of the fields.
8. The Terry Farm, a private facility, plans to build an amphitheater.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: February 14, 2008
Group: OSU Extension and 4-H
Met with: Dan Remley

This is a countywide organization and a branch of the Ohio State University Extension Service which has a branch at each of the Ohio counties. They have outreach programs, educational programs, and other activities. The programs on youth development coincide with the 4-H. They have programs for agricultural and natural resources, horticulture, master gardener programs and others. There are also programs in family consumer sciences such as nutrition and health, assistance with food pantries, parenting, financial management, food safety. There are also projects in community development. One of their activities is trying to develop more walkable communities to assist in developing healthier life styles.

Vision

1. Community gardens which will be an ideal with some new developments to get the youth involved and build community. It can be one half to two acres in size.
2. They have a “health nuts” program which is their environmental and health education program that is with the education program in conjunction with Butler Metro Parks and would like to see this extend into the Township.
3. Farm land preservation is also one of their visions.
4. The trails and walkable communities, especially around schools is one of their goals.
5. They will promote smart growth such as mixed use development in the Bethany area.
6. They would also like to begin a Master Naturalist Program similar to their Master Gardeners Program, which could help with environmental and education programs throughout the County and Township.
7. Newsletter will promote the educational programs.
8. They would also like to see some connections to Wilhelmina Park so that the homeowners have good access and possibly a road to Princeton Road to provide better access. He would like to see green space preserved in this area as well.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: February 14, 2008

Group: MetroParks of Butler County

Met with: Executive Director John Granville
Jason Boerger, Superintendent and Ranger
and Chief of Operations
Kevin Clements, Park Manager for Dudley Woods

The Park District currently operates with money from the State from local government funds and they do not have a levy. They are the only Park District in the State without an operating levy. They are willing to develop partnerships to maximize their impact and reduce any overlap within their organizations. They are developing about a third of the VOA property and will be taking over the other two thirds in the southern portion that is owned by the Township. The 180 acres that they currently operate has a 35 acre lake and other activities. The new area is slated to have about 18 soccer fields and a wide variety of other active and passive facilities.

Their funding also comes from stickers on the cars which is five dollars per year per car or ten dollars for a transferable sticker or two dollars per day. They only have three ticket booths so much of it is simply on the honor system.

They have a wide variety of small properties throughout the County and that development takes place with local government funds, property transfer, grants, etc. With the lower real estate market, they are getting some of the transfer tax cut back and they see this as a challenge.

Their budget is currently is approximately \$2.5 million.

They currently have about 30 staff members with many of them being part time and only 11 full time staff. They have a lot of volunteer support. They partner with several non-profit to help their mission.

We discussed Dudley Woods, which is owned by the Township and operated by the MetroParks. This site is not big enough. It may or may not have a trail easement over a piece of property in the center of the site. Albert Dudley donated the land and own the property which the trail crosses. In general, this site is too small for what they are trying to do and would like to get more land in the area. Andy Meyer will check some of the Township property records to see if any easements for access across Mr. Dudley's property where granted.

Vision

- They would like to have large parks near the population centers.
- Coordinate bike trails throughout the county. This includes coordination with the Conservancy District on the connection between Little Miami and Great Miami trails.
- They want more paved trails, with convenient access.
- Dudley Woods needs a restroom and a playground area. There is a Romtec type toilets currently at the site.

Metro Parks provided a summary sheet for the site which includes the following information. The Park is called the William F and Cora Dudley Woods, the address is 5591 Hankins Road. The facility assets include the following:

- 64 acres of mixed habitat including Upland Forest and flood plain.
- Gregory Creek goes through the park.
- Gregory Cabin is restored on the site
- Reserveable wheel chair assessable picnic shelter accommodates 64 people with 7 eight foot long picnic table, one 10' wheel chair assessable picnic table, one large grill and one small grill.
- Picnic area with two 8' table and one small park style grill.
- Romtec wheel chair accessible restroom with single riser for men and women.
- Hackberry Trail is 1.4 miles of multiple habitats.
- Information kiosk.
- Parking for passenger vehicles, two handicap parking spaces and bus parking area.

Vision

- They would like to have large parks near the population centers.
- Coordinate bike trails throughout the county. This includes coordination with the Conservancy District on the connection between Little Miami and Great Miami trails.
- They want more paved trails, with convenient access.
- Dudley Woods needs a restroom and a playground area. There is a Romtec type toilets currently at the site.

Metro Parks provided a summary sheet for the site which includes the following information. The Park is called the William F and Cora Dudley Woods, the address is 5591 Hankins Road. The facility assets include the following:

- 64 acres of mixed habitat including Upland Forest and flood plain.
- Gregory Creek goes through the park.
- Gregory Cabin is restored on the site
- Reserveable wheel chair assessable picnic shelter accommodates 64 people with 7 eight foot long picnic table, one 10' wheel chair assessable picnic table, one large grill and one small grill.
- Picnic area with two 8' table and one small park style grill.
- Romtec wheel chair accessible restroom with single riser for men and women.
- Hackberry Trail is 1.4 miles of multiple habitats.
- Information kiosk.
- Parking for passenger vehicles, two handicap parking spaces and bus parking area.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: February 14, 2008

Group: Lakota Sports Organization (LSO)

Met with: Jason Leyda, President
Corey Backstrom,
Bruce Rhodes, Executive Administrator

The group provided an overview of their organization in response to some of the pre-interview questions which is attached. The following are some of the other items which were discussed:

- The organization is growing and they are the only organization in the Township that offers soccer.
- Westchester has recreation soccer and uses the school sites; therefore they have less overhead and charge less.
- LSO funding involves two properties which they operate and maintain.
- 75 percent of their users in the program are from Liberty Township.
- There is one other recreation baseball group in West Chester.
- There are no Township provided baseball fields in the Township. The group spends \$10,000 per baseball field each year for maintenance.
- For another contact, we should talk with Jay Sheppard with Upward flag football and they have approximately 200 kids in the program from Liberty Township and Westchester.
- There are no basketball courts in the Township and tennis takes place at the school sites.
- The group does background checks take which cost them \$15,000 per year.

- Liberty Park needs maintenance. The soccer fields are low and remain wet. They need to raise the fields up.
- They held a \$750,000 per year budget.
- At the LSO property the schools could extend the bus parking which would cause them to lose three of their larger fields adjacent to Liberty Junior School. When the maintenance barn was developed, it took 3 to 4 of the fields away.
- Lakota School District is the seventh largest school district in the State with 17, 500 children in the program.
- There was an adult softball complex in West Chester which is has been taken out of use.
- The current fields at the VOA site are in very poor condition.
- Beckett field in Westchester is a new complex which is developed by the Tif money from Union Center. This replaced Basil Park.
- There are no lighted fields for soccer or baseball in the area.
- Their program currently has a wait list.
- One problem they have is that the fields never get a chance to rest and they are just getting by with enough fields now. There will probably lose the large field first.
- Fees are \$90 per season for soccer and \$100 to \$150 for baseball, depending on the age group.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: February 14, 2008

Group: Lakota Thunderbirds Youth Basketball

Met with: Bill Kroth

This group currently has 90 teams of boys and girls from 3rd to 8th grade. They use Lakota School District boundaries and have 900 children in the program with about ten children per team. They have 200 volunteers and a ten person board to oversee the organization. Information can be found at Tbirdhoops.org. The programs run from November through February. They practice at the 12 elementary and 4 Junior High Schools and the Kindergarten and they play their games in the Junior High Schools. They have a fee of \$125 per child. They have a 100,000 budget. It is noted that there are 500 new families in the school system. They are currently turning children away because they can not have any more teams. They pay for the use of Junior High and for weekend use for the games on Saturday and Sunday.

Vision

- They need meeting places for their board and groups.
- They are looking for major sponsors to pay for practice time and possibly use of private facilities.
- They could possibly build their own indoor facility at some point in the future.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: February 14, 2008

Group: Boy Scout Troop #944

Met with: Jeff Allen

1. There are two other Boy Scout Troop groups in the community as well. They currently have forty to fifty scouts through St. Max Church. They use Dudley Park for their kick off program. Some of the Eagle Scouts do a project in the park and at VOA and the Wetlands area.
2. They need space for weekend campouts which is primarily open space. They also look for service projects and assistance with other programs. They have a fall and spring Camperee which they currently perform at various locations. They would need fire rings and other facilities for this activity.
3. Some of their programs are for plant and animal identification, forestry, environmental sciences and others. If the Township would offer more programming, they would probably take advantage of the programs and possibly add some merit badge classes.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: February 14, 2008

Group: Girl Scouts

Met with: Kris Willenbrink

This is one three service areas included in the Township. There are six school and 544 girls in her program and also 1000 and 700 girls in the other programs. They use Keehner Park for their bridging ceremony. They have a day camp at Sharon Woods in Hamilton County and at Timber Hill in Butler Metro Parks. The Daisies get together at Liberty Playland and this is a good location for that activity.

They would like to do more service project, clean up of parks, etc. They need nature education programs. They have gone to Caldwell Nature Preserve in Hamilton County and North Bend Road and they have gone to Krone Conservatory in Cincinnati as well.

They get 400 new girls in the program in the Lakota School district alone with a 120 in her area. They recently redistricted. The vision includes a day camp and a twilight camp area which takes place from 6 to 9 p.m. They currently have attendance of 650 in the day camp and 250 in the twilight camp. They would need to break down into groups of 25. They would need restrooms and tents for the day camp to get some of the kids into the shade and out the sun. Trails and meeting spaces would be needed.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: February 14, 2008

Group: Partners in Prime

Met with: Steve Schnabl, Executive Director
Joanne Westwood

1. Partners in Prime is a senior citizens' organization that serves a portion of the County. They have a 30,000 square foot facility in an old school in Hamilton. They serve 1,500 home delivered meals each day with a staff of 75 people and only 10 are involved in social recreation. They have been in the Westchester area since 2000 and since 1982 they have been using a Federal Transportation Grant.
2. They also have a 3,000 square foot storefront in Westchester and another in Fairfield. There is a possibility that they could move into the old library on Cox Road when it is vacated for a new library. It is also a site that would have potential in an old Kroger.
3. They have a survey of 20,000 people in the Township with a 9 percent return rate which they will share with us when it is completed. This will help to determine some of the activities that the senior citizens would want.
4. They stated that it is difficult to get the word out about senior programs in the Township. There is a quarterly newsletter and a channel 8 cable program.
5. The program services the southern area of Butler County. One goal of theirs is to get more of the 55 plus year olds as volunteers for civic engagement. One possibility is in youth sports where they can help with organizing, planning, maintenance, etc.
6. The group has \$3 million budget and \$600,000 for the senior centers at the three sites.
7. West Chester Township helps by giving \$100,000 and Liberty Township recently helped with the funding of the survey.
8. Ideally, there will also be bocce courts, horseshoe, shuffle board, and other activities in the community.

Vision

1. To have a facility in Liberty Township in the future.
2. Some of the needs that they have include a banquet and luncheon site and a concert venue with a band stand and dance area. They could help manage a concert facility if it were available.
3. They would also like to see some tennis and basketball courts and softball leagues that can be used by the seniors.
4. A vehicle for transportation will also help them.

**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Date: May 13, 2008

Group: Lakota YMCA

Met with: John Schaller, Executive Director
Joe Ayers, Program Director,
Andy Meyer, Liberty Township

By: Patrick Hoagland

The YMCA currently sits on about six acres. It was chartered in 1988 and the building was first developed in 1991. Currently the building has about 80,000 square feet. The building includes and indoor and outdoor swimming pools, an indoor play land, a fitness area, craft room, aerobics/spinning room, a large open multi-purpose room, climbing wall, (both indoors and outdoors), two racquet ball courts and nursery room. The outdoor climbing wall is 45' tall. The indoor pool is a six lane lap pool and also a junior pool for toddlers. The outdoor pool has eight competition lanes, a slide and zero depth entry area. The recent addition to the building included enclosing of their existing lap pools, the development of the outdoor pool, the expanded fitness area and the second floor area which is a large multi-purpose room and the indoor climbing wall.

The Lakota YMCA currently has 13,000 members and most of those are within a five mile radius including mostly West Chester Township and Liberty Township.

This is an independent YMCA, so the decisions they make are for their own. They currently run all of the after school programs at all of the elementary schools in the Lakota School District. They also have a summer camp program. In addition to utilization of Liberty Park, which is located behind the YMCA, they also use Dudley Park and Sharon Woods. Sharon Woods in Hamilton County has more trees and shade area for the uses.

Their athletic programs have about 100 kids per season for the three to five year olds in developmental leagues.

Discussed Items:

1. They have a difficult time being able to use the fields in Liberty Park because they are programmed by LSO.
2. They would like to have their phone number and web page listed on the Township News Letter.
3. There is a real problem with drainage in Liberty Park.
4. Ideally, the parking lot that is located between the YMCA and the Park would be paved. This is Township owned and utilized by both groups. The entrance road is actually an easement to the Township from the YMCA and the Township is responsible for paving and maintenance of the roadway.
5. They suggested that signs indicating trail length be included in Liberty Park and the other parks as well.
6. They mainly use the park in non-busy times for their day camps.

**STAKEHOLDER MEETING
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP, OHIO
PROJECT NO. 07125**

Present: Chris Passarge, Executive Director of Business Operations for Lakota Local Schools
Andy Meyer and Jon West of Liberty Township

By: Patrick D. Hoagland, ASLA

**BRANDSTETTER CARROLL INC.
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS**

August 27, 2008

The Lokota Schools are having a Demographic Analysis Study that will be completed by the end of September or early October to look at ten year projections for the School District. The School District encompasses both Liberty and Westchester Townships. Some proposed changes which they have discussed are to change the Wyandot School from pre-kindergarten and first grades to grades 2 to 6 once they build the new Early Childhood Center at the corner of Princeton Road and Butler Warren Road. They also have a need for another early childhood center which would have pre-kindergarten through first grade in the northwest portion of the Township, since there are so many children within this age range. There is also the possibility of a site in front of a church at Millikin and Route 747, on the southwest corner of the intersection, which is another possibility for a school.

Several organizations currently use the gymnasiums, classrooms and auditoriums in the schools. These are coordinated with the Central Office. There is a \$40 per hour cost for activities that take place on the weekends. Activities during the week day already have custodians on the site, so there is no additional charge. They do require that groups have liability insurance and must prove that to the Central Office. The gymnasiums are used from November through March every night including the weekends by other organizations. Seven to eight of their buildings are also used by churches every Sunday.

The high school facilities are not used by outside organizations because they are so busy with school functions. There are over 200 teams which use the gymnasiums. Some of the organizations that use the gyms include: LSO, Thunder Birds Basketball, Saint Max, Saint John and other Mother Theresa Schools. The swim team currently practices and meets through the YMCA.

Currently, the use of outdoor fields is coordinated through the principal of the local schools. They hope to change this in the near future to where the Central Office will be responsible for scheduling these fields so they can make sure the fees are paid and the liability insurance is in place. This was one issue brought up by some of the community groups.

The schools do use the soccer fields at Liberty Park for some other pre-season activities.

The schools are looking for corporate sponsors to develop artificial turf at both high schools. They would allow community use of the fields when not used for school functions. The fields probably would be lined for football, soccer and lacrosse. They would not build artificial turf at one field without doing it at both schools. They would hope to generate some fees through rentals of the fields and use by other organizations to offset the operating costs. They may set this funding aside for future replacement of the turf in about ten years.

**FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PARKS MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 07125**

By: Wayne Bain, Brandstetter Carroll Inc.

**BRANDSTETTER CARROLL, INC.
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS**

July 22, 2008

Liberty Township Staff:

**Present: Rick Plummer, Services Director
Melanie Brokaw, HR Director/Assistant Administrator**

Comments:

- Mr. Plummer is responsible for roads, parks and cemeteries.
- He has 6 full time staff to work on roads, 4 full time staff for parks; 2 for mowing, 2 for general up-keep, trash, cleaning areas, restrooms.
- They contract out the cemetery mowing.
- Staff does playground inspection during winter months.
- At times, he uses both parks and roads staff to help with work needed to be completed, especially work in winter months.
- He hopes to hire seasonals again in the future; however, the concern with seasonals is the constant need to train new staff.
- Melanie Brokaw and Rick Plummer work closely to provide the special events in the community.
- Melanie oversees the special events for the parks as well as her HR and Assistant Administration responsibilities.
- The major events are on the 4th of July and fall events.
- She works with two committees; one for the 4th of July and a committee for fall events. This committee meets six times per year.
- Revenue from the events is used in the township for future events.

- Most of the subdivisions have a Home Owner's Association and pools for the community. There are currently 108 subdivisions in the community.
- They have an excellent relationship with the LSO; however, there currently is a poor relationship with the YMCA.
- The YMCA utilizes Liberty Park and parking lot; however, does not help with the park clean-up and parking lot repairs.
- New residents are moving into the Township and expect more from the Park Department.
- The need for ball fields is growing and the Parks cannot continue to sustain the growth.
- The Parks cannot keep up with sufficient practice fields.
- The LSO members continue to grow. They currently have 4500 players.
- Staff developed a field use policy; however, the trustees rejected it.

Vision:

1. Build a softball/basketball complex that could also host tournaments.
2. Have an area to host a 5K run. This could be a major revenue generator for the park.
3. Need a ball field attached to a large picnic shelter that could be rented to groups.
4. Develop the Wilhelmina Park facility property with an amphitheater, ball fields, concessions with electricity for festivals and concessions.
5. Proposed Tiger Woods first tee program on the Wilhelmina property.
6. Restrooms, planned in Liberty Park with full plumbing, Fort Liberty with a vaulted facility and Dudley plan vaulted in 2009.
7. Development of a Park District.
8. Hire an events coordinator to expand and improve the events in the community.
9. With development of a Parks District and a Director of Parks, the intent would be to separate the maintenance of Parks to include a Maintenance Supervisor.

Liberty Township-Stakeholder Meeting

Present: John Granville, Executive Director of MetroParks of Butler County

Comments:

- The ten year plan is in process for the 457 acre VOA Park. The intent is to have the following:
 - 9 game soccer fields
 - 12 practice soccer fields
 - 4 baseball complex with concession facility
 - 3 ball field complex with a concession facility

- The facility currently includes the following:
 - The Ronald Reagan Lodge- open 21/2 years. A real estate transfer fee helps pay the debt on the lodge.
 - A small lake.
 - Currently constructing a new amphitheater

- The Butler County MetroParks annual operating and capital budget is approximately \$2.4 million.

- They have 11 full time employees and 34 seasonal employees.

- Butler County MetroParks have 22 sites and 3600 acres.

- Butler County's next project will include the following:
 - Rentschler Forest Reserve
 - Complex with a lake, small lodge and sports facilities.

- All Departments' budgets are stressed.

Vision:

1. A potential levy for parks and recreation where MetroParks, the County, and Township all share in the benefit.

2. It is important that the County and Township share programs, and develop marketing jointly.

3. Butler County MetroParks must increase their marketing efforts.

4. Consider the possibility of a joint recreation district.

