

Grosse Ile Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update
Public Involvement
November 18, 2009 - November 19, 2009

November 18, 2009 Focus Group Discussion:

Environmental, Outdoor

What do you like?

- programming options
- abundant natural areas and open space
- pathways
- dog park (need more paths/connections to dog park)
- farm environment (equestrian)

What would you like to see in the future?

- shallow pool for dog park (concern is maintenance)
- fencing at farm needs repair (posts)
- utilize Centennial Farm as an actual farm – maintain ag structures (coop, barn, silo) and honor its historic significance
- Farming/growing initiatives with local schools
- investigate centennial historic status, both of farm and buildings
- urban co-op farms and/or gardens – Traverse City example
- promote use and education at herb garden and farm
- Reach out to current farm operators
- Farmers market on Macomb St.
- limited signage into trails (leave only footsteps...) lots of trash is collected in the woods
- recycling and trash receptacles along pathways and trails
- Lack of permanent tenant besides farm operators
- Entrance needs to welcome users so they know it is open to the public for general use. There is no central focal point – entrance.
- Directional signage
- How can we prevent misuse of parks (trash, illegal cutting of vegetation, illegal activity, motor bikes, etc.)
- Encroachment into parks by adjacent homeowners
- Pond: needs to be cleaned and restored – full of algae. Students in L.A. are interested in doing more specific plans but the Twp. needs funding, add picnic tables – generally enhanced. Aeration system???
- Add fish to pond??
- Water access for canoes/kayaks to East River – Twp. owned site north of Elba (old dump site) could be used (incorporate storage at launch site)
- Elizabeth and Water's Edge aren't the most desirable or safe access points
- Commercial uses should be allowed to keep parks running, but shouldn't overpower that they are public parks – preserve resident's PUBLIC interest in parks
- Strengthen resident's comfort using all parks for all recreational purposes (i.e. those going to Water's Edge don't often feel it is a general park; those at Centennial park might not feel like general use is allowed)
- How do we communicate with residents? (past promotional efforts haven't been that successful)
- Focus on "vacation at home" ideas

- Create partnerships with Elba Mar boat club for parking facilities... (unused green lawn area could be used) – may be beneficial to them as well – transport
- Top 3 goals: bike paths, trails, water access

Bike trails:

- Dedicated bike paths v. sidewalks
- East River Groh road south to hickory island (high pedestrian activity here!)
- East/west corridors
- High School on Grays Drive – students can commute by bike
- Trails at Airport Recreation Area – paved paths, boardwalks and/or culverts/bridges

Arts, Music & Recreation

What do you like?

- Boating, more docks would generate additional interest and use
- summer concerts at Water's edge
- toboggan hills
- trails
- basketball court at Water's Edge
- Volleyball court
- Great job improving the golf course – beautification efforts were great – carry on with it.
- cooperation of the rec. department with concerts, art projects (lending equipment and promotional resources)
- Dog Park

What would you like to see?

- Channels – needs to be more frequent - every couple of months (use internet, too!)
- website needs improvement (see “opportunities grosse ile” site) could advertise events
- pocket parks on Macomb Street
- work with all groups (DDA, etc.) interactive, cooperative – not redundant
- advertise township website
- soccer fields – can they be used without an organized game? Signs seem to prohibit general use
- one volleyball court can't accommodate tournaments
- night swimming (accommodate working people)
- line dancing in existing parking lot
- Croquet on Hawthorne
- Horseshoes
- Community Victory Garden
- Band trips to Somerset in Troy
- Discussion groups
- Hobby clubs (harmonica club)
- Senior facilities with cozy, comfortable environment and place to gather, socialize and eat together
- bike paths – transportation issues – paths would allow children to walk to school
- Encourage enrichment after school programs
- Collaboration of youth and seniors – shared programming (senior reading, playing games, etc.)
- Younger children tend to use Centennial Farm and playscape, but “castle” needs attention (graffitti, bees, general maintenance)
- Improve Airport Park
- Encourage kids to use on-island facilities like Airport park – playscape needed
- Centennial Farm is underutilized
- Many homes have ample yard for daily fun, usually parks are used for family gathering, kid playdates

- Arts and Recreation Department – supervised play (games, painting, etc.) everyday
- Line dance at the walking club (tennis club)
- transportation for seniors has improved, but could see more
- Need more day trips (shorter trips)
- Get people motivated – promote programs
- Need more speakers at Senior Center (travel, education, local govt. reps.)
- Seniors miss having Recreation Dept. representatives at their meetings
- Parking at water's edge – accessibility issues
- Consider adding a room at Centennial Farm dedicated for Seniors
- Access is difficult in natural areas
- Trail head signage – need signs to attract people to entrances, focal points, etc. Or maps provided.
- Need to invite the “middle group” between youth and seniors. Working community...
- Recognize parents gather where kids do
- Changing family patterns tend to prevent use – lack of travel options, not many parents that can take kids to daytime programs
- Need an entertainment/concert venue – band shell

Community Involvement

What do you like?

- Campouts at Centennial Farm
- Recreation programming is good – competitive prices
- Good working relationship with Recreation Dept. hosting joint events with Airport Commission, staffing, sharing venues

What would you like to see?

- fishing, outdoor activities
- passive water recreation – views of water, sitting areas, etc.
- waterfront access
- consider “sweat equity” options for social/community groups to use facilities
- more trails at Centennial Park – access from nearby residences
- bow and arrow archery range (both a facility and a program)
- teenage input into programming – advisory board with teens (6-12th grades) – go to church/community groups to find local teens rather than going to schools, where you're likely to find the same kids get involved
- Go to them instead of asking everyone to come to the Recreation Commission (consider an assembly at school or some other event).
- winter youth activities
- community center planned on Meridian
- Be realistic – acknowledge barriers like liability and try to overcome them where possible
- Promote the Recreation Commission and the current plan – keep track of progress throughout the term of the plan and make it accessible to residents
- People need to know how to support Recreation Commission and where to go for information
- Ice climbing
- Annual ice fishing competition with Gander Mountain retailer
- Additional practice football fields – Airport Commerce park has a desire to give property to GYRA for 3 practice fields
- 2 jewels: waters edge and centennial farm – will funding be available in the future? First priority of the Township OVERALL should be maintaining and retaining these two facilities.
- With recent boating restrictions on cross-border activity, demand for Sharkey's boat docks will increase - a few more transient docks might help

- Canoe/kayak launch areas
- WWTP site – access to canal
- Take advantage of and seek out fishing opportunities – fish cleaning stations
- Climbing and repelling – use SWAT facility

Athletic, Fitness & Health

What do you like?

- Shelters at Centennial & Water's Edge Park is excellent – in use quite often – shelter from weather is key
- Building maintenance
- golf upgrades are also great
- Soccer association has held meetings at both pavillions
- Fields are better since fertilized

What would you like to see?

- Northeastern part of fields accumulates water
- Pavilion at Airport Park is needed for lightning shelter for games (could also be used for concessions)
- Multi-purpose building (restrooms, meeting, storage, concession) and playscape
- Meeting room/storage/concession
- Consider athletic fields at Bertha and Marion Parks
- School funding is tight – schools may start to charge for use of their fields in the future
- Soccer Club cannot survive if they have to pay a fee for use of fields
- Water's Edge – lighting at ice rink could also be used by basketball (multi-purpose lighting would work if the fixtures could be rotated)
- Surface of basketball is too slick – rough surface

ICE SKATING

- Use existing Centennial Park pond for winter skating
- Develop an all-season arena for roller & ice hockey
- Purchase turf to place atop roller hockey rink for use by soccer
- Youth camps and cooperation with other rec groups
- launch
- Water access – rowing building or boathouse (could be used for other purposes in off-season)
- Maintenance equipment at Water's Edge
- Pond maintenance on golf course
- Location for soccer tournaments – community-wide cooperation to welcome outside residents and show off what Grosse Ile has to offer
- Lack of soccer fields & need for maintenance – current facilities will not accommodate tournaments or invitational events
- Work with county or others that have excess fill dirt from other construction projects to bring fill into Airport park to level out fields – think about stockpiling dirt until it can be used – youth that use the fields could be asked to help with upkeep, patrolling, etc.
- Disc golf around perimeter of fields
- bocce ball
- Metroparks has disc golf – middle school also has one
- Archery range
- Use sledding hill for cross country training?
- Jump roping is back in style
- Use facilities (maybe at the airport) or build a multi-purpose building for indoor activities in the winter (football, soccer, etc.).
- Batting cages (especially indoor)

- Indoor swimming pool (preferably at school) & lessons (even as part of school curriculum)
- Safe Routes to School public input is to – create connections from schools to existing facilities. Non-motorized pathway separate from the road on the River Roads (priority one is East River) from Horsemill to Manchester (west river second priority), east west third (bellview, horsemill then parkway)
- basketball at airport park – water's edge experiences a lot of wind
- Practice soccer field at Centennial Park in area west of entrance