

PUBLIC INPUT



REGULAR RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Throughout the preparation process for the Recreation Plan the Township Parks and Recreation Committee held regular meetings – these meetings were open to the public for comment and direct feedback.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

A Public Workshop was held on **June 2, 2010** from **6 to 8 pm** at the Rapid River Township Hall. The Township's consultant facilitated the workshop (See Appendix A sign-in sheet). The meeting was advertised in the local newspaper and a direct posting at the Township Hall (See Appendix A).

A PowerPoint presentation and graphic boards were presented to the participants with a full overview of the Township's Recreational Inventory – with a focus on those facilities owned and operated by the Township. The Workshop also included an overview of "Systems Approach to Planning", definitions of recreation, reasons for pursuing a Recreation Plan for the Township and a brief overview of the sections in the Plan as defined by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE).

Participants were also given an overview of the Community Park Functional Use Diagrams (FUD) and design program assembled by the Recreation Committee and planning consultant. The FUD Diagrams were developed using information gathered in previous brainstorming sessions held by the Parks and Recreation Committee in 2009.

Hands on exercises included a brief warm-up exercise that was completed by participants at the beginning of the Workshop and two more exercises that allowed attendees to work together in small groups examining and commenting on existing facilities, discussing possible improvements and then prioritizing the top project areas. Before departing attendees were asked to rate the top project areas in their respective group that were presented by each group. While the first exercise was used to construct ideas through positive interaction at a small group level, exercise two began to build consensus between all of the Workshop Participants.

The **warm-up** included questions pertaining to recreational programs and asked participants if they or any family members participate in any programs or activities. The second question asked participants - if they could decide what the next #1 priority would be for improving or developing new parks in the Township, what would it be? Participants were provided with suggested answers that included: non-motorized trails, improving Croy Lake Park, improving Community Park and a blank space to provide any other suggested project. Unique responses were recorded and tallied as follows:



WARM-UP EXERCISE

1. Do you or any of your family members participate in any Community Recreational Programs, if so, which ones?

Soccer (Kalkaska)	<u>1</u>
Baseball (Rapid City / Alden)	<u>3</u>
Baseball (not identified)	<u>2</u>
Soccer (not identified)	<u>1</u>
Disc Golf (Log Lake N. Mich. League)	<u>2</u>
Softball (not identified)	<u>1</u>
Soccer (not identified)	<u>1</u>
Golf (Men's League @ Grandview)	<u>2</u>



2. If you could decide what the next #1 priority would be for improving recreational opportunity in the Township, what would it be?

Non-motorized Trails	<u>0</u>
Improving Croy Lake Park	<u>7</u>
Improving Community Park	<u>9</u>
Other (Disc Golf Course)	<u>6</u>

Exercise I was conducted to gather participant's responses for each of the topic areas including **Croy Lake Park, Community Park and new recreational facilities**. Participant responses were as follows:



Exercise I:

Participants were divided into 3 groups. Each group worked with the facilitator to draw or make notes on the base maps and program inventory sheets placed on the walls.

1. Improvements to Croy Lake Park

For Croy Lake Park participants were asked to evaluate the existing facility for how it might be developed.

2. Improvements to Community Park

For the Community Park participants were asked to evaluate (3) different functional use diagrams (FUD) and draft design programs that were provided by the planning consultants.

3. New Recreational Facilities

For new recreational facilities participants were asked to think of how the Township might want to develop future recreational facilities including: non-motorized trails, land acquisition, river and lake access and other new parkland.

Exercise II:

Exercise two began to build consensus between all of the Workshop Participants. Participants were asked to rank the three highest priority “projects” from the groups list. A priority tally for each topic area is provided below.

**(Important Note: A vote represented below does not necessarily validate any or all of the suggested improvements or comments provided by the group, but rather the overall improvements to the facility based on a program to be determined).*

1. Improvements to Croy Lake Park

Priority	Facility	(Group)			TOTAL
		1	2	3	
1)	Pavilion	+		+	2
2)	Trail Network / Pathways	+	+		2
3)	Boardwalk / Dock	+			1
4)	Bridge		+		1
5)	Parking		+		1
6)	Signage & Wayfinding	+			1
7)	Disc Golf Course			+	1

2. Improvements to Community Park

(Based on (3) functional use diagrams (FUD) A,B,C presented to participants)

Group	Preferred FUD	Comments
1)	C	-Like one-way in and out parking and circulation -Develop disc golf course -Consider adding swings to playground
2)	C / B	-Construct pavilion with restrooms -Parking is important -Develop soccer & baseball facility -Develop greenspace / openspace -Develop community garden
3)	C	-Extend parking to baseball fields -Construct pavilion with restrooms -Develop baseball facility -Consider views & access between recreational spaces

3. New Recreational Facilities

Priority	Facility	(Group)			TOTAL
		1	2	3	
1)	Develop trail system along Rapid River	+	+	+	2
2)	Utilize existing utility Easement for non-motorized Trail to connect Croy Lake Park & Community Park	+	+		2
3)	Acquire (80 acres) in NW corner of Township			+	1
3)	Access to Wheeler Lake			+	1
3)	Develop a sledding hill (consider existing sledding hill on State Land)	+			1

PUBLIC WORKSHOP SYNOPSIS

Attendance at the Public Workshop held on **June 2, 2010** was good; attendees worked cooperatively and offered a diverse cross-section that included various professional backgrounds and residents who have held public positions including parks & recreation committee members, township board members, local business owners, retirees and a good mix of local teenagers. The input gathered helped to validate the Recreation Survey and other recreation planning efforts conducted by the Township in 2009 and spring of 2010.

A large percentage of youth (teen to young adult) turned out for the June 2 workshop and voiced strong support for the development of a disc golf course at Croy Lake Park. The younger cohort seemed to lean more towards the development of Croy Lake Park over the Community Park most likely due to the diversity of the mature woodlands and potential opportunity for the development of a disc golf course.

The remaining participants also felt that Croy Lake Park had much potential for the development of some type of recreation facility; however, most felt that just adding a parking lot, looping trail system, possibly a boardwalk or fishing platform and basic amenities was all the site needed. After some discussion, the possibility arose that a trail system could provide the network or support system for a disc golf course.

Workshop participants were asked to spend a considerable amount of time analyzing the functional use diagrams (FUD) for the development of the Community Park; this site was identified by the Parks and Recreation Committee as high priority prior to developing the Recreation Plan. The majority of participants agreed that FUD "C" was the preferred diagram that should be considered for further site planning of the Park.

Overall, workshop participants voiced strong opinion for improvements to any or all of the existing Township properties. Land acquisition was specifically identified with the possibility of creating more access to the Rapid River and other small inland lakes. The idea of developing a non-motorized trail network to provide transportation options to the park sites was also discussed.

PARKS AND RECREATION MEETINGS

Formal meetings were held with the Parks and Recreation Committee in May, June and July to review and ultimately approve the draft plan sections. These meetings were open to the public during the formal 30-day public comment and before adoption of the plan by the Township Board.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INPUT

The Township will consider additional public and stakeholder input when submitting grants. Stakeholder groups may include the Disability Network of Northern Michigan and other non-governmental organizations.

PUBLIC HEARING

On **September 21, 2010** a public hearing was advertised and held after the draft plan was available to the public. The public hearing was advertised in a local newspaper more than seven days prior to meeting. The Recreation Plan then was unanimously adopted by the Township Board on **September 21, 2010**.