

TOWNSHIP OF NORTH BRUNSWICK PLANNING BOARD

**RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2006 NORTH BRUNSWICK
MASTER PLAN AND ADOPTING THE DECEMBER 5, 2017
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN ELEMENT**

WHEREAS, the Municipal Land Use Law ("MLUL") mandates that municipalities in New Jersey conduct periodic re-examinations of their Master Plans; and

WHEREAS, the North Brunswick Planning Board ("Board") has been undertaking a re-examination of the 2006 Master Plan ("2006 MP") for the past two years, and, on June 6, 2016, the Board adopted the "Township of North Brunswick June 6, 2016 Housing Element/Fair Share Plan," to address housing needs in the Township; and

WHEREAS, while the Planning Board was in the process of reexamining the 2006 MP, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection ("NJDEP") issued a letter to North Brunswick Township, dated March 9, 2017, setting a deadline of December 31, 2017, for the Township to complete and adopt a new Open Space and Recreation Plan ("OSRP") in order to qualify for Green Acres funding; and

WHEREAS, the NJDEP letter stated that the OSRP must be adopted by the Planning Board as an element of the Township's Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2000 Municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan ("2000 Plan"), prepared by Maser Consulting and adopted by the Planning Board on December 7, 2000, had been prepared in accordance with NJDEP guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the North Brunswick Planning Board adopted the 2006 MP in May of 2006; and

WHEREAS, the 2006 MP, prepared by a team of consultants, including Heyer, Gruel & Associates, and Urban Engineers, Inc., includes a twenty-six (26) page "Recreation and Open Space Element," that is not in accordance with NJDEP guidelines; and

WHEREAS, as such, there is a need for a 2017 Master Plan Amendment to revise the 2000 Plan and the 2006 MP to satisfy the requirements of the MLUL and the Green Acres Open Space and Recreation Plan guidelines ("Green Acres Guidelines"); and

WHEREAS, in the 2017 Master Plan Amendment, every identified issue and need, and every recommended action, contained in both the 2000 Plan and the 2006 MP has been reviewed to ensure legal compliance, and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Master Plan Amendment also outlines the major improvements accomplished since adoption of the 2000 Plan, and describes a number of future initiatives for acquisition and development of open space and park land in the Township; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Green Acres Guidelines, two (2) dates were selected for public input sessions to allow residents the opportunity to share their ideas for future open space and recreation needs; and

WHEREAS, the dates selected were October 24 and November 2, 2017, and both meetings were advertised by the Township Clerk in the official newspaper; and

WHEREAS, at the meetings, after a brief presentation on future population projections relative to existing open space and active recreation inventory, several member of the public made suggestions for possible future recreation facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Board has incorporated several of the public's recommendations into the 2017 Master Plan Amendment, hereinafter referred to as the "December 5, 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan Element"; and

WHEREAS, the Board reviewed the draft Master Plan Amendment at its November workshop meeting; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on the "December 5, 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan Element" at 7:30 PM on December 5, 2017;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Planning Board of the Township of North Brunswick hereby adopts the "December 5, 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan Element" as an amendment to the 2006 MP.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Planning Board of the Township of North Brunswick at its public meeting held on December 5, 2017.


Janice Larkin
Planning Board Secretary

2017 MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

December 5, 2017

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN ELEMENT

Prepared by Thomas Vigna, P.P.

Township Planner

Adopted by the North Brunswick Township Planning Board
after public hearing on December 5, 2017

RECOMMENDED MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS RELATED TO RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE:

1---Municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan Adopted by the Planning Board in October of 2000, and

2---Recreation and Open Space Plan Element of the North Brunswick Master Plan Adopted by the Planning Board in May of 2006.

INTRODUCTION

The Township has prepared and adopted three comprehensive documents assessing recreation and open space needs in the Township over the past 28 years.

The first of these three documents was the Open Space and Recreation Master Plan prepared by Candeub Fleissig and Associates, Inc. (**1989 Plan**). The 1989 Plan was adopted by the Planning Board on February 22, 1989. This document did not comply with Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program (**DEP**) guidelines for preparation of an Open Space and Recreation Plan (**OSRP**).

The second document is the 2000 Municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan (**2000 Plan**) prepared by Maser Consulting. This 2000 Plan, prepared in accordance with DEP guidelines, was adopted by the Planning Board on December 7, 2000.

The third document is the Township of North Brunswick Master Plan (**2006 MP**), adopted by the Planning Board in May of 2006. The 2006 MP includes a very detailed 26 page Recreation and Open Space Element (**ROSE**) that was developed after much consultation with Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services (DPRCS) staff and the Open Space Committee (OSC). The 2006 MP was prepared by a team of consultants, including Heyer, Gruel & Associates, and Urban Engineers, Inc. This document did not follow DEP guidelines.

The Municipal Land Use Law mandates periodic re-examinations of the Master Plan. The North Brunswick Planning Board has been undertaking a re-examination of the 2006 MP for the past two years, and on June 6, 2016, adopted the Township of North Brunswick June 6, 2016 Housing Element/Fair Share Plan to address housing needs in the Township. This 2017 Master Plan Amendment (**2017 MPA**) contains only amendments relative to open space and recreation needs, hereby referred to as the December 5, 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan Element.

While the Planning Board was in the process of reexamining the 2006 MP, the DEP issued a letter to North Brunswick Township, dated March 9, 2017, providing a deadline of December 31, 2017 for the Township to complete and adopt a new OSRP. This letter indicated that the OSRP must be adopted by the Planning Board as an element of the Master Plan.

As such, this 2017 MPA will be assessing both the 2000 Plan and the ROSE incorporated in the 2006 MP to assure that the 2017 MPA satisfies both the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law and the requirements in the Green Acres Open Space and Recreation Plan guidelines.

Each issue and need identified, and each action recommended in the 2000 Plan and in the ROSE included in the 2006 MP, has been reviewed to determine if it is still valid today. This 2017 MPA also describes all major improvements accomplished since adoption of the 2000 Plan, and outlines a number of future initiatives for acquisition and development of open space and park land in the Township.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The key findings identified in the Executive Summary of the 2000 Plan are as follows:

1---The demand for recreation time is coming close to exceeding the supply of facilities available.

2---The Township relies heavily on the availability of Board of Education athletic fields.

3---Sports programs have scheduling problems.

4---Proper maintenance of fields is impossible due to overuse.

5---There is an adequate supply of Township-owned open space for passive recreation and open space conservation uses.

6---There is a deficiency in the amount of land devoted to active recreation (approximately 40% of the recommended acreage) that should be addressed through acquisition and development of additional athletic fields.

7---Acquisition of property for a centralized sports and recreation complex should be the Township's highest recreation priority.

Seventeen years later, this 2017 MPA has determined the following:

A---Finding # 1 is no longer valid, as demand is no longer exceeding supply due to the development of additional athletic fields.

B---Finding # 2 is no longer valid due to the addition of recreation fields. In fact, the middle school and high school now rely on the Township's turf fields and new tennis courts at Veterans Park for their programming.

C---Finding # 3 is no longer valid, as additional fields, combined with the construction of two turf fields that allow for play to continue in inclement weather, have assisted with scheduling problems.

D---Finding # 4 is no longer valid, as fields can now be rested due to the addition of recreation fields to the Township's inventory.

E---Finding # 5 is still valid. While the Township's supply of passive open space land exceeded the recommended standard in 2000, the amount of acreage available for passive recreation expanded significantly with the acquisition of the 70 acre Pulda Farm.

F---There is no clear consensus as to whether finding # 6 is still valid, as the standard chosen to be utilized determines whether the amount of acreage devoted to active recreation use is adequate or deficient. However, if the Population Ratio Method, which recommends 6 acres of active recreation space per 1000 persons, is utilized, the Township would be deficient 37 acres of recreation space to meet its estimated 2017 non-institutional population of 40,625 persons.

Based upon population projections for the next 20 years, the Township would have a deficiency of 58 acres and 72 acres respectively of active recreation space to address its 2027 and 2037 build out population projections.

However, the above deficiencies do not take into account the fact that the Township works in conjunction with the County of Middlesex to schedule sporting uses on two County-owned facilities totaling approximately 34 acres. If the acreage of these two facilities is factored in to the analysis, then the Township is only three acres deficient in active recreation space today.

G---Finding # 7 is no longer valid, as Community Park fulfills the highest priority of constructing a centralized sports facility.

The Executive Summary of the 2000 Plan also included six goals and objectives. In general, these goals and objectives are still valid. However, the Township has significantly addressed a number of these goals and objectives through development of Community Park and construction of a turf field at Sabella Park. These two parks have specifically addressed the goal of providing space for emerging sports such as lacrosse and cricket.

2017 Action Plan Recommendations

Priorities identified and discussed in the Action Plan of the OSRP incorporated in this 2017 MPA are listed below. Both the Township's existing inventory of active recreation and passive open space, as well as potential acquisitions, are shown on the Map entitled 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

1---Acquisition of approximately 20 acres referred to as the Skaritka property;

2--- Acquisition of approximately 2 acres referred to as the Board of Education property;

3--- Acquisition of approximately 24 acres referred to as the EDA property;

4--- Acquisition of 22.5 acres referred to as the Treumann property; and

5--- Acquisition of approximately 14 acres referred to as the Johnkins property to provide access to Farrington Lake.

6---The Township should continue assessing potential enhancements to Babbage Park with a focus on the senior population and the special needs population;

7---The Township should explore development of an indoor recreation facility on any of the sites identified above to allow for expansion of basketball and wrestling programs beyond their current limitations resulting from shared use of school facilities. This facility, depending upon its size and location, could be expanded to encompass a full community center to allow for additional recreation opportunities such as a stage for community theatre, an indoor/outdoor pool, volley ball, ping pong, chess and other indoor activities.

8---Construction of at least two sand volley ball courts at one of the existing parks should also be a priority, as a number of residents came out to the second public input session to request the addition of these facilities. Sand volleyball is experiencing rapid growth among the general population, and these facilities would also support the high school sand volley ball programs by allowing

members of the team to train and play without having to travel to a neighboring municipality.

9---The Township purchased 6.63 acres of land located off of Old Georges Road. This property, referred to as the Knob Valley Swim Club property, is being considered as a potential summer camp site, a splash park or a swim club;

10---The Public Participation meetings also resulted in a number of additional suggestions for alternative/emerging sports that are not currently incorporated into existing parks in the Township. Depending upon future interest, feasibility studies would have to be prepared to determine the feasibility of facilities such as an ice hockey rink, a skateboard park and a Pitch and Putt/driving range facility.

In addition, Pages 168-170 of the 2006 MP contain a description of 14 recommendations for future consideration as acquisition sites to maximize the potential of the Township's park system. While some of these recommendations are already identified as priorities above, each of these 14 recommendations should still be considered valid if engineering studies show that environmental constraints do not limit their ability to accommodate the needs of specific sports at a reasonable price.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The Goals and Objectives portion of the 2000 Plan included four main goals and ten objectives.

The first three goals, which include providing proper amounts and location of open space, maximizing the efficiency of parks, and establishing open space linkages, are all still valid goals today.

The fourth goal, which is providing a large, centralized active recreation complex, has been addressed through development of Community Park.

The ten objectives enumerated in the 2000 Plan, which are listed below, are all still valid today.

1---Providing six acres of active recreation space for every 1000 persons;

2---Providing recreation facilities in each geographic area of the Township;

3---Providing barrier free access;

4---Resting fields;

5---Providing facilities for the mature segment of the population;

6---Encouraging cooperation with the Board of Education relative to shared use;

7---Addressing the needs of emerging sports;

8---Establishing open space linkages;

9---Encouraging new developments to dedicate open space; and

10--Pursuing pedestrian crossings of major highways and the Northeast Corridor rail line.

2017 Master Plan Amendment Goals

In addition to the above objectives, this 2017 MPA specifically recommends the following three goals;

1---Continue to assess the need and best location for an indoor recreation facility or community center;

2---Explore enhancements to Babbage park specifically designed to address the needs of the elderly population and the special needs population; and

3---Acquire additional property as appropriate to expand existing parks or to provide new or expanded recreational opportunities for emerging sports.

INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The Inventory incorporated in the 2000 Plan identified existing recreational facilities owned by the Township, the County of Middlesex, the Board of Education and by private developments.

Two properties identified on page 8 as being utilized by the Township are no longer utilized today:

---a softball/baseball field on property owned by First Union Bank; and

---a softball/baseball field on property owned by Deerbrook Village.

The following section, entitled “Acquisitions and Improvements to Open Space and Recreational Facilities since the 2000 Plan”, provides specific information on several properties acquired and/or developed since the adoption of the 2000 Plan.

Acquisitions and Improvements to Open Space and Recreational Facilities since the 2000 Plan

1---The Township’s development of the 105 acre Otken Farm into a centralized, active recreation park is the most significant recreational development. This park, known as Community Park, includes facilities for every age group and demographic group on the Township. It includes a 2.17 mile walking trail, a park maintenance building, two girls’ softball fields, four baseball fields, six soccer fields, a multipurpose field, a cricket field, a butterfly garden and a dog park. It also includes a five acre area known as the “Great Lawn” which is used for movie nights, campouts and other special events. This park has provided the Township with the ability to address the growing need for the sport of cricket, as the upper section of Community Park has been designated as a cricket field which is currently used for hardball and softball play for adults, as well as for a children’s cricket program.

2---The Township acquired the 70 acre Pulda Farm. At this time, the Pulda Farm is not being utilized for active recreation purposes. Present activities include 30 community garden plots for residents, as well as allowing the use of the property

by residents to fly model planes. Additional planning relative to the use of this property is required.

3--- Middlesex County has developed a 25 acre park at the intersection of Rt. 1 and Milltown Road. This park, known as David Crabiel Memorial Park, consists of a multipurpose turf field and a baseball field which are lighted to extend hours of play. The Township and Middlesex County work in conjunction to schedule sporting activities.

4---The Township purchased 6.63 acres of land located off of Old Georges Road. This property, referred to as the Knob Valley Swim Club property, is being considered as a potential summer camp site, a splash park or a swim club.

5---The Township has made substantial improvements to Veterans Park, including a new multipurpose field, three playground equipment units with an emphasis on rubber playground surfacing, a larger swing set unit that can accommodate handicapped children, a new irrigation system, walking paths, a Veterans Memorial and a new concession stand.

6---the Township installed a new turf, multi-purpose field at Sabella Park to primarily accommodate football, soccer and lacrosse, as well as new drainage, irrigation and lighting improvements;

7---The Township acquired 4.22 acres located off of Schmidt Lane for possible recreation use. The former owner of the property currently resides in a house located on the property, and no decision has been made at this time as to the property's suitability for active recreation.

8---The Township has an on-going program to upgrade playground equipment and make safety upgrades in neighborhood parks throughout the Township.

9---The Township has recently entered into an agreement with the City of New Brunswick to allow North Brunswick residents to access Farrington Lake. Prior to this agreement, the Township did not have the right to develop any recreational programming on the lake, as New Brunswick has riparian rights giving the City legal jurisdiction over use of the lake.

The actions taken above have resulted in an increase of two additional girls' softball fields, five additional baseball fields, six additional soccer fields, three additional multipurpose fields and one cricket field.

Table # 1, entitled Existing Parks and Open Space, shows the total acreage available after the above improvements for both active and passive recreational purposes in the Township of North Brunswick as of November 2017.

Table -1 Existing Parks and Open Space

Facility	Size(Acres)	Amenities

Municipal Park Areas

Applegate Park	0.9	Basketball, playground
Babbage Park	16.72	Baseball, basketball, flagpole, football field, light, pavilion, picnic area, playground, restrooms, soccer fields, trails
Brunswick Knolls Playground	1.85	Basketball, playground, tennis courts
Boyd Tot Lot & Ponds	2.4	Fishing, playground
Caruso Field	6.31	Baseball field, Flagpole, small snack shack
Colonial Gardens Playground	0.5	Basketball, playground
Columbus Park	0.25	Sitting area
Eisenhower Playground	1.19	Basketball, playground
Farrington Oaks Playground	1.31	Basketball, playground
Frisch Park	1.3	Baseball, basketball, playground
Hermann Park	2.42	Basketball, playground, tennis courts
JFK	5.16	Soccer fields
Martin Luther King Playground	0.27	Basketball, playground
North Brunswick Community Park	105.33	Running/Walking trails, Dog Park, Maintenance Park Facility, 5 acres of great lawn used for special events, Softball/Baseball Cricket, Soccer Fields, Snack Shacks
Renaissance Park	14.13	Baseball, flagpole, lights, pavilion, picnic area, play ground, restrooms, soccer fields
Sabella Park	28.97	Baseball, basketball, flagpole, football field, lighted pavilion, picnic area, playground, restrooms, soccer fields
Senior Citizen Center	1.26	Picnic area, bocce/shuffleboard, community center
Vanderbilt Park	0.33	Playground
Veterans Park	16.87	Baseball, flagpole, pavilion, picnic area, playground, restrooms soccer field, tennis courts
Municipal Park Areas Subtotal	207.47	

Open Space Areas

Farrington Lake Conservation Area	146.2	Camping, fishing, trails
Hidden Lake Open Space and Conservation Area	50.94	Fishing, picnic
Hoover Tract	3.42	Natural wildlife, fishing, picnic
Luke Open Space and Conservation Area	22.6	Natural wildlife, playground
Nob Valley Swim Club	6.63	Adult pool, Baby pool, Restroom Facility
North Brunswick Open Space and Conservation Area	42.13	Natural Wildlife
Pulda Farm	70.19	Community Garden, Access to Farrington Lake, Walking Paths
Route 27 Property	6.34	Open Space Area
The Ramble	7.57	Open Space
Open Space Areas Subtotal	356.02	
Total Active Recreation and Open Space	563.49	

NEEDS ANALYSIS

The population projections incorporated in the 2000 Plan Needs Assessment were based upon projections developed by Middlesex County. These projections underestimated the 2010 population of North Brunswick by 3,604 persons. According to the 2000 Plan, the Township's 2010 population was projected to be 37,549 persons. The 2010 US Census, which reflects population in April of 2010, was actually 41,153 persons. 40,409 of these persons resided in households, with the remainder being population residing in an institutional setting.

As stated in the June 6, 2016 Housing Element/Fair Share Plan (**HEFSP**), the tax assessor had assessed 124 new residential properties between April of 2010 (date of the US Census) and April of 2016. Based upon the HEFSP, future residential development will be primarily restricted to 1875 residential units located in the Main Street transit village on Rt. 1 northbound and 270 units of age-restricted rental housing located on Rt. 130 southbound. With the exception of these units, there is almost no land zoned to permit further residential development in the Township. No more than 400 of the units in the transit village can be constructed prior to commencement of construction on the platform for a train station, which for purposes of projection, is estimated to be 2021.

For projection purposes, the 1875 units in the Main Street transit village are projected to be built out over the next 20 years, while the 270 senior units are projected to be a four year build out beginning in 2019. In addition, acknowledging that there is some potential for infill single-family housing on undersized lots in the Township, it is assumed that there will be a five unit increase in the number of single-family homes each year.

Based upon the above assumptions, Table 2, entitled "Housing Build Out and Population Projections through 2036", shows that the Township's population, excluding institutional population, is projected to be 40,625 persons at the end of 2017, 44,132 at the end of 2027, and 46,497 persons at the end of 2037. These projections assume that the average number of persons per household will continue to be 2.7 persons per household as reflected in the 2010 US Census.

As Table 2 shows, if it assumed that the Township does not rezone any additional lands for residential purposes, and the average occupancy per household remains at 2.7, the Township's population will peak at less than 47,000 in 2037.

The 2000 Plan utilized two standards to assess open space needs: the Population Ratio Method and the Area Percentage Method. Based upon the standard of 8 acres of total open space per 1000 persons, with 6 of these acres dedicated to active recreational use, the Township would need 325 acres of total open space and 244 acres of active recreational space to service its 2017 population estimate of 40,625. To service its 2027 population projection of 44,132, the Township would need 353 acres total and 265 acres of active recreational space. The total needed to address its build out population projection of 46,497 in 2037 would be 372 acres and 279 acres respectfully.

According to the Area Percentage Method, which recommends 3% of the developable land area in a municipality for the amount of total open space, the 2000 Plan states that this would result in 196 acres of total open space.

According to Table 1, entitled "Existing Parks and Open Space", the Township currently owns 563 acres of total open space. This amounts to almost 200 acres more than would be required to meet the Township's total open space build out population need.

Table 1 also shows that the Township owns 207 acres of developed active recreation sites. Based upon this standard of 6 acres of active space per 1000 persons, the Township would have a deficiency of 37 acres, 58 acres and 72 acres respectively to address its 2017, 2027 and 2037 build out population projections.

However, the above deficiencies do not take into account the fact that the Township works in conjunction with the County of Middlesex to schedule sporting uses on two County-owned facilities totaling 34 acres.

The 2000 Plan discusses the National Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards which are utilized as guidelines for specific recreation needs in a community. The 2000 Plan acknowledges that these are generic national standards and should be used only as general guidelines. In 2000, the Township was deficient in the

number of improved playing fields for a number of sports. However, the 2000 Plan acknowledged that this analysis did not take into consideration the Township's use of Board of Education facilities or County-owned facilities.

The 2000 Plan specifically states that the Township might want to investigate the demands for rock climbing, track & field, skateboarding and roller hockey.

Planning for a skateboard park is a specific recommendation of the 2000 Plan.

The public provided a number of recommendations for alternative sports such as an ice hockey rink, a Pitch and Putt/driving range, a community pool, a skateboard park and an additional cricket field. For all but the additional cricket field, it is recommended that a feasibility study be obtained before determining the need or feasibility of any of these proposals.

Table 2						
Housing Build Out and Population Projections through 2036						
2017-2037						
Year	Infill Housing	Main Street Housing	Senior Housing	Total Housing	Population Increase	Total Population (in households)
2010						40,074
2010-2015	124			124	335	40,409
2016	5			5	14	40,422
2017	5	70		75	203	40,625
2018	5	140		145	392	41,016
2019	5	108	68	181	489	41,505
2020	5	80	68	153	413	41,918
2021	5	93	67	165	446	42,364
2022	5	93	67	165	446	42,809
2023	5	93		98	265	43,074
2024	5	93		98	265	43,338
2025	5	93		98	265	43,603
2026	5	93		98	265	43,868
2027	5	93		98	265	44,132
2028	5	93		98	265	44,397
2029	5	93		98	265	44,661
2030	5	93		98	265	44,926
2031	5	93		98	265	45,191
2032	5	93		98	265	45,455
2033	5	93		98	265	45,720
2034	5	93		98	265	45,984
2035	5	93		98	265	46,249
2036	5	82		87	235	46,484
2037	5	0		5	14	46,497
Total	234	1875	270	2379	6,423	

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

The 2000 Plan includes Site Assessment Sheets for each of the Township's active recreation sites and open space properties. These forms have been reviewed with the Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services, and the information on these forms has been determined to be valid today with the exception of the modifications reflected below for parks that have experienced specific renovations.

The standards utilized for the Park Classification System have been determined to still be valid today, as has the classification assigned to each of the parks existing in 2000. The comments on pages 31 and 34 of the 2000 Plan relative to the lack of feasibility of expanding undersized neighborhood parks and community parks are also still valid today given the fact that these sites are surrounded by residential developments.

The overuse of athletic fields was identified as a prevalent problem. This is no longer an issue, as the additional parks added to the inventory and the ability of two turf fields to allow for play during inclement weather have assisted with scheduling and the resting of fields.

The 2000 Plan also cited a grading problem with the soccer fields at the 9.2 acre workhouse site. This issue has been addressed by minor grading modifications.

The 2000 Plan also cited safety concerns at several parks due to aging playground equipment and inappropriate surfaces and minimum fall zones. These problems have been addressed through a renovation program over the past several years.

The following modifications are hereby made to the 2000 Site Assessment Sheets:

Veterans's Park

A major renovation resulted in Veteran's Park receiving three new playground units, walking trails, a new swing unit, a pavilion, a new handball court, a new concession stand and a multipurpose field.

Sabella Park

Renovations undertaken since 2000 have resulted in Sabella Park getting a new lighted multipurpose turf field that is used for soccer, lacrosse and football, as well as relocated and lighted basketball courts.

Community Park

Improvements constructed at Community Park include facilities for every age group and demographic group in the Township. They include a 2.17 mile walking trail, a park maintenance building, two girls' softball fields, four baseball fields, six soccer fields, a multipurpose field, a cricket field, a butterfly garden and a dog park. It also includes a five acre area known as the "Great Lawn" which is used for movie nights, campouts and other special events. This park has provided the Township with the ability to address the growing need for the sport of cricket, as the upper section of Community Park has been designated as a cricket field which is currently used for hardball and softball play for adults, as well as for a children's cricket program.

Mini Park and Neighborhood Park Renovations

The following mini parks and neighborhood parks received renovations inclusive of new playground units and swings, as well as modifications to fall zones and surface coverings as required to meet regulatory standards:

---Boyd Tot Lots and Ponds, Brunswick Knolls Playground, Colonial Gardens Playground, Eisenhower Playground, Farrington Oaks Playground, Frisch Park, Hermann Park, Martin Luther King Jr. Playground and Renaissance Park.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan incorporated in the 2000 Plan included eight initiatives:

- # 1---Acquisition and development of new recreation facilities;
- # 2---Establishment of a centralized sports complex;
- # 3---Acquisition of approximately 90 acres adjacent to the Board of Education administrative offices;
- # 4---Acquisition of the Otken Farm;
- # 5---Acquisition of 49 acres referred to as the DKM property in an area of the Township identified as perhaps most in need of active recreation facilities;
- # 6---Acquisition of smaller parcels for expansion of neighborhood parks if adjacent lands become available;
- # 7---Provision of greenways, bikeways and walkways; and
- # 8---Provision of safety enhancements at playgrounds, particularly in equipment areas.

Several of these recommendations are still valid today, while several of them have already been achieved.

A---The Township has acquired approximately 209 acres of additional land for recreation and open space purposes since adoption of the 2000 Plan.

Approximately 126 of these acres have been developed for active purposes. In addition, Middlesex County has developed 25 acres of land for active purposes at David Crabel Memorial Park and provided the Township with recreational programming rights to these facilities.

B---Development of the 105 acre Community Park satisfied the need for a centralized sports park.

C---70 of the 90 acres identified adjacent to the Board of Education property were acquired when the Township purchased the Pulda Farm. The remaining acreage,

which is a combination of land known as the Skaritka tract and the property currently occupied by the Board of Education offices, should be high priorities for acquisition due to their close proximity to the Pulda Farm.

D---The Otken Farm was developed and dedicated as Community Park in 2007.

E---Approximately 50 % of the acreage referred to as the DKM property in the 2000 Plan has been acquired and developed into active recreation by Middlesex County, with the Township securing programming rights to this facility. The remaining 24 acres should be acquired for active recreation if the Economic Development Authority, the property's current owner, cannot secure tenants to make construction of office space feasible.

F---Acquisition of land to expand neighborhood parks remains a valid goal if property becomes available at a reasonable price.

G---The Township should continue its efforts to provide additional linkages between parkland and community facilities in the Township. The Township has recently taken steps in this direction by establishing a series of signed walking routes for residents.

H---The Township has embarked on an ongoing program to make safety enhancements inclusive of rubber surfaces and enhanced fall zones in neighborhood parks where playground equipment is located. This program should be continued.

If the Population Ratio Method, which recommends 6 acres of active recreation space per 1000 persons, is utilized, the Township would be deficient 37 acres of recreation space to meet its estimated 2017 non-institutional population of 40,625 persons.

Based upon population projections for the next 20 years, the Township would have a deficiency of 58 acres and 72 acres respectively of active recreation space to address its 2027 and 2037 build out population projections.

2017 Action Plan Recommendations

Based upon the deficiencies cited above, it is the recommendation of this 2017 MPA that the 11 acquisitions and development initiatives identified below be given serious consideration over the next ten years. However, the extent of the deficiencies cited above is mitigated if the 34 acres owned by Middlesex County are factored into the needs assessment. Both the Township's existing inventory of active recreation and passive open space, as well as potential acquisitions, are shown on the Map entitled 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

1---One of the highest priorities should be the acquisition of the approximately 20 acre property located off of Old Georges Road and referred to as the Skaritka property. This property is adjacent to portions of the Board of Education Administrative Offices, Caruso Field and the Pulda Farm. The property's size could allow for a portion of it to be developed for active recreational purposes while still providing a buffer from the Pulda Farm which is planned to be maintained as passive open space.

2---If the Skaritka property is acquired, it would be prudent to also acquire the approximately 2 acre Board of Education property when it becomes available, assuming the purchase price and demolition costs are not cost prohibitive. Properties # 1 and # 2 could potentially be a good location for a future indoor recreation facility or community center.

3---This plan also recommends that the Township consider acquisition of the approximately 24 acre tract referred to as the EDA property based upon its location adjacent to David Crabel Memorial Park. This property has excellent access off of Rt. 1 northbound, and could be accessed with little impact on residential properties to the rear. The property abuts a large undeveloped portion of David Crabel Memorial Park, and would allow for a large undeveloped portion of that park to be developed for active purposes with no need to disturb Milltown residents who reside on streets that dead-end at the park property.

Given the size of this property, this might be a potential future site for specialized active recreation facilities such as an ice hockey rink, a Pitch and Putt/driving

range, or an additional cricket field. Given the demographics of Middlesex County, the County might want to pursue development of cricket fields on this site to make said facilities available to residents of the County.

4---The Treumann property, 22.5 acres located on Rt. 130 northbound just north of Davidson Mills Road, could possibly become available in the future given the weak demand for nonresidential uses permitted by zoning. The advantages of this property include its proximity to Farrington Lake.

5---Acquisition of approx 14 acres referred to as the Johnkins property should also be considered in the future, as this land provides potential access to Farrington Lake. This land is adjacent to the Skaritka property and to the Pulda Farm. There is currently an occupied single-family home on this lakefront property. The Township might want to consider purchasing the property and allowing the existing resident to continue to reside on the property similar to the purchase of land on Schmidt Lane.

6---Future improvements to Babbage Park, with a focus on the senior population and the special needs population, should also be a priority. Given the size of this park, it appears that the site could also accommodate several active recreation fields without limiting its design and layout to benefit the populations mentioned herein.

7---Further study and assessment relative to the need for an indoor recreation facility to allow for expansion of basketball and wrestling programs beyond their current limitations should also be given serious consideration. This facility, depending upon its size and location, could be designed to function as a full community center to allow for additional recreation opportunities such as an indoor/outdoor community pool, a stage for community theatre, volleyball, ping pong, chess and other indoor activities.

A community center could also be combined with a new library building if the proper site was selected. The Township should not rule out the possibility of combining uses on this site if a determination is made that both a library and a community center are warranted.

8---The Township purchased 6.63 acres of land located off of Old Georges Road. This property, referred to as the Knob Valley Swim Club property, is being considered as a potential summer camp site, a splash park or a swim club.

9---The Township should also consider the construction of at least two sand volley ball courts at one of the existing or future park sites, as several residents came out to the second public input session to request the addition of these facilities. Sand volleyball has become very popular among the general population, and these facilities would also support the high school sand volley ball programs by allowing members of the team to train and play without having to travel to a neighboring municipality.

10---The Public Participation meetings also resulted in a number of additional suggestions for alternative/emerging sports that are not currently incorporated into existing parks in the Township. Depending upon future interest, feasibility studies would have to be prepared to determine the feasibility of facilities such as an ice hockey rink, a skateboard park and a Pitch and Putt/driving range facility.

11---Consideration should also be given to any of the 14 sites or activities identified in the 2006 MP.

Public Participation

In accordance with DEP guidelines, two dates were selected for public input sessions to allow residents the opportunity to share their ideas relative to future open space and recreation needs. The dates selected were October 24 and November 2. Both meetings were advertised by the Township Clerk in the official newspaper.

At the October 24 meeting, after a brief presentation on future population projections relative to existing open space and active recreation inventory, several member of the public made suggestions for possible future recreation facilities. The following active recreation improvements were suggested:

- # 1--Construction of an indoor recreation facility which could accommodate wrestling, basketball, volley ball, ping pong, chess and other indoor activities;
- # 2--Expansion of the indoor recreation facility identified in # 1 above, to include a full community center which could include a stage for community theatre, an indoor/outdoor pool and other multipurpose areas;
- # 3--Construction of an ice hockey rink that would allow for both club play and, in conjunction with the Board of Education, for a high school ice hockey program;
- # 4--Construction of a skateboard park;
- # 5--Construction of a boat ramp to allow for the launching of small boats into Farrington Lake;
- # 6--Construction of a 9 hole executive golf course or Pitch and Putt course, with or without a driving range;
- # 7--Refurbishing Babbage Park to address all segments of the population, particularly the elderly and special needs population;
- # 8--Refurbishing the pool facilities or constructing a new Township pool at the recently acquired Nob Valley Swim Club, or in the alternative, developing a splash park at the site;

9--Replacing the cinder walking trail at Community Park with a hard surface to reduce dust, enhance enjoyment and improve accessibility for use by handicapped persons;

10--Construction of a sidewalk along Cozzens Lane and Rt. 130 southbound in the vicinity of Community Park to improve pedestrian accessibility;

11--Construction of an additional field to accommodate field hockey;

10--Construction of a second cricket field; and

13--Construction and/or signing of additional pedestrian linkages for walking and bicycling throughout the Township.

At the November 2 meeting, a number of residents, including several who play on the High School sand volleyball team, came out to request that the Township construct at least two sand volleyball courts to allow for both men's and women's play without having to adjust net height.

General Standards for Alternative/Emerging Sports Facilities

For general planning purposes, estimates of the acreage required for some of the alternative/emerging sports suggested at the public participation meetings is outlined below.

Skatepark

Based upon a review of the literature, a skatepark designed to meet all skill levels will require between 18,000-25,000 square feet of area. A park of 10,000 square feet is recommended as the absolute minimum size.

Ice Hockey Rink

For an ice hockey rink, depending upon spectator seating, a single surface facility would require between 2.5 and five acres of land, while a twin surface facility would require 5-7 acres of land. Most ice hockey rinks constructed in North America follow the National Hockey League (NHL) specifications of 200' by 85', with a corner radius of 28'.

Pitch and Putt/Driving Range

Pitch and Putt is an amateur sport very similar to golf, but with a maximum hole length of 80 yards or less. Players use only two clubs, one of which is a putter, and generally can play 18 holes in 1 ¼ to 1 ½ hours. These facilities primarily serve the beginning golfer. The land required for an 18 hole golf course is approximately 12-15 acres for a high quality course, with 9 holes requiring approximately one half of this amount.

A par 3, nine hole executive golf course, as opposed to a Pitch and Putt, would require approximately 30 acres. A driving range would require approximately 15 additional acres depending upon the amenities offered.

Cricket Fields

While there are no fixed dimensions for a cricket field, the diameter of the field usually varies between 450' and 500'. The International Cricket Council (ICC) standard dimensions of a cricket field require approximately 16,000 square yards of grass. In order to allow for some seating, a figure of four acres appears reasonable for planning purposes.

Sand Volley Ball Courts

The dimensions of a standard sand volleyball court are 59' by 29 ½'. In addition, you need a space around the court measuring 10 feet or more in width. Two courts would be required in order to allow for both men's and women's play without having to adjust the height of the net.

It is suggested that orientation be set so that the net runs east to west in order to avoid morning and evening sun being directly in the eyes of players.