



**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor Hornik & Community Vision Plan Committee  
FROM: Heather M. Zieziula, P.P, AICP, Senior Planner  
RE: Recreation Improvement Committee Meeting 7/24/08  
Date: August 4, 2008

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Our firm attended the Township's Recreation Improvement Committee's ("Committee") Meeting on Thursday July 24, 2008. The Vision Plan process and status of the project was presented. The Plan is in the Community Assessment/Profile Phase, where we obtain information from the community and Township on existing conditions, its strengths, weaknesses regarding various topics (land use, circulation, zoning, public services, facility assessment, parks/recreation...etc.) to understand where the community is now.

The following was discussed:

- Representatives from the various recreational leagues are members of this Committee (basketball, Little League, football, lacrosse, soccer, swimming, football, softball...etc.).
- Separate from this committee is the Recreation/Park Committee consisting of seven members, established by ordinance. This committee is charged with overseeing Recreation and Senior Programs.
- **Issues:**
  - *Move from Decentralized to Centralized fields/programs!*
    - Ability to control individual programs better.
  - Outgrown current Recreation Center!!
    - Existing Location: Possibility to reorganize space in existing Recreation Center to make more efficient or take out basketball court? It was agreed that that basketball court is the lifeline of the Recreation Center for not only basketball games, but for other various activities, such as classes, aerobic classes...etc. Classrooms could be placed in existing facility.
    - Two separate facilities: one for Teens and another for Seniors. Not as feasible as an option. Currently, the Teen Committee has a plan for their recreational wants/needs.
    - New facility: requires at least 16,000 s.f. 50,000 s.f. warehouse-type space would be preferred.

- Facility must be multi-purpose and be able to accommodate different events occurring at the same time.
- Possible locations:
  - Texas Rd. is viewed as too far away.
  - County park across from former hospital site. Contamination is present.
  - Tennant Road/Amboy Road Corridor can become a "sports corridor" with an indoor sports complex.
  - Airport site could house a multi-purpose facility.
  - Old prison site (near New Hope facility) could be a good location, given its close proximity to the heart of town.
- Better maintenance/quality of all existing fields. Fields are scattered, expensive to maintain, and not efficient in current locations.
  - Potential for a 1 cent tax for maintenance of fields could aid in paying for maintenance costs.
- Additional basketball courts needed. Schedule for court times is booked to the maximum on a weekly basis.
  - Opportunity to reach out to the private sector to fund new court construction. Private funding possible to construct 3-5 new courts.
- Sports have become more and more year-round and not as seasonal. Therefore, the availability of securing fields/facilities for practice and games is becoming more difficult. Additional fields are needed for soccer, lacrosse, and football.
- Parking is also an important issue to address. Older parking systems could possibly be closed. Identification of land for placing softball & baseball lots near each other is recommended.
  - Twp. owned small, blue house near Little League fields could be demolished and be replaced with parking.
- A better working relationship with the school system is needed. Working together can help ease the problem of field maintenance and other various issues.
- Overall, the Committee agreed that very successful sports programs are provided to the community. However, these facilities and fields need to be SAFE!