

November 09, 2023

Solon Township Township Board

Re: Facilitative Meetings Report - Solon Twp. Parks

Fleis & VandenBrink (F&V) is honored to walk alongside the citizen / community groups within Solon Township. In June, we began a journey with the goal of making recommendations that was based on citizen input. This input received by the Township Board, would be a guide in forward movement within the park spaces.

The catalyst of that journey was an overwhelming plea to have formal community recommendations bound into an action forward report. However, before you begin turning the pages and diving into the report, I wanted to provide snapshots of recommendation sections. These snapshots, found on the next page, are the beginning of a future road map which will demonstrate obtainable paths to implementation of future park improvements.

As each snapshot block is digested, please note that money is not always the top need to find advancement, but collaboration between the Township and several groups including the baseball leagues, the rowing club, the river committee, and other community interest groups will develop the energy for success.

During the Township Board meeting tonight, we will discuss each block and the next steps towards making some of all of these community aspirations a reality.

As we look towards the future, there is one additional recommendation that I personally would like to add to this letter. That consideration is for the Township to hire a community programing coordinator. This part-time, 10 hr. per week, position would take on the responsibilities of organizing all facilities use/activities, community programing, organizations use agreements, and could include some fund raising initiatives.

Thank you again for your trust in F&V to facilitate these community meetings and provide recommendations to the Township Committee and Board.

Sincerely,

Matt Biolette

Recommendations Overview

Pg. 2. Funding Recommendations

The Park Committee's funding recommendation to the Township is the creation of a park fund to be used to provide matching funds with future grants.

A. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

- Establish a durable and stable mechanism to fund park improvements and ongoing maintenance in the
 form of a Millage to be placed on the ballot during the next available election cycle. This recommendation
 suggests that language placed on the ballot for millage rate for no less than 1 mills and not to exceed 3
 mills.
- Create a category within the General Fund called "Match", fund it with general fund dollars and private donations. The "Match" dollars will provide necessary matching funds for grants and/or selected park project expenses.
- "Match" funds will be prioritized for the community park concept drawing and cost estimate to apply for grants.
- Review Park & Recreation Plan pages 42-46 annually.
 - * Note: The use of a special assessment could be an alternative tool considered by the Twp. Board in lieu of a millage.
 - ** Note: For Example, a 2.5 mill tax mechanism would generate approximately \$150,000.00 annually based on the average dwelling SEV & the census house quantity data.

Pg. 5. Community Park Recommendations

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

- Create new lease agreements with the leagues clarifying responsibilities, goals and objectives.
- Narrow recommendations down to three obtainable improvement elements (baseball fields should not be included) and update concept drawing(s) and cost estimate.
- Apply for grants and/or seek private funding for the three identified improvements.
- Re-evaluate advancement of goal(s) annually.

Pg. 7. - Beach Park

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

- Recruit the Northern Michigan Rowing Club to request costs estimates for longer dock and establish local funding campaign for purchase.
- Seek cost estimates for swim area safety rope and float kit, floating swim area markers, and anchors and bring a proposal to the Township. - <u>Safety Rope and Float Kit Link</u> <u>Floating Swim Area Markers Link</u> Anchors Link
- Complete the application for Permit to place Buoys or Beacons Application Link
- Poll neighborhood residents on types of activities or uses they would like to see added to Beach Park.

Pg. 8. - J. Vlack Park

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

- · Close road to keep vehicles preventing park use for un-allowed and illegal activities.
- Survey community for park use recommendations.
- Contact certified forester for consult visit.



COMMUNITY PARK REPORT



SOLON TOWNSHIP, LEELANAU COUNTY, MI

November 2023





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REFERENCES

2022-2026 Solon Twp. Park & Recreation Plan (851130_draft_5_ypr_plan_10_24.pdf (leelanau.gov) 2020-2024 Leelanau County Park & Recreation Plan (leelanau_county_recreation_plan_v.pdf)

INTRODUCTION

The community of Solon Township, which includes the non-incorporated Village of Cedar, has long established commitment to park resources. The Township board created the Park & Recreation Committee in 2016 to develop a plan and make recommendations for enhancements.

The Township development of recreation and parks inventory have historically hinged around two main attractions. The Annual Polka Festival established in 1975 drawing nearly 10,000 people over four days, and the Cedar River's final 3-mile stretch from the bridge on Kasson Street to the mouth of Lake Leelanau.

In 2022 the Township developed a Park & Recreation 5-year Plan in accordance with best practices guidelines of the Michigan Department of Resources (DNR). This plan included community input and set the stage for recommendations for enhancements based on several factors including park condition, age, use, community input, and future access to grants and funding.

The Township recreation inventory includes four (4) properties identified as parks, Community Park, Beach Park, River Park, and Joe Vlack Memorial Park. These properties have unique features and are supported via the Township's general fund in the amount of \$50,000.00 annually for maintenance and repair.

In the spring of 2023, the Park & Recreation Committee began to seek assistance in bring together the community to arrive at a conscious decision for next steps in the development of the parks and recreational use plans. Utilizing a Traverse City Rotary for Charity Seed Grant the Township hosted three facilitated public meetings during June, July, & August 2023 to build consensus on recommended action items.

I. GRANT & PURPOSE

In the spring of 2023, the Solon Township Park Committee sought direction from and approval from the Township Board pursued a planning grant from the local Rotary for Charities, a Traverse City non-profit group.

The primary goals of this grant included citizen-based perspective resulting in:

- Improved citizen clarity
- Finding community unity
- Seeking direction for future park land use and improvements

The grant specified the following deliverables:

- Three facilitative meetings to gain community input on facility & recreation desires.
- A summary report with action steps.
- A small amount of money to edit/prepare one park concept design.

The Park Committee engaged Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering's Matt Biolette to facilitate three public meetings with the goal of producing a summary report with actionable steps towards completion by the Solon Township leadership.

Special thanks go to the Rotary for Charities of Traverse City for dedication to the communities of Leelanau and Grand Traverse County.

A. GRANT OUTCOME

Purpose of Grant:

To facilitate public surveys, forums, visioning sessions, and group decision making to identify elements desired to remain, be improved, and/or be added to the existing parks.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Conduct visioning sessions to prioritize desired improvements within the existing Township parks.
- Identify Contingent Interest Groups & gather their opinions.
- Outline citizens desires for park investments ranked by highest priority.
- Determine community desired elements for the parks.
- Recommend possible phased approach to redevelopment of parks.
- Conceptual plan(s) and estimated cost for updates.
- Township funding availability and funding source recommendations.

II. FUNDING SUMMARY

Of the three facilitated community meetings the second meeting was predominantly focused on local government functions and the types of funding accessible for park improvements.

The discussion focused on two key slides, the Capital Improvement Plan (Figure 1) taken directly from the 2022 Park & Recreation Plan, and the Project Funding Overview (Figure 2) used to help citizens better understand the flow & sources of the funding accessible by the Township.

The Park Committee and the facilitator recognized the importance of discussing the benefits and drawbacks of utilizing a tax assessment commonly known as a park millage. A millage is the rate at which property tax is levied on property(s). Property tax is determined by multiplying the state equalized value (taxable value) of the property by the number of mills levied, where one mill equals 0.001 of one dollar.

• For example, using the average Solon Township home value of \$261,000, with a state equalized value of \$130,000 per home, a millage rate of 2.5 and 595 homes in the township. The park millage would create an estimated \$190,000, qualifying Solon Township for a fund allowing for a bond or loan of \$1 million over a 7-year period for park enhancements with an additional \$45,000 annually for maintenance. This estimate would bring the annual park maintenance and improvement budget to \$95,000 (\$50,000 currently budgeted by the Township + \$45,000 from the millage).

The Park Committee's funding recommendation to the Township is the creation of a park fund to be used to provide matching funds with future grants.

A. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

- Establish a durable and stable mechanism to fund park improvements and ongoing maintenance in the form of a Millage to be placed on the ballot during the next available election cycle. This recommendation suggests that language placed on the ballot for millage rate for no less than 1 mills and not to exceed 3 mills.
- Create a category within the General Fund called "Match", fund it with general fund dollars and private donations. The "Match" dollars will provide necessary matching funds for grants and/or selected park project expenses.
- "Match" funds will be prioritized for the community park concept drawing and cost estimate to apply for grants.
- Review Park & Recreation Plan pages 42-46 annually.
 - * Note: The use of a special assessment could be an alternative tool considered by the Twp. Board in lieu of a millage.
 - ** Note: For Example, a 2.5 mill tax mechanism would generate approximately \$150,000.00 annually based on the average dwelling SEV & the census house quantity data.

III. INDIVIDUAL PARK PROPERTY SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community input collected during the three facilitated meetings held July, August & September 2023 was combined with the Citizen Survey data collected as a part of the Park & Recreation Planning process of 2021 - 2022. The meeting minutes are included in Appendix A. This consolidated data led to the recommendations specified by park below:

- Community Park (Victoria Creek Park)
- River Park
- Beach Park
- Joe Vlack Memorial Park



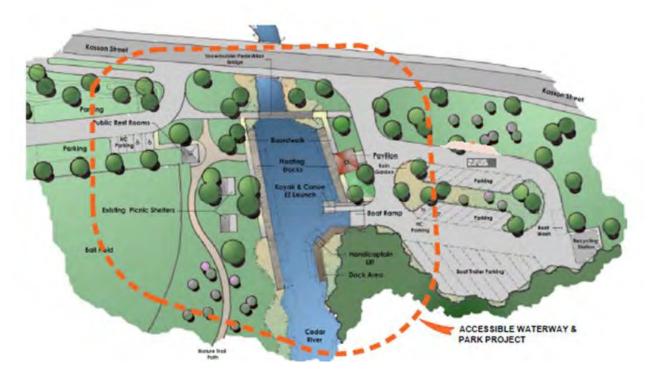
A. COMMUNITY PARK & RIVER PARK

The community recommends the two parks located on either side of Cedar Bridge, currently known as the "Community Park" and the "River Park" should be conjoined into one cohesive park with a north & south designation.

Planning considerations for both the north and south portions of the park need to include elements able to withstand highwater and prolonged flooding as well as being compatible with the wetland's designation of this area.

Citizen recommendations for park property north of the bridge (which includes parcels 032, 016, 040):

- Kayak/Canoe launch update to include ADA access.
- Improved parking lot areas
- Fishing pier or platform
- Pavilion area
- Dog park area
- Improved motorboat launch (fishing & small recreational boats)



Community Park North Concept Drawings created by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering



Citizen recommendations for park property south of the bridge (parcel 035) fell under either general use areas or baseball fields:

GENERAL USE AREAS

- Removal of tennis courts for improved community space. (To be used for Polka Festival & other future festivals)
- Consider installation of a covered area for use as band shell, performance area or banquet area.
- Improved and well-defined parking area(s).
- · Shoreline trail and possible fitness trail.
- Increased trash containers throughout park.
- Enhanced playground appealing to wider age range of children.
- Increase picnic area and install covered picnic areas and grills.
- Basketball court
- Pickle ball court
- Green space for youth activities i.e., soccer and flag football.

The nature of the property is seasonal river flood plain, thus limiting use of the baseball fields, picnic shelters and open spaces dependent on the season and the water levels. Future enhancements will need to address river flooding impact on use.

The community desires additional spaces for sports activities beyond baseball within the south portion of the park. However, they understand the benefit of planning how to cohesively exist with the baseball fields as the leagues consistently utilize them. This will be the primary consideration when selecting other uses or activities to implement which complement utilization of the baseball fields.

The baseball league representatives in attendance at the facilitated meetings are passionate about the leagues and their impact on the community. Their primary concern is to annually improve and maintain the existing baseball fields at the south Community Park location and to refrain from utilizing any of the existing baseball fields for alternate activities.

The Township and facilitator scheduled a one-on-one meeting with both the Leelanau County Youth League and the adult baseball and softball leagues which occurred between the 2nd and 3rd facilitated meetings, the meeting notes are included in Appendix A.

The League representatives requested improved clarity in the field lease agreements between the Township and both Leagues. Rewritten agreements would include longer lease time frames and specify each parties' responsibilities for maintenance activities, portable restroom costs and future improvements. The Leagues current lease time is June to October, with a decrease in the number of fields used once school starts. The League representatives indicated these changes in the leases would motivate the leagues to participate in funding the improvements listed above.

In the 3rd facilitated meeting the possibility of relocating the baseball fields was discussed. Four new baseball fields would range from \$200,000 - \$300,000 per field depending on the initial topography of the land used. To pursue relocating the baseball fields further facilitated community meetings with the Township leaders and the Leagues and site location planning will be necessary.

The recommendations from both the Youth and Adult Leagues are as follows:



BASEBALL AREAS

- Bleacher replacement or repair.
- Fence replacement or repair.
- · Improve existing baseball field lighting.
- Install lighting for fields which do not currently have lighting.
- Add walkway and security lighting.
- New dugouts for the back baseball field.
- Annually increased budget for field maintenance (turf rolling, turf replacement etc.).
- Install five portable restroom units.
- Annual insect/pest control budget.
- Install Concession Stand
- Purchase field from Chamber to include in Township property inventory and programing.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

- Create new lease agreements with the leagues clarifying responsibilities, goals and objectives.
- Narrow recommendations down to three obtainable improvement elements (baseball fields should not be included) and update concept drawing(s) and cost estimate.
- Apply for grants and/or seek private funding for the three identified improvements.
- Re-evaluate advancement of goal(s) annually.





A Community Park South Concept Drawings created by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering

B. BEACH PARK

The boat launch with access to Lake Leelanau is a significant feature of Beach Park for the community. They envision separating this area from the public swimming area using a temporary seasonal dock which will be utilized by the Northern Michigan Rowing Club (NMRC) aging members enabling them to remain active in the club.

Citizen recommendations for Beach Park (two parcel 027, & 040):

- Engineer evaluation of boat ramp for enhancements.
- Longer dock for Northern Michigan Rowing Club (separator for launch and beach).
- Swim rope line to separate swimming area from deeper portion of the lake.
- Improved designated parking area.



- Potential location for future
 - Dog park
 - o Pickle Ball Courts
 - o Activities sponsored by surrounding homeowners.

During the meetings, a repersentaive from the Northern Michigan Rowing Club advised the group would welcome the opportunity to discuss a more active roll in the Beach Park and explore what that roll might include. Ideas suggested were donations (funding), volunteer labor, or other beneficial park activities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

- Recruit the Northern Michigan Rowing Club to request costs estimates for longer dock and establish local funding campaign for purchase.
- Seek cost estimates for swim area safety rope and float kit, floating swim area markers, and anchors and bring a proposal to the Township. - <u>Safety Rope and Float Kit Link</u> <u>Floating Swim Area Markers Link</u> Anchors Link
- Complete the application for Permit to place Buoys or Beacons Application Link
- Poll neighborhood residents on types of activities or uses they would like to see added to Beach Park.



A Beach Park Concept Drawing created by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering

C. JOE VLACK MEMORIAL PARK

The Joe Vlack Memorial Park was donated to the Village of Cedar in 1934 the pond was donated and in 1955 the remainder of the property was donated. This area featured a pond stocked annually by the DNR, turning the park into a fishing attraction. The pond was created by a dam which failed in 2015 leaving the property with rustic trails as its attraction.

The most common uses for this park are:

- Bird watching
- Trail walking
- Dog exercise and/or training



The community is concerned the park is being used for:

- Hunting
- ORV vehicles
- Illegal dumping
- Underage drinking
- Illegal drug use

The citizen goup recommended closing the park road to vehicle access at the 1st facilitated meeting and this recommendation was presented by the Park Committee at the July Township Board meeting. The Township agreed to close vehicle access to the park to address the community concerns. Parking and to the park property by foot is not affected by the road closure.

The citizen recommendations for the Joe Vlack Memorial Park (two parcels 016, & 017):

- Consult forester regarding health, maintenance and harvesting of the woods.
- Pond and stream rehabilitation.
- Seek volunteers to create marked rustic trail(s).
- Consider alternative uses like a campground.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

- Close road to keep vehicles preventing park use for un-allowed and illegal activities.
- Survey community for park use recommendations.
- · Contact certified forester for consult visit.



A Joe Vlack Memorial Park Concept Drawing created by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering

IV. VISION PLANNING MEETING SUMMARIES

The community found consensus across all three facilitated meetings at confirming the focus for improvements should be the Community Park first, the Beach Park second and Joe Vlack Memorial Park third. (Meeting Minutes included in Appendix A)

A. July 6, 2023 Meeting Summary

The initial meeting positioned the citizens to work together in identifying the needs of each property, the desire for investment at each property, and resulted in a consensus the "river" and "community" park should be visioned as one property plan with multiple separate phases and goals based on the contingent interest groups.



A recommendation from this meeting, was brought before the Township Board to close vehicle access to Joe Vlack Memorial Park.

B. August 3, 2023 Meeting Summary

At the second meeting, the community group present, was asked to and verified concurrence with the community decisions made during the initial meeting.

The facilitator steered a conversation surrounding several financial considerations including grants, millages, special assessments, public, private, corporate contributors, the township operation and improvement budget, and contributions from contingent interest groups.

The meeting was concluded with a brainstorming session to identify the personal recommendations of each attending member.

C. September 7, 2023 Meeting Summary

At the third meeting, the community group present, was asked to and verified concurrence with the community decisions made during the first & second meeting. Two categories were focused on and stack ranked by improvement and by general topic based on the citizen selected park, Community Park.

By Item of Importance

- 1. Improved Recreation Programing
- 2. Multi-Community Space / Big Pavilion
- 3. Bathroom Facilities & Trash improvements
- 4. Parking Improvements
- 5. Accessibility for disabled people
- 6. Kayak Launch
- 7. Docks & Fishing Platforms

By Topic

- 1. Additional planning
- 2. More clean bathrooms
- Bleacher improvement
- 4. Plans for all parks
- 5. Parking lot egress (playground)
- 6. Safety inspection w/recommendations
- 7. Develop maintenance plan/program (comprehensive)
- 8. Goals & mission of P&R committee (annual goal planning)
- 9. Online posting for meetings & events

The community group concurred the money for matching grant dollars needs to be funded locally before seeking those grant(s) or state/federal apportion funding. The community understands it needs to show investment and forward movement, creating results before favorable funding will become available. The suggestion was made to entrust the local contingent groups like the baseball leagues to self-create improvements and/or raise matching funds to be used towards a specific grant opportunity. Those activities must be managed by the park committee and the township board to keep consistent with the overall vision for the park areas.

V. INTEREST GROUP MEETING SUMMARIES

A. BASEBALL, SOFTBALL & LELLANAU COUNTY YOUTH LEAGUES

A special meeting was held with the contingent interest group include the LCYL and adult softball league to defuse a misunderstanding the conceptual drawings were not actually park plans. The representees of the leagues believed a predetermined a goal to eliminate one or more baseball fields was in place.

Once an understating was reached on the intent of the concept drawings, the conversation pivoted to the impact of the combined league having 125+ players annually using the fields in June, July and August for both leagues and extending into September and October for the adult leagues. The most significant discovery of this discussion



was the leagues belief the Township did not support the baseball facilities with enough property maintenance or grounds maintenance compared to other area facilities.

The representatives of the league were receptive to the conversation around possible renegotiation of their individual agreements providing them with more flexibility to make long term improvements.

B. RIVER COMMITTEE

A conversation was had with Mark Polinko and Ray Pleva of the River Committee to learn the history of the last river dredging. Ray discussed the vision the River Committee had for opening the access of the river into the lake and how without boat traffic on the river it will continue to silt over and reduce accessibility. We also discussed a need for a sewer system to address the high water and lack of drainage in the downtown area.

The River Committee has visions and goals for the north side of the Community Park but has not raised funds or accessed a grant to make improvements.



FIGURES

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROJECT FUNDING

Capital Improvement Schedule

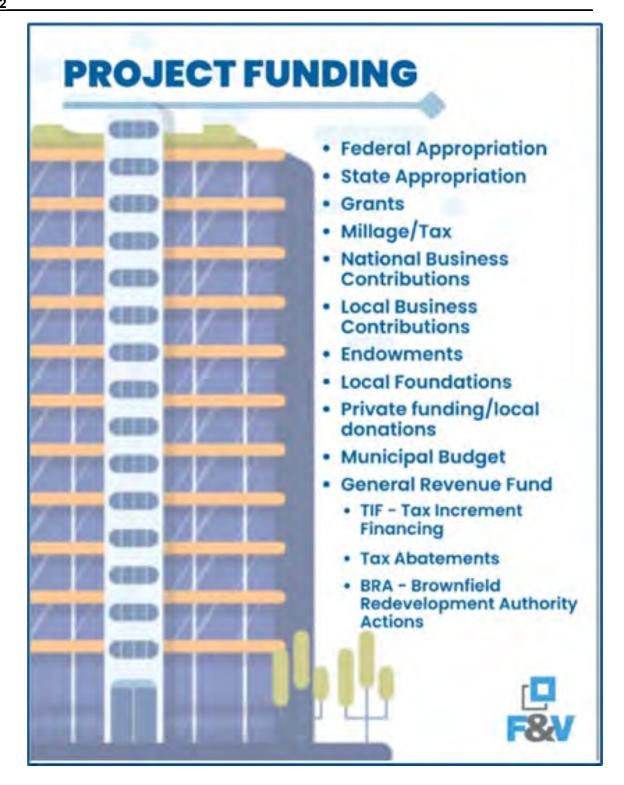
Year 2022	Project Community Park New Play Area ADA Walks Parking Ballfield Vault Toilet, Restroom Rain Gardens	Est. Cost \$1,000,000	Justification Goals 1, 2, 4 & 6	Funding Source \$300,000 MNRTF \$200,000 Local Match \$500,000 Donations/Foundations
2023	Park Land Acquisition	\$80,000	Property, Goals 1 & 5	\$40,000 MDNR MNRTF \$40,000 Local Match
2024	River Park Launch Improvements ADA Improvements	\$200,000	Goals 1, 2, 4 & 6	\$100,000 MDNR Waterways \$100,000 Local Match
2025	Park Land Acquisition	\$80,000	Property, Goals 1 & 5	\$40,000 MNRTF \$40,000 Local Match
2026	Beach Park Restroom Improvements ADA Improvements	\$500,000	Goals 1, 2, 4 & 6	\$300,000 MDNR \$200,000 Local Match

Abbreviations

MDNR - Michigan Department of Natural Resources MDOT – Michigan Department of Transportation LWCF - Land and Water Conservation Fund MNRTF- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

TEA-21 -Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century







APPENDIX A

Facilitative Meetings Presentations & Minutes

Solon Township – Biolette Recap Meeting #3 09/07/2023

Attendance: 19

Agenda:

Recap Meeting #1 & #2

Citizen recommitment / consensus

General Consensus / Property Specific

Address the Community Park, Playground Park, & River Park as ONE PARK / ONE PROJECT / ONE PROPERTY with different faces, spaces and places.

Close J. Vlack to vehicle traffic until a later date when more defined spaces are developed.

Develop a plan for a longer dock to accommodate the rowing club & a defined swimming area for the Beach Park

Seek an increased park budget to allow yearly maintenance / improvements to all park spaces.

Generate a funding plan for increase capital improvements.

Financial Consensus

Money / Funding starts locally.

Most Grant funds require matching dollars.

CIG's (Contingent Interest Groups) have specific wants but have not brought Asks / Plans / \$\$ to the Twp. A road map is needed to attempt to obtain funding.

Review & Discuss example road maps for Project / Funding

Consensus On Community Input by Properties, ranked by community importance.

Improved Recreation Programing

Multi-Community Space

Bathroom Facilities & Trash improvements

Parking Improvements

Accessibility for disabled people

Kayak Launch

Docks & Fishing Platforms

Consensus on Community Input by Topic, ranked by community importance.

Additional planning

More clean bathrooms

Bleacher improvement

Plans for all parks.

Parking lot egress (playground)

Safety inspection w/recommendations

Develop maintenance plan/program (comprehensive)

Goals & mission of P&R committee (annual goal planning)

Online posting for meetings & events

Discussion and Review of the League(s) presence in the township parks and their desires

The facilitator & Mary Taylor met independent the two different league leaders Sarah Launter Adult league and Alison Bebe from the Youth League. Reference notes file name: <u>LCYL Interview Worksheet2</u> & soloncedarbaseballschedule2023

Note: Two leagues express their desires for field improvements, ranked by importance

LCYL.Adult Softball(1) Bleacher repair replacement(1) Bleacher Repair Replacement(2) Field #3 Fencing(2) Fencing Repair / Improvements

(3) Dugouts in Field #3 (3) Resurface Field

Township Recommendations

Listening to input and discussion on the recap

Are there any ideas or thoughts you have that you feel we need to explore yet tonight?

Any thoughts you want to share about from what you heard tonight or during these any of these community meetings?

Is there anyone who feels they have not been heard?

Tammy of the Coffee House discussed her community survey for a "DOG Park" in solon. Her recommendation was to use a part of the old recycle area or another segment of a park. The committee believes Joe Vlack Park would be the best location. However, the community has expressed a desire to see something downtown.

There was discussion about bicycle path to avoid safety concerns with increased summer traffic. We explored and talked through how that is a county joint project and not directed by the Township. Township does not own roads, county does.

Conversation occurred around how the river is affecting the community park and how "improvements" should be mindful of the flooding.

Ray P talked to how to improve river flow and how the process is being met with roadblocks from EGLE, DNR, and other agencies.

There was some conversation on what if the baseball fields were moved from the community park to another location resulting in a "improved sports complex" would that result in a more mixed-use community space in the heart of town.

An idea of a larger mixed-use pavilion was once again surfaced but the group was unable to suggest activities that might support such a structure outside of Polka Festival.

What's Next (Next Steps)

A report is issued to the township board with data, recommendations heard during these meetings, and suggestions for forward direction.

The park committee and the board then have available funds to re-identify and vison some improvements for future creation or improvement.

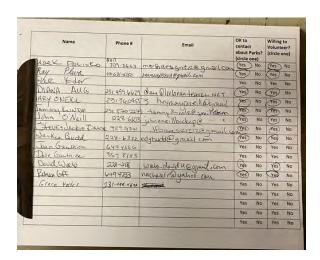
Seek Funding

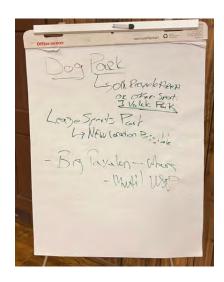
Closing Comments and Request for notes for thank you to the Rotary Foundation for their support of this process.

AFTER ACTION MEETING

Following the closing of the public meeting an after-action meeting was conducted with Mary & Kelly to determine (1) recapped the perceived value of the facilitated meetings, (2) discussed the input of the river committee and Ray Pleva / Mark Polinko, (3) the need for a "hired" programming manager to improve the activities within the parks and community building, (4) the need for a structured maintenance program and the staff duties, (5) restricting of the leagues contracts with commitments from both sides, and (6) possible/potential need to restructure the Park & Rec Committee term of service from 1yr to either 2 or 3.,

IMAGES FROM MEETING





SOLON TOWNSHIP VISIONING AND PLANNING SESSION

Thursday, September 7, 2023

Session started at 7:00 pm with Mary Taylor introducing Matt Biolette from Fleis and VandenBrink, who would be facilitating this session. There were 19 people in attendance.

Matt Biolette gave a recap of the past two Visioning sessions with the purpose of giving information to those who had not been present for these past two meetings, and to verify that there had been consensus on items. Consensus is necessary for the Parks Committee to move forward with a recommendation to the Township Board.

The four parks in Solon Township that have been and will be discussed at these Visioning Sessions are the River Park, Community Park, boat launch/beach park and Joe Vlack Park. It has been determined that Joe Vlack Park is the least used, although its use is being abused by the dumping of trash. Joe Vlack Park is in the process of being closed off. Matt asked if the people present were in consensus with the items as presented. There was not vote of consensus, but there was no discussion of disagreement.

Matt stated that conceptual drawings of these four parks was done in 2021. He reiterated that there is no formal park plan in place and that these drawings are strictly conceptual and are not set in stone.

People interested in the baseball facilities talked about their impact on the community.

A member of the audience asked if anyone knew whether the water from the artesian well located at the launch/beach park was potable. That information is not known. The well would have to be sampled sporadically and this would raise some legal issues for the Township.

Matt reviewed funding. He stated that funding can be gotten in four ways; 1) locally through private funding, 2) municipal funding, taxes and mileage, 3) grants, which frequently require matching funds, and 4) Contingent Interest Groups, such as the Polka Fest and Little League.

Matt discussed the need for a "road map" to obtain funding. This "road map" is the road to improvements in the park system. The five steps to move forward along this road map to success is; 1) identify a project and determine whether it will meet the long term goals of the Township, 2) Private people coming forward with plans and money to help, 3) the use of volunteers to help lessen overall costs, 4) matching dollars for grants, and 5) make sure you only apply for grants that you have the pre-engineering done on the project.

Matt informed the public that the River and Community parks are being considered one park. By combining these parks, it will help when applying for grants.

It was brought up that the Township has budgeted \$30,000 for the maintenance of all the parks and the need for more funds if the parks are improved or facilities expanded. The baseball group would like reassurance that the fields will be leased to them for ten years. If they feel they are guaranteed this amount of time, they will do more to help with the diamonds.

Matt was asked if the recommendations that will be presented to the Township Board will be more specific than the general recommendations, we are hearing this evening. Matt told everyone that the recommendations from these Visioning Sessions will be discussed by the Parks Committee, who will then take more specific recommendations to the Township Board.

COMMUNITY INPUT

A community member stated that at her job in Cedar she has become aware of the need for a dog park here. She posted a petition online and it has been signed by 22 people so far requesting a dog park. This suggestion was discussed. It was stated that there are other municipalities in the area that have put in dog parks, and they might be willing to share their experiences with us. Joe Vlack park was mentioned as a possible location.

It was mentioned that the river and surrounding area is having issues with high water. It was questioned where park facilities/improvements would go, as they might end up under water.

It was asked if there was another area in which to rebuild the ball diamonds where there is no flooding, i.e., a sports complex.

One person present asked what is the best use of the parks? They notice that most users are kayakers and families fishing. Does anybody know how many people are using the facilities such as the tennis courts, baseball diamonds, and river.

Ray Pleva mentioned that a study was done in the past regarding what was needed and the costs. The river is clogging up with weeds and grasses at the mouth and causing flooding. This report did not mention how many people used this park. It was mentioned that the tennis courts were built on an area of muck that was filled. Because this is an unstable base, the tennis courts are cracking. There was more discussion on the river and keeping it open. Matt informed those present that the river and its maintenance is not under the jurisdiction of the Parks Committee (which covers dry land parks) and thus not a part of this Visioning Session's purpose. Joan Gauthier asked that everyone attend the Cedar River meetings if they have questions and concerns about the river.

It was mentioned by a resident that the river is a floating bog, and they would recommend we have a boardwalk for fishing and walking.

It was asked by a resident if increasing park space for ball parks has been brought up before. Matt stated it had been discussed before.

It was asked if there had been previous discussion regarding a multi-use building. Matt stated that it has been a topic before the Parks since this Visioning process began. If this were a project to be recommended there would have to be programming for this building as well as maintenance costs to be considered.

It was asked how much it would cost to build new diamonds. Matt stated that the average cost for a new diamond is \$220,000. This cost is per each diamond.

A resident stated that we cannot build in the Community Park area due to flooding. She stated that the Polka Fest and winter baseball tournament are money makers. Why do we need all these things (Parks improvements?) that will cost so much when we can already use what the Township does have. It was explained that per law, parks should be brought up to ADA compliance.

We were informed by Joan Gauthier, Township Treasurer, that the Polka Fest and baseball are not money makers for the Township but may be for the Chamber. The resident then stated that should not investment be put into the Township building so that it could be used as a money maker for the Township. The resident stated should not priorities be focused on the building.

A resident stated they agreed with the recommendation of a dog park with plantings that do not need to be mowed.

It was recommended that the Township consider linear trials, i.e., Bike and walking trails. These trails can be used 12 months of the year rather than just a few months.

A resident asked if grant applications needed better drawings. Matt stated that the applications would need a cost estimate and a plan. He stated that Fleis and VandenBrink will do the updated drawing reflecting the results of these meetings.

It was stated that biking has become dangerous in the area and, thinking in the long term, bikes and electric bikes are future transportation. Matt stated that this person should speak with the County and MDOT.

It was requested of the Township to let people have more advance notice of scheduled meetings, such as this meeting. The public was informed that meeting schedules are listed on the Solon Township website, Solon Township Parks Facebook page, and the bulletin board.

WHAT'S NEXT:

Kim Smith

The Parks Committee will review and discuss the recommendations discussed at these Visioning Sessions. A report will then be issued to the Township Board giving the data and recommendations heard during these meetings, as well as suggestions for moving forward. This report will be in a PDF format and will be made a part of the Solon Township website. Matt stated that a local paper may write an article about this report as well. Matt stated that this Report should be before the Board at their December meeting.

Mary Taylor informed those present that if any of them are interested in being a part of the Parks Committee, they should write a letter to the Supervisor stating that they would like to be a member of the Parks Committee. She stated that the Parks Committee meets the last Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

The Township Board will then discuss which project(s) and funding should be directed to move forward.

Session ended at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Kill Gillia	
END SEPTEMBER MINUTES	

Meeting #2 Notes August 2023

Solon Township – Biolette Recap Meeting 8/3/2023

Attendance: 16

Agenda & Notes
Recap meeting #1.

Citizen recommitment / consensus – is this group in agreement, as the initial meeting resolved, that the Community Park (as newly defined as both north & south properties) remains the highest importance in development / improvement?

Identify the primary goal of the Community Park (a) baseball or (b) diverse recreation? Standing Vote & Discussion

Discus how park development / planning is "phased" and why.

Exploring how funding could be accessed.

Visual - F&V Funding Document

Exploring the functions and Park Committees, Twp. Board and how ideas/projects transition to the board for decision and actions.

Citizen Exercise / Input.

Community Needed Improvements - Ranked Importance

Community voicing exercise - recommendation to the Twp. Board.

Moving Forward - Next Steps.

Request 1-1 with baseball citizen group

Recommendation to Twp. board J-Vlack Park Gates purchase and install.

Close Mtg. / Next Meeting is 9/7/2023.

AFTER ACTION MEETING

Following the closing of the public meeting an after-action meeting was conducted with Mary & Kelly to determine (1) next board meeting report & request for action/motions, (2) the influence on the process of the non-township resident baseball citizens group, (3) a request for a separate meeting with the baseball citizen group to help understand their direct needs and intentions for ongoing programing of the park facilities, (4) why the Ray P. and others are not engaging within this forum (the term boycott was used my Mary)

Citizen Consensus – Stand and Identify

(Q) Please stand and identify which of the two concept parks designs resonate most with you?

Preliminary Option A

More public Space / less baseball focused, reduce to 2 baseball fields.

Preliminary Option B

Core elements being 3 or 4 baseball fields and work other elements around those fields.



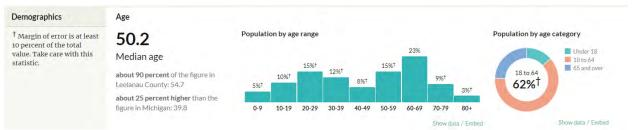




Vote: 11

OUTCOME:

The room was initial divided 60/40 until several community members (3) who feel the baseball fields are the most significant value the Community Park has for both Solon Twp. residents and non-residents became vocal affecting the participants to become influenced to change / follow the larger groups selected design. Noteworthy: Census Data identifies the township 10-19 age demographic as 10%, Equal to 161 of 1,612 population



Source: https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US2608974500-solon-township-leelanau-county-mi/ White Board - Citizen Visioning / Input / Verbalization



Bring to Parks Committee: (Broad Brush) additional planning more clean bathrooms bleacher improvement plans for all parks parking lot egress (playground) Safety inspection w/ recommendations develop maintenance plan/program (comprehensive) Goals & mission of P&R Committee (Annual Goal Planning) Online Posting for Events

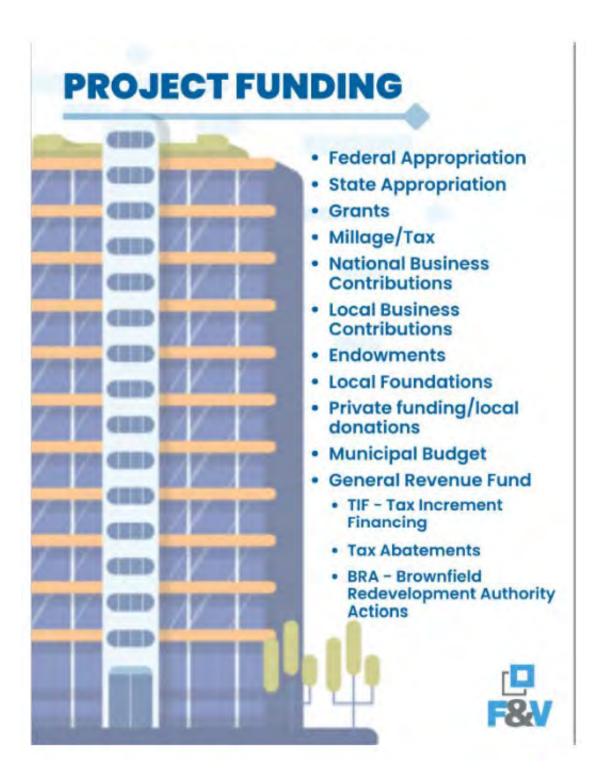
Funding - Visual

Broad Brush – What is Most Important?

- 1. Improved Recreation
- 2. Multi-Community Space
- 3. Bathroom Facilities & Trash
- 4. Improved Parking
- 5. Accessibility
- 6. Kayak Launch
- 7. Docks & Fishing Areas
- 8. Hard Trails
- 9. Water Trail

Suggested Topics/Needs for the P&R committee to verbalize with the Twp Board:

- Additional planning
- More clean bathrooms
- Bleacher improvement
- Plans for all parks
- Parking lot egress (playground)
- Safety inspection w/recommendations
- Develop maintenance plan/program (comprehensive)
- Goals & mission of P&R committee (annual goal planning)
- Online posting for meetings & events



Park Committee Meeting Recap /Notes - Kelly Claar
Solon Township Parks Visioning Meeting 8/3/2023 Solon Township Hall
Hosted by Fleis and Vandenbrink's, Matt Biolette

Township Board attendees: Steve Yoder, Joan Gauthier, Jim Lautner Parks Committee attendees: Mary Taylor, Kelly Claar, Grace Yoder

The meeting was set up with 3–30-minute structure. Review

Narrow the Scope of our Park Choice Discuss phasing of our Park choice

Rules Review: Have fun, share ideas, no idea is good or bad.

I. Review from 7/6/2023 Vision Meeting

Solon Township inventory is 4 parks.

Cedar Community Park

Solon Beach Park

Vlack's Park

Solon Townhall

(Solon Schoolhouse)

What has happened up to this point? There has been a 5-year recreation plan written, a community survey sent in the tax bills, the community has made some decisions by choosing the parks they want to focus on investing in.

The community chose in order of priority: 1)Cedar Community Park 2)Solon Beach Park 3)Vlack's Park The community decided that the Cedar Community Park includes the north and south of the river as one whole park.

We heard from the community what they believe what the most needed improvements are. (See previous notes list)

There was a consensus from the community that since we are not planning to spend funds on Vlack's Park right away, the committee should recommend that Vlack's Park road should be closed to vehicular traffic. The question was asked; "Is all of the review still true today?" The room answered YES.

II. Narrowing the Scope

The point of this is to figure out what is most important to focus on. The room was directed to two different drawings in the back of proposals for the Cedar Community Park. One drawing includes a multi-use space and the other one reduces the footprint to 3 ballfields. The group was directed to stand near the drawing they liked the best.

Questions that came up during this process:

Are the ball fields considered multi-use? (Generally, "no")

The snowball tournament rep said they must use all fields to operate one time per year.

Youth league has lots of ball field opportunities throughout the county. E. g. Miles Kimmerly is a county park meant to service the entire county and they have 4 ball fields.

Cedar does not have multi-use space currently.

There were suggestions that now that the recycling bins have been moved that we could create a farmers' market and multi-use space there.

3 people chose the Multi use space and 14 chose the ball fields option.

What about when the river floods and facility improvements?

Matt stated that any improvements involving the river will require an EGLE permit which is usually about \$15,000 to start.

Some other comments from the room were:

Can we get a multi-use space farther from the river?

Can the grub shack be used to build bathrooms?

How do we mitigate the squishiness? The water is backing up and there is a concern that the park will be under water.

Can we get entities to collaborate with us regarding the water flow issue? The answer was yes but it is not in the purview of the Parks Committee.

The Parks Committee does not control the flow of the river.

How to improve the drainage regarding the Cedar Swamp is a much bigger conversation than we have time to cover in these parks' sessions.

Allison Beebe: "During the months of June and July all 4 ball fields are used 4 days per week.

Is this a factual statement and from what time to time per day?

Phasing and Money (in other words, prioritizing)

"What are the broad-brush elements within the parks?"

The community within the room rated the following order of priority:

Improved Recreation

Multi-Community Space

Clean and Improved bathrooms and trash removal Improved Parking Accessibility
Kayak Launch (ADA) for Cedar River
Dock, Fishing Area
Trails/ Water Trails

Consensus was looking for a multi-use and recreation blend. Matt asked everyone to consider programming that supports the entire year and not focus on just one big event.

There was some ADA discussion and Matt let people know that there must be an ADA component in all proposals to be successful for grants. Comments were made in the room that there was not much ADA in our parks in Leelanau County. Matt mentioned that the handicap boat loading system in the Parks and Rec 5-year plan would draw people to the area because it is an accommodation that is nowhere else in the county. This led to a discussion of other aspects of ADA and which level a community needs.

The Money Discussion

Focus: "How to find money for park improvements, the mechanisms and the requirements of the individual mechanisms."

Table 4 of the Park and Recreation Plan discusses the Capital improvement Schedule.

Grants

The most common grants for parks are from the MI Department of Natural Resources. The 3 main types of DNR grants are:

Trust Fund

Passport

Waterway

They all require some type of match, usually 50/50. There are other requirements for grants and each one needs to be weighed in terms of what makes the most sense for your goals and particular organization. Other big grantors are:

LWCF

MDOT

TEA 21

Other Types of Funding

Municipal Budget (Township Budget)

Private Funding (local donations)

Local Foundations (Rotary, Traverse City has at least 70)

Endowments-when someone passes away, they leave an interest-bearing account which is donated to the organization.

Local Business Contributions (Cherryland Electric)

National Business Contributions (American Waste, State Farm, Banks)

Millage (a loan through a bond that gets paid back)

State Appropriations (Grants & Earmarks)

Federal Appropriations (Grants & Earmarks)

It is possible to turn grants down if the match is too big or it is not a good fit for your organization.

Example Modeling – Using a millage as the match for the grant.

For a \$4 million park would require a \$2million match for 50%. To gain a \$2 million match would require a million for 2.5 for a Township the size of Solon. The example showed the annual bond payments / tax collection schedule. The calculation demonstrated also factored in the annual operation and CIP plan for the park system at \$4m of roughly \$50K. In the example millage calculations showed a home valued at \$261,000.00 (Avg. Twp. Data) at \$652 per year in tax or \$54 per month per household.

To propose a millage, the community must feel strongly about recommending a ballot initiative to the board. Then it us up to the board to propose a vote. If it is a yes, then the board has to find a bond and it usually takes 3 years to put all of this in place. It is important to match the dollar amount with the phasing that has already been put in place.

This led to a discussion as to how Committees and Township Boards work together. In this case, the Parks Committee takes input from the community and tries to work out a solution and make recommendations to the Township Board. There is a member on the board that makes a motion, another board member seconds it

and then they proceed to discussion. After that the board votes, and the motion either passes or fails. The Parks committee takes direction from the board and

Parks' Items from the Solon Community to take to the Township Board as requested needs:

Additional planning for Parks

More bathrooms and clean bathrooms

Bleacher improvements

Specific "general" plans for all the parks

Parking lot egress, specifically related to the playground.

Safety inspections of all the parks with recommendations

Develop a maintenance plan and comprehensive program for each park.

Develop and make public the goals and missions of the park and recreation committee.

Online presence and postings for meetings and community events

Previous Meeting Notes of Items that are needing improvement:

Bleachers

Flush toilets

Band shell

Tennis court resurfaced.

Improved and more picnic areas.

Horseshoe pits

Weather cover for tennis courts

Bigger playground with more age group offerings

Improved shoreline on the river

ADA walkways

Dugouts and improvements on existing

Insect control measures

More trash cans.

Concession area

Boardwalk into and along the river

Improvements on the north side of the river

Floating docks

More and improved parking

More club involvement in the parks program

Walking trails

Gate to completely enclose the current playground.

Ice Rink-need to choose between natural and synthetic. Pros and cons to both.

------ END AUGUST MINUTES ------

Meeting #1 Notes July 2023

PARK ID: SOLON COMMUNITY PARK

CONSENSUS STATEMENT:

The Community Park & The River Park should be considered one property and therefore developed in accord with a cohesive master plan.

Most of the participates in the first meeting (July) believed baseball/softball/I-league ball is important to the community and surrounding communities. Participants strongly supported a recommendation for a tax-millage or other tax-based recreation incentive to support maintenance and development/enhancement of this park.



© Supporting Comments (11)

Most used

Maintenance is a priority – park is run down.

Brings people (a wide group of ages) & spending to town.

More grills & picnic areas & picnic tables

Concession area, food truck area

Allows a place for youth activities.

Keep baseball.

Better community area for concerts, polka festival

An enclosed area for polka fest., concerts, & farmers market

Opposed Comments (0)
Swamp floods baseball fields

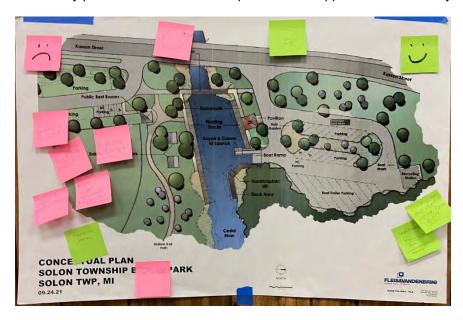
Thoughts / Comments / Needs

- Bleachers
- Fence repair / replacement
- Better Bathrooms / Flushing toilets
- Better Parking
- Band Shell / Performance Area
- General lighting
- Ball field lighting improvements
- Tennis Court resurface / cover tennis courts for Polka Festival
- Bigger playground more age play
- Concession Stand
- Walking fitness trials
- Natural shoreline
- Field maintenance
 - o Turf maintenance
 - Rolling & other improvements
- Pavilion improvement
- ADA Walkways
- Shuffleboard / Horseshoe
- Add new dugouts for back field.
- Purchase or assume back ball field from chamber ownership so can be improved by township grants / DNR funds.
- More trash cans.
- Bug control

Park Id: Solon River Park

CONSENSUS STATEMENT:

The River Park had only two of the 25 people support it as a standalone park during the July meeting. However, the consensus was that this property was "connected / adjoined" to the community park and should be developed as one plan. The south side of the Victora Creek / Cedar River is connected as a part of the community park and north side of the park should support total community activity.



© Supporting Comments (2

Center of community most important park

Needs bathroom structure.

A pavilion structure please / one larger structure on the south side and a smaller structure on the north side

Kayak / Canoe launch

Boardwalks on river edge

Improved paved parking.

Amphitheater / music in the park

Find involvement / commitment form the garden club.

Opposed Comments (0)

river needs to be corrected first. (Not within this committees' capabilities. This is a dry land committee)

Thoughts / Comments / Needs

•

Park Id: Solon Boat (Beach) Launch Park

CONSENSUS STATEMENT:

The Solon Boat Launch / Beach Park is the only public boat launch located in the township however is extremely shallow and only practical for launching a small fishing boat, a kayak / canoe, or a rowing boat for the local club.

This property could be connected in partnership with the rowing club as they desire a longer dock to enter the boat for aging members. In addition, a strong desire for the this to be more public swim area, aka beach area.



© Supporting Comments (2)

Access to swimming & boating.

Split the area (boating / swimming).

Allow for dog access – i.e., dog beach.

Possible special interest group to have increased involvement / aka take on responsibility. Northern Michigan Rowing Club.

Opposed Comments (1)

Ramp needs improvement, not useable by most boats.

Better safer swimming area needed.

Not enough parking.

Needs more maintenance priority.

Thoughts / Comments / Needs

•

Park Id: Solon Joe Vlack Memorial Park

CONSENSUS STATEMENT:

The JVMP was not supported by any participants within the first meeting and strongly opposed as a community need for additional investment at this time. The focus group stated that the property should be "barricaded" in some fashion to keep vehicle traffic from the trail style roads and prevent illegal dumping and mischievous behavior from occurring.

F&V to present the committee a proposal to bring to the board with the intent to provide a recommendation which could be supported by the County Road Commission to restrict or stop vehicle access to the park while also providing a safe place for a limited number of cars to park and allow access by foot for hiking.



Supporting Comments

<u>(0)</u>

This is a special property which could find partnership at the County level in development.

Could this property become a campground? And if yes, how could the development of that asset occur? private / public partnership?

This property is unofficially used for hunting and ATV/UTV riding.

Opposed Comments (13)

trash dumping occurring because park is unmonitored. does not currently have a feature use, no draw to park. mischievous behavior happening.

ATV/UTV abuse on sand hill leading to private land.

SOLON TOWNSHIP

VISIONING AND PLANNING SESSION

Thursday, July 6, 2023 Prepared By Kim Smith

(Solon Twp. Park Committee Member)

Session started at 7:05 with Mary Taylor introducing Matt Biolette from Fleis and VandenBrink, who would be facilitating this session.

Thoughts / Comments / Needs

•

Matt Biolette gave some background and history of Solon Township and the Parks Committee leading up to this session and the ones following. He covered the topics: Parks and Rec Plan and the eight goals given in this plan.

Matt spoke of diverse types of funding available, i.e., DNR Spark Grant, community foundational grants, donations from community members, etc. He related that Solon Township has a higher-than-average median household income due to the lake frontage. This higher household income effects some of the grants and funding the Township might write for.

He stated that when parks and goals were discussed this evening, we (the Township) do not have to do everything that the proposed drawings show, but may be just one piece of the plan, with a kayak launch given as an example. There may be benefactors willing to fund just one piece of what the proposal drawing shows for a park.

He stated that if ideas, issues, etc. are brought up during this session that do not fit into the discussion topic at hand, these items will be placed into an area called a "parking lot" to be discussed at a later time/date.

Matt asked those present what they felt "recreation" was in Solon Township. Responses were: Baseball, tennis, pickleball, basketball, kayaking, fishing, ice skating, playground, rowing, hiking, picnicking, camping, baseball facilities with four to five diamonds necessary.

Matt asked who those present felt should take care of these recreational facilities, or how they should be funded. Responses were:

Municipal staff, volunteer based, special assessment, and interlocal agreement (like the fire department). It was brought up that our parks are used by many other communities, although maintenance is paid for by Solon Township. the Solon Township Board has budgeted \$35,000 this year. This is the highest budget ever for parks.

Baseball diamonds were discussed. It was brought up that the adults pay for diamond dust and have volunteered to build and repair bleachers.

Matt asked what the biggest shortfalls were with the Township parks. Responses were: Flushable bathrooms, area for taking dogs swimming, resurfacing needed on tennis courts, lights need updating on the ballfield, better park lighting, rough outfield on baseball fields, higher fence needed for baseball field, parking at Joe Vlack Park, Solon beach access road needs improvements, trees should be removed from Solon beach, hiking trails, biking trails.

For the third segment Matt asked participants to stand up. Participants were asked to go to the drawings of each of the community parks pasted on the side wall. Participants were asked to stand in front of the community park that they felt merited the most need for improvement.

Unfortunately, in my notes, I numbered the plans (from left to right) #1, #2, #3, #4. Results were: three people standing before drawing #2 (Beach?), two people standing before #3 (riverside?), and seven people standing before #4 (Community Park?).

Matt then asked participants to stand beside the park they felt least needed improvement and write on a postit note why you felt that way. Results were: 16 people stood before drawing #1 (Joe Vlack?) and one person stood before drawing #2 (Beach?).

Matt then referred to the Community Park which received the most votes as highest priority/need for improvement. He told them if they could wish for ANYTHING for this park, what would they like to see happen at just the Community Park. Responses were:

Ballfield maintenance, higher fence, bleachers, update lighting, better bathrooms, resurface tennis court, bigger playground, lighting in more areas of the park and parking areas, concession stand, more activities for teenagers, walking trail with exercise and fitness integrated into the trail, covered tennis courts, ice skating rink, maintain natural shoreline, more/better parking, pavilion improvement, dugouts for backfield, ADA walkway, bocce ball court, shuffleboard, horse shoes, trash receptacles, band shell near river, plus one diamond, disc golf, storage. The guestion was raised whether dogs should be allowed in Township parks.

Township Board members present stated dogs are only allowed at Joe Vlack Park. There have been problems in the past with unfriendly dogs.

Matt then stated that with all the additions mentioned, there usually needs to be existing items removed. He asked what items the participants would be willing to "take away" from the Community Park. Responses were: Bugs (bug control), the existing makeshift polka fest toilets

Matt next asked the participants to consider if they would like the community park to be just the park as drawn and labeled as the Community Park or would they like it to be combined with the area that includes the boat launch and parking area with the river running between these areas. Response was eight to two to combine the two areas into one park.

Matt then stated that from the earlier responses, Joe Vlack Park was the park with the least positive responses. He informed the public that according to stipulations when this park was gifted to the Township, the Township cannot sell this property. If the Township does not want it, it reverts to the family that donated it, and they could then develop it or do whatever they wish within the constraints of Zoning. He then posed the question of whether the Township should give this property back to the family who donated it or should they keep it. A third option was brought up to work with another public entity to improve it, i.e., trails, etc. No consensus was reached.

Matt then mentioned the beach park with the options of whether this park should keep the functional (boat launch) or turn it into beach area as mentioned earlier. Consensus was to keep the park functional.

Kim Smith

 	- END IIII V MINITES	s	

Baseball League Meeting Notes

Solon Township Monday August 28, 2023

Facilitated Community Visioning Project

Interview with Leelanau County Youth League & Adult Softball League Coordinators

Questions

Please provide a copy of the practice & competition schedules to use the fields.

LCYL practice schedule is up to coach - Typical is 1-2 X per week for all teams except t-ball. Adult softball is not likely to practice except for preseason a few times.

Please reference the number of players for each of the different "cedar" teams LCYL time 6:00 – 8:30 Competition Play Fields 2, 3, & 4

Fee per Player \$35 t-ball & \$65-\$75 for regular ball

2023 LCYL Softball Season June 01 – Aug 15
Middle Girls Fld #3 Teams _1 Players _10_ Total Players _10_

2023 LCYL Baseball Season June 01 – Aug 15
Colts Fld #2 Teams _1 Players _15_ Total Players _15_
Peewee Fld #3 Teams _1 Players _14_ Total Players _14_
Pony Fld #2 Teams _0 Players _0_ Total Players _0_

2023 LCYL Tball Season June 01 – Aug 15

Tball – Fld #4 Teams _1 Players _11 _ Total Players _11_

Adult COED Softball Season June 1 – Oct 15

Fld #1 Season

Team(s) __5_ Players _10-12_ Total Players

65

COED Softball Game times 6:30 - 7:45 - 9:00 Field #1

North closest to river

Fee per player \$_____ p/ season

Note(s)

Possible LCYL Spring Season April – May for season 2024 or 2025, not yet determined. Chamber provide grant to LCYL of \$3,500 per year in field maintenance & Equipment. Pays for Helmets, Bases, Ump Fees, Insurance, and Cedar resident discount to play.

From LCYL Website Schedule for Competition Play

Programing – Competition - As posted online schedules on the LCYL website.

2023 LCYL Softball

Middle Girls Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/27, 6/29, 7/13, 7/18,

2023 LCYL Baseball

Colts Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/19, 6/26, 7/10, 7/24,

Peewee Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/19, 6/21, 6/26, 6/28, 7/10, 7/12, 7/17,

Pony Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar (0)

2023 LCYL Tball

Tball Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/22, 6/27, 6/29, 7/20,

Adult League

5 teams play on Tuesday only during season.

TOTAL PLAYERS

ADULT 65

= 128

Probable Total
Attendance
Players & Family

= 320

Calc = 2.5 people per player

Briefly describe the tasks performed by the LCYL & its' volunteer group on the cedar fields?

LCYL Field 2-4

Cleaning After Games Preseason Prep

Diamond dust application labor

Bases maintenance and replacement

Adult Softball - Field #1

Diamond Dust purchase & application

Bases maintenance and replacement

Rolling Field #1

What does the LCYL have record of maintenance costs & field improvement expenses during the 2023 season of play for the Cedar fields?

LCYL

N/A – Receipts / Investment \$\$ calc

Diamond Dust – Split Chamber / Township \$\$

Base Replacement when needed

Caulk

Adult Softball

N/A - Receipts / Investment \$\$ calc

Diamond Dust Hurley Rake Base Replacement Bleacher Repair

Weed Control

Caulk

What maintenance does the township provide?

Mowing all fields

Pota-Potties (3-4) Teams would like to see 5 total.

Trash / refuse

All qualified requested repairs within budget allowance

Grounds, Fence, Lighting, Scoreboard, etc.

The LYCL has stated there is an economic impact from these team sports into the Village of Cedar, unpack what was meant by that statement?

Open Item – Did not really discuss but examples were gas station and local bar. Find comparative example, if possible, from other data, as no true measurement is achievable.

Local bar now closes at 9pm and resulted in only pregame spending no late night after adult league like in prior to COVID.

Of the registered youth players from during the 2023 season, can LCYL identify how many reside inside the Township boundaries of Solon Twp.?

LCYL 95% in township resident and 5% outside

Adult League 50/50

What, if any, support does Leelanau County provide to regional sports play in funding and/or other actions? None

What improvements are desired by the LCYL of the Cedar fields?

LCYL Adult Softball

(1) Bleacher repair replacement

(2) Field #3 Fencing

(3) Dugouts in Field #3

(1) Bleacher Repair Replacement

(2) Fencing Repair / Improvements

(3) Resurface Field

Other mentioned needs: Score boards, field resurfacing, porta-Jons (5), Scoreboard Field #3, Tennis Court Area removed and new surface for pickle ball & basketball, possible 2 courts for tennis, parking lot improvements/maintenance, parking lot lighting for safety after adult league.

Additional mentions for northside of river area: Fishing platform, Kayak launch, Improved Parking and boat trailer parking, play space for cornhole or horseshoes or bocci-ball (or something similar) and another pavilion space.

Does the league(s) feel there are members of the baseball family that would be willing to participate in fundraising & donations campaigns to achieve some of the identified improvements to the Cedar fields?

Adult team – YES - if there was a longer term lease the guaranteed the fields were not going anywhere the adult team would be all in on finding money for improvements.

The LCYL needs to get option and permission for the League before making any commitments.

Does the LCYL or Adult League currently do fundraise for field maintenance and improvements? Yes, historically the adult league gave examples of Scoreboard purchase, bleacher purchase, dugouts being constructed.

The youth league stated improvements had been made because of contributions / fundraising but did not have examples to provide.

What other information does the league(s) wish to provide to help expand on the focus of this park to remain baseball focused?

Both Sarah Lautner & Alison Beebe wanted to express the history of the baseball in the community park and the current level of play active during the months on June, July, Aug (adult league June 1 & Oct. 1)

Both Leagues are willing to discuss with the township ways to better communicate and provide the leagues "ownership" in the fields. A shared understanding of who is responsible for what.

The land the ball fields are located is a swamp. Thoughts?

Alison Beebe - Any upcoming vision plans that are taken to the Solon Township Board need to take into heavy consideration all aspects of the environment the park is currently in, being swamp, and if the Cedar River continues in its natural environment with weed growth slowing down the river flow into the lake, what that will continue to do to the already existing mushy land.

Other Notes:

There was discussion on an improved lease agreement for both the LCYL & Adult league with commitments from all parties (Township and League(s) on who is responsible for what.

There was conversation on access to a storage building or even the placement of a league owned storage building / shed.

Discussion on how to initiate a Pre-Season, During Season, & Post-Season inventory and maintenance required form for submission to council.

There was clarification that there is no plan (concept) to change the park from baseball fields to anything else. Only a Landscape architects' depiction of what could be possible based on current trends on play space / park space. The league(s) were both put off by a previous meeting and felt the baseball fields were in planning to be closed and removed.

There was discussion on how to vision and show phases using a website placement allowing donation and education to occur in one space.

Other Key Contacts

Rebecca Goff was the Cedar tball coach and is a co-founder of the Brian Nachazel memorial Snowball tournament.

Sarah Launter - Cedar Adult Softball

Members of LCYL

Coordinators and are currently constructed as follows:
Alison Beebe / Cedar Coordinator
Luke Moeggenberg, President / Empire Coordinator
Rebecca Carlson / Lake Leelanau Coordinator
Janet Denoyer / Leland Coordinator
Sarah Morgan, Secretary / Maple City Coordinator
Kaleb Foss, Treasurer / Maple City Coordinator
Joe Symons / Suttons Bay Coordinator

Practice Schedule

2023 LCYL Softball

Middle Girls Practice Play Dates @ Cedar 1-2 per week.

2023 LCYL Baseball

Colts Practice Play Dates @ Cedar 1-2 per week.
Peewee Practice Play Dates @ Cedar 1-2 per week.
Pony Practice Play Dates @ Cedar 1-2 per week.

2023 LCYL Tball

Tball Practice Play Dates @ Cedar None

Programing - Competition - As posted online schedules on the LCYL website.

2023 LCYL Softball

Middle Girls Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/27, 6/29, 7/13, 7/18,

2023 LCYL Baseball

Colts Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/19, 6/26, 7/10, 7/24,

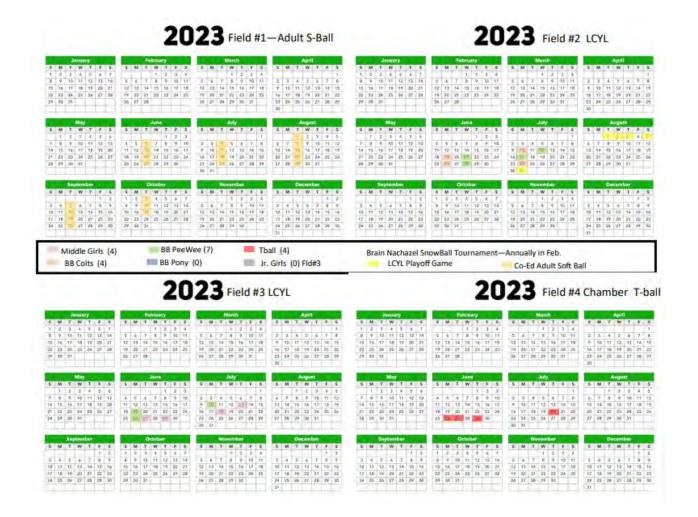
Peewee Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/19, 6/21, 6/26, 6/28, 7/10, 7/12, 7/17,

Pony Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar (0)

2023 LCYL Tball

Tball Competitive Play Dates @ Cedar 6/22, 6/27, 6/29, 7/20,

Schedule Image below:



MISSION / GOAL

Our goal is help develop baseball and softball skills at all levels in the youth within Leelanau County. We seek to provide a safe, fun, and competitive environment for our children to thrive and develop the life skills of teamwork, sportsmanship, honesty, courage, respect for authority, and physical fitness. In caring for our kids through baseball and softball, we believe we can make a difference in the lives of our youth, creating a better future for them and a better future for our community.

BACKGROUND

TEAM - The Leelanau County Youth League is managed by a group of volunteers from around the county with representatives from each local town. This group works together as Coordinators and are currently constructed as follows:

Coordinators and are currently constructed as follows:
Alison Beebe / Cedar Coordinator
Luke Moeggenberg, President / Empire Coordinator
Rebecca Carlson / Lake Leelanau Coordinator
Janet Denoyer / Leland Coordinator
Sarah Morgan, Secretary / Maple City Coordinator
Kaleb Foss, Treasurer / Maple City Coordinator
Joe Symons / Suttons Bay Coordinator

APPENDIX B

SOLON TOWNSHIP PARKS PARCEL MAPS, PICTURES & CONCEPT DRAWINGS

COMMUNITY PARK - COMMUNITY PARK SOUTH



























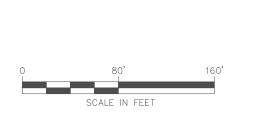




EXHIBIT A2



CONCEPTUAL PLAN 2 COMMUNITY PARK SOLON TWP, MI

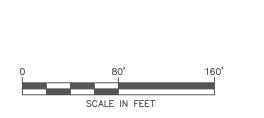








CONCEPTUAL PLAN COMMUNITY PARK SOLON TWP, MI







RIVER PARK - COMMUNITY PARK NORTH









CEDAR RIVER PARK EXISTING CONDITIONS SOLON TOWNSHIP













CEDAR RIVER PARK EXISTING CONDITIONS SOLON TOWNSHIP



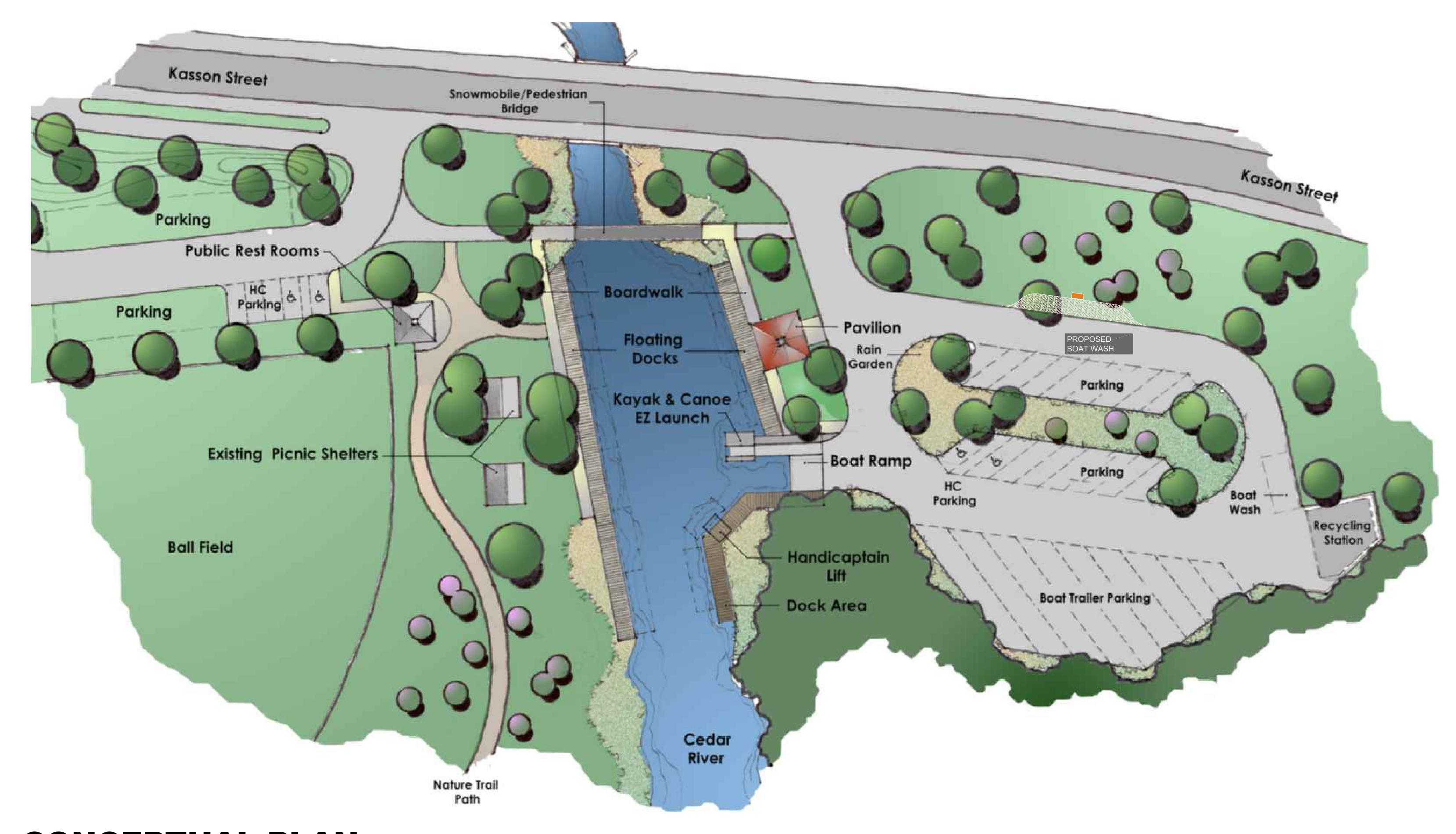








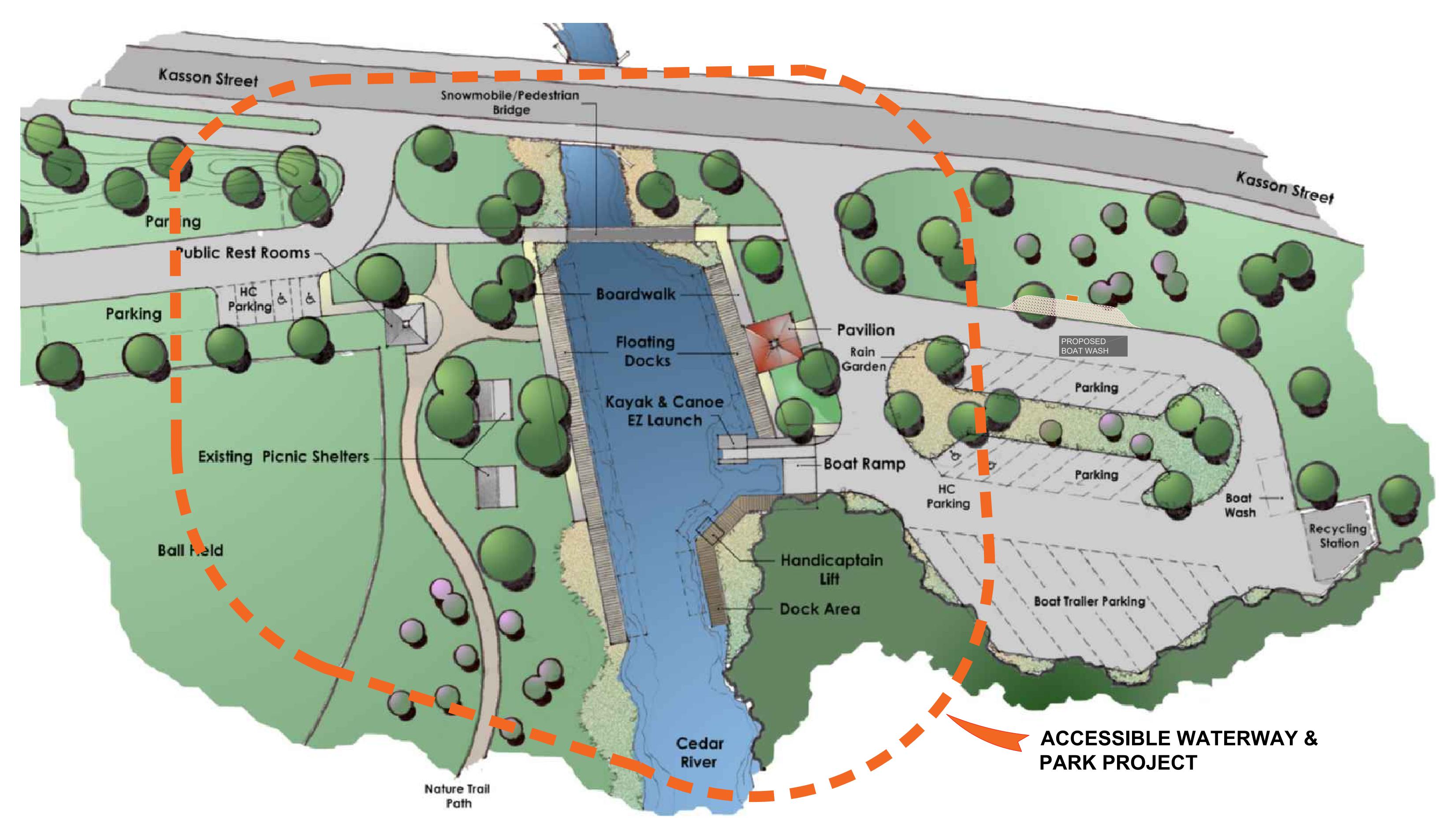




CONCEPTUAL PLAN SOLON TOWNSHIP BEACH PARK SOLON TWP, MI







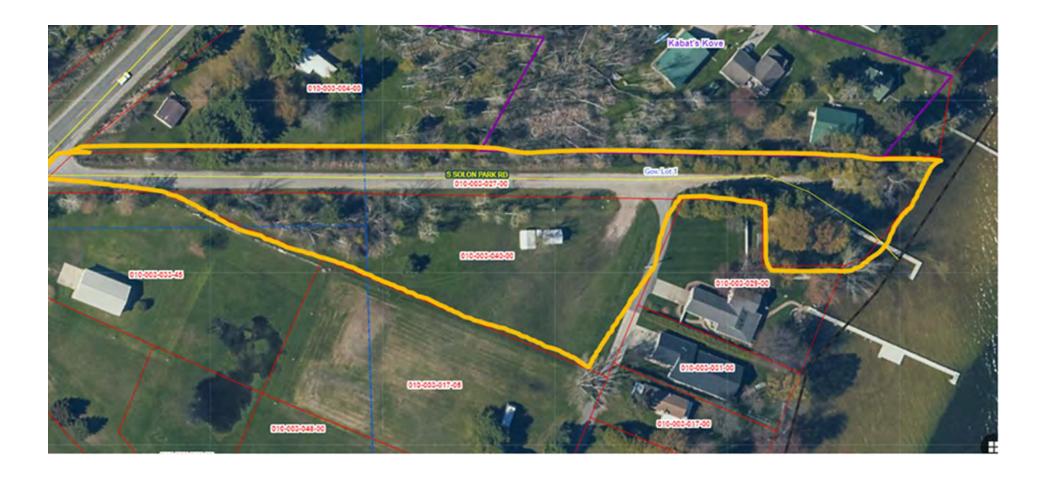
CONCEPTUAL PLAN CEDAR RIVER PARK SOLON TWP, MI





BEACH PARK



















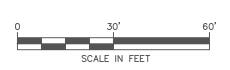




CONCEPTUAL PLAN - OPTION A SOLON TOWNSHIP BEACH PARK SOLON TWP, MI





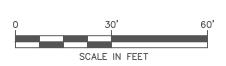




CONCEPTUAL PLAN - OPTION B SOLON TOWNSHIP BEACH PARK SOLON TWP, MI







J. VLACK MEMORIAL PARK







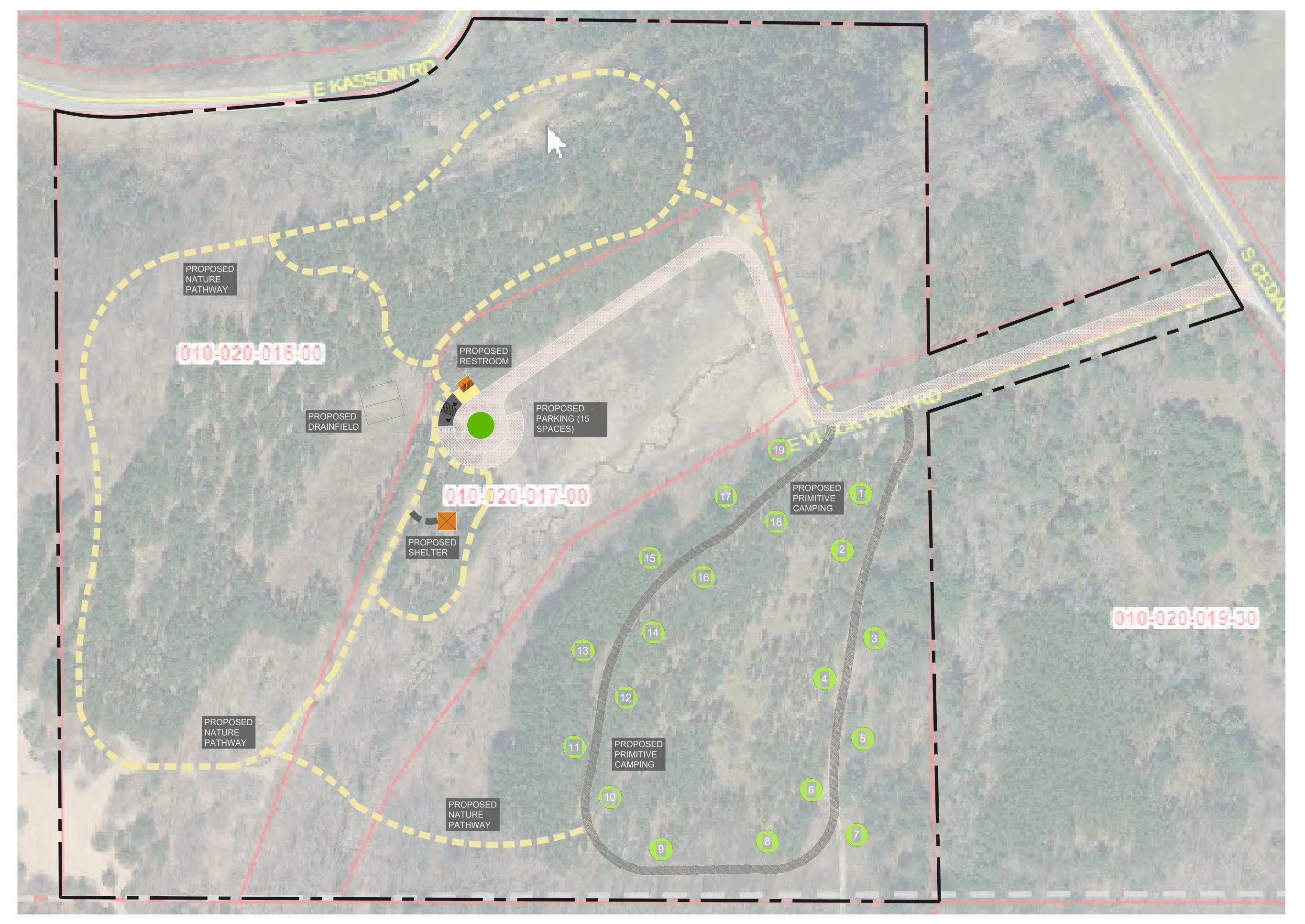












CONCEPTUAL PLAN
JOE VLACK MEMORIAL PARK
SOLON TWP, MI







APPENDIX C 2021 PARK CONCEPT BUDGET ESTIMATES

Community Park Phase 1 Improvements PreDesign Engineer's Estimate



Job: 851130 By: AWF/RWS Date: 12/18/2021

Item	ITEM		EST	UNIT	ESTIMATED
No.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY	PRICE	TOTAL
1	Mobilization, Bonds & Insurance	LSum	1	\$60,000	\$60,000
2	Fence Removal	LSum	1	\$10,000	\$10,000
3	Light Pole Removal	LSum	1	\$3,000	\$3,000
4	Site Grading	LSum	1	\$50,000	\$50,000
5	12" Sand Subbase, CIP	Syd	4,800	\$12	\$57,600
6	Geotextile fabric	Syd	4,800	\$5	\$21,600
7	8" Aggregate Base, 21AA	Syd	4,800	\$7	\$33,600
8	HMA Parking Areas	Ton	875	\$110	\$96,250
9	Splash Pad	LSum	1	\$125,000	\$125,000
10	Sidewalk, Concrete, 4 inch	Sft	10,000	\$4	\$40,000
11	Restroom Bldg - Vault	LSum	1	\$75,000	\$75,000
12	Pavilion	LSum	1	\$64,000	\$64,000
13	Electrical Distribution	LSum	1	\$30,000	\$30,000
14	Play Area	LSum	1	\$100,000	\$100,000
15	Play Area Concrete Curb	Lft	200	\$25.00	\$5,000
16	Play Area Sand Sub-base, CIP	Cyd	133	\$12.00	\$1,596
17	Play Area Rubber Surfacing	Sft	3,100	\$14.00	\$43,400
18	Softball field Fencing	LSum	1	\$40,000	\$40,000
19	Softball field Lighting	LSum	1	\$60,000	\$60,000
20	Parking Area Striping	LSum	1	\$2,000	\$2,000
21	Handicap Parking Signs	Ea	6	\$250	\$1,500
22	Pav't Markings, Crosswalks	LSum	1	\$2,000	\$2,000
23	Benches	Ea	3	\$1,500	\$4,500
24	Trash Receptacle/Recycle bin	LSum	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
25	Bike Loops	LSum	2	\$1,400	\$2,800
26	Picnic tables	Ea	4	\$1,800	\$7,200
27	Trees, 2" Caliper	Ea	12	\$300	\$3,600
28	Misc. Landscaping/Raingardens	LSum	1	\$25,000	\$25,000
29	Lawn Restoration	Syd	4,000	\$4	\$16,000

Construction Subtotal: \$982,000

Contingencies & Undeveloped Design Details (30%): \$295,000

Subtotal \$1,277,000

Engineering (15%): \$191,550

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$1,468,550

Community Park Phase 2 Improvements PreDesign Engineer's Estimate



Job: 851130 By: AWF/RWS Date: 12/18/2021

Item	ITEM		EST	UNIT	ESTIMATED
No.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY	PRICE	TOTAL
1	Mobilization, Bonds & Insurance	LSum	1	\$32,000	\$32,000
2	HMA Removal (Tennis Courts)	Syd	4,800	\$5	\$24,000
3	Fence Removal	LSum	1	\$10,000	\$10,000
4	Light Pole Removal	LSum	1	\$3,000	\$3,000
5	Site Grading	LSum	1	\$25,000	\$25,000
6	12" Sand Subbase, CIP	Syd	1,700	\$12	\$20,400
7	Geotextile fabric	Syd	1,700	\$5	\$7,650
8	8" Aggregate Base, 21AA	Syd	1,700	\$7	\$11,900
9	HMA Parking Areas	Ton	325	\$110	\$35,750
10	12" Sand Subbase, CIP Courts	Syd	1,300	\$12	\$15,600
11	6" Aggregate Base, 21AA Courts	Syd	1,300	\$6	\$7,800
12	HMA Baseketball/ Pickleball Court, 3"	Ton	225	\$130	\$29,250
13	Pickleball/BB Equipment & Installation	LSum	1	\$5,000	\$5,000
14	Pickleball/Basketball Surface Coloring	Syd	1,350	\$14	\$18,900
15	Black Vinyl Chain Link Fencing	Lft	720	\$50	\$36,000
16	Light Pole Sports Courts - Pickleball& BB	Ea	8	\$6,000	\$48,000
17	Sidewalk, Concrete, 4 inch	Sft	5,000	\$4	\$20,000
18	Restroom Bldg - Vault	LSum	1	\$75,000	\$75,000
19	Parking Area Striping	LSum	1	\$2,000	\$2,000
20	Handicap Parking Signs	Ea	2	\$250	\$500
21	Pav't Markings, Crosswalks	LSum	1	\$2,000	\$2,000
22	Benches	Ea	2	\$1,500	\$3,000
23	Trash Receptacle/Recycle bin	LSum	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
24	Bike Loops	LSum	1	\$1,400	\$1,400
25	Picnic tables	Ea	2	\$1,800	\$3,600
26	Trees, 2" Caliper	Ea	6	\$300	\$1,800
27	Misc. Landscaping/Raingardens	LSum	1	\$25,000	\$25,000
28	Lawn Restoration	Syd	2,000	\$4	\$8,000

Construction Subtotal: \$474,000

Contingencies & Undeveloped Design Details (30%): \$142,000

Subtotal \$616,000

Engineering (15%): \$92,400

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$708,400

Solon Beach Park Improvements - Option A PreDesign Engineer's Estimate



Job: 851130 By: AWF/RWS Date: 12/18/2021

Item	ITEM		EST	UNIT		ESTIMATED		
No.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY		PRICE		TOTAL	
1	Mobilization, Bonds & Insurance	LSum	1	\$	32,000	\$	17,000	
2	Site Grading	LSum	1	\$	15,000	\$	15,000	
3	8" Aggregate Base, 21AA	Syd	1,200	\$	9	\$	10,800	
4	HMA Parking Areas	Ton	30	\$	200	\$	6,000	
5	Handicap Parking Signs	Ea	2	\$	250	\$	500	
6	Sidewalk, Concrete, 4 inch	Sft	2,500	\$	5	\$	12,500	
7	Prefabricated Restroom Bldg - Vault	LSum	1	\$	75,000	\$	75,000	
8	Restroom Bldg - Upgrade Running Water	LSum	1	\$	30,000	\$	30,000	
9	Drainfield/Well	LSum	1	\$	40,000	\$	40,000	
10	Electrical Distribution	LSum	1	\$	20,000	\$	20,000	
11	Parking Area Striping	LSum	1	\$	800	\$	800	
12	Restoration	Syd	2,000	\$	4	\$	8,000	

Construction Subtotal: \$236,000

Contingencies & Undeveloped Design Details (30%): \$71,000

Subtotal \$307,000

Engineering (15%): \$46,050

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$353,050

Solon Beach Park Improvements - Option B PreDesign Engineer's Estimate



Job: 851130 By: AWF/RWS Date: 12/18/2021

Item	ITEM		EST	UNIT		ESTIMATED	
No.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY	PRICE		TOTAL	
1	Mobilization, Bonds & Insurance	LSum	1	\$	32,000	\$	17,000
2	Site Grading & Removals	LSum	1	\$	22,000	\$	22,000
3	8" Aggregate Base, 21AA	Syd	1,500	\$	9	\$	13,500
4	HMA Parking Areas	Ton	30	\$	200	\$	6,000
5	Handicap Parking Signs	Ea	2	\$	250	\$	500
6	Sidewalk, Concrete, 4 inch	Sft	4,400	\$	5	\$	22,000
7	Prefabricated Restroom Bldg - Vault	LSum	1	\$	75,000	\$	75,000
8	Restroom Bldg - Upgrade Running Water	LSum	1	\$	30,000	\$	30,000
9	Drainfield/Well	LSum	1	\$	40,000	\$	40,000
10	Play Area - Equipment & Surfacing	LSum	1	\$	100,000	\$	100,000
11	Beach Sand	Cyd	175	\$	55	\$	9,625
12	Kayak Launch	LSum	1	\$	40,000	\$	40,000
13	Electrical Distribution	LSum	1	\$	20,000	\$	20,000
14	Parking Area Striping	LSum	1	\$	800	\$	800
15	Restoration	Syd	2,000	\$	4	\$	8,000

Construction Subtotal: \$404,000

Contingencies & Undeveloped Design Details (30%): \$121,000

Subtotal \$525,000

Engineering (15%): \$78,750

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$603,750

Vlacks Park Improvements PreDesign Engineer's Estimate



Job: 851130 By: AWF/RWS Date: 12/18/2021

Item	ITEM		EST	UNIT		ESTIMATED	
No.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY	PRICE		TOTAL	
1	Mobilization, Bonds & Insurance	LSum	1	\$ 32,000	\$	17,000	
2	Site Grading	LSum	1	\$ 17,500	\$	17,500	
3	8" Aggregate Base, 21AA	Syd	1,500	\$ 9	\$	13,500	
4	HMA Parking Areas	Ton	30	\$ 200	\$	6,000	
5	Handicap Parking Signs	Ea	2	\$ 250	\$	500	
6	Sidewalk, Concrete, 4 inch	Sft	3,000	\$ 5	\$	15,000	
7	Pavilion	LSum	1	\$ 50,000	\$	50,000	
8	Prefabricated Restroom Bldg - Vault	LSum	1	\$ 75,000	\$	75,000	
9	Restroom Bldg - Upgrade Running Water	LSum	1	\$ 30,000	\$	30,000	
10	Drainfield/Well	LSum	1	\$ 30,000	\$	30,000	
11	Electrical Distribution	LSum	1	\$ 20,000	\$	20,000	
12	Parking Area Striping	LSum	1	\$ 800	\$	800	
13	Campsite clearing	Ea	21	\$ 750	\$	15,750	
14	Soil Cement Stabilzed Pathways	Sft	32,000	\$ 1	\$	32,000	

Construction Subtotal: \$323,000

Contingencies & Undeveloped Design Details (30%): \$97,000

Subtotal \$420,000

Engineering (15%): \$63,000

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$483,000