

TIMBERS RECREATION AREA MASTER PLAN REPORT

Presentation Date - January 29, 2014

I. HISTORY

The Timbers Recreation Area was deeded to the Timbers Civic Association on June 20, 1972 (Liber 2516, folio 172; land records of Anne Arundel County, Maryland).

In accordance with the deed requirements, the Timbers Civic Association must remain a legal entity and the Recreation Area must be used for recreational purposes for the benefit of the lot owners of the Timbers Subdivision otherwise the property reverts to and becomes the property of the original grantor, in fee simple. In October 1974 the Timbers Civic Association wrote and adopted their by-laws in order to properly manage, utilize, maintain and improve the Recreation Area so that it will not revert to the grantor but will stay under the ownership of the Association.

According to the Timbers Civic Association By-Laws, the Association must:

1. Utilize, control, maintain and improve the Recreation Area,
2. Secure concerted action on all matters pertaining to the protection, development and improvement of the Recreation Area,
3. Raise funds for Recreation Area maintenance, improvements and activities,
4. Maintain the Recreation Area for the general welfare of the community and to enhance and maintain community property values, and,
5. Serve the best interest of the Association in all community matters with regard to the Recreation Area.

Over the years the Recreation Area has suffered from heavy use in some locations, problematic erosion at various locations and has become overgrown in some areas with noxious weeds, poison ivy, English ivy and other vines. In May 2013 the Timbers Civic Association By-Laws were revised and included the creation of the "Recreation, Maintenance and Development Committee," organized to address these problems and was given the responsibility to:

1. Plan, coordinate and execute Recreation Area maintenance and upkeep by either community cleanups or through contract vendors. The funding for all these activities will be incorporated into the committee's Five Year Plan,
2. Research, develop, and prioritize capital improvements for the Recreation Area. From this prioritized list, develop a Five (5) Year Plan with associated itemized capital improvement costs,
3. Submit the five-year plan to the Budget and Finance Committee Chair no later than 30 June each year for evaluation and inclusion in the Budget Plan to be submitted to the Executive Board. The Five Year Plan will be updated annually,
4. Coordinate with the Treasurer to fund yearly capital improvements to the Recreation Area as identified in the current approved fiscal year budget plan,
5. Plan and execute the capital improvements, maintenance, purchase and installation of recreation equipment through contract vendors and/or membership work parties.

In order to address the problems of the Recreation Area identified above, the Recreation, Maintenance and Development Committee distributed a questionnaire to all Timbers Civic Association members in August 2013 requesting their ideas and suggestions for improving the Recreation Area. The responses received included recommendations for additional recreation equipment, miscellaneous site improvements, erosion control efforts and additional recreational amenities. The list of recommendations was then compiled by the Committee and sent out to the community for review and for ranking or prioritizing in order of their importance. The results of the survey are to be used to develop the five-year development plan and include the following items listed in priority order:

Priority	Capital Improvements	Estimated Cost
1.	Terracing with Steps (erosion control)	\$800 - \$1,500
2.	Permanent Benches	\$400 ea.
3.	Permanent Picnic Tables	\$500 - \$700 ea.
4.	Wooden Sign Frame for Announcements	\$300 - \$400
5.	Modular Climber	\$3,000 - \$5,000
6.	Charcoal Grill	\$250 - \$500
7.	Horseshoe Pit	\$75
8.	Fire Pit	\$500 - \$700
9.	Electricity	\$300
10.	Sandbox	\$200
11.	Volleyball Court	\$300
12.	Fitness Trail	
13.	Pavilion	\$5,000 - \$10,000
14.	Water	
15.	Meditation Trail	
16.	Shade Grass behind Backstop	

In order to have an approved guideline for the above improvements and for all future development of the Recreation Area, the Timbers Civic Association, on September 23, 2013 voted to proceed with the preparation of a Master Plan for Development. The Recreation, Maintenance and Development Committee has the responsibility to coordinate the planning process and began work immediately following the meeting gathering existing site information to establish an "Existing Site Conditions Plan" for use in identifying the existing facilities and eventually, the proposed improvements.

II. MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

The first step in the master planning process was to prepare the "Existing Site Conditions" plan. The Plan was completed by using aerial photography from Google Earth, obtaining topographical data from Anne Arundel County, by performing site measurements on-site and by locating all existing vegetation, site features and recreation equipment on the plan in order to provide a reference and base map to be used for preparing the proposed improvements.

The next step in the planning process was to review the prioritized list of recommendations mentioned above that were prepared in August 2013 and evaluate them to see how they would relate to the existing site conditions and existing recreation equipment. Each Capital Improvement item on the list was reviewed by the Recreation, Maintenance and Development

Committee (The Committee) and evaluated as to their practicality, public safety and cost/benefit relationship. Two items; Item No. 8 - "Fire Pit" and Item No. 14 - "Water" were considered impractical due to the safety hazard of the fire pit and the cost/benefit ratio of the water service and were therefore no longer considered for the Master Plan proposal. All remaining items in the list were considered and have been included in the Master Plan.

The Committee evaluated each of the remaining Capital Improvement items on the priority list by considering the following criteria:

1. Functional relationships and compatibility with other existing or proposed elements,
2. Minimal disturbance of existing vegetation,
3. Compatibility with the slope of the land,
4. Orientation to sun and shade,
5. Noise levels generated by users,
6. Public safety and liability,
7. Potential vandalism problems,
8. Longevity of materials or equipment,
9. Use of recycled or alternative materials,
10. Ease of construction by community labor versus contract labor,
11. Cost effectiveness.

III. MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan includes all of the existing play equipment, the ball field, the entrance sign and planting areas and proposes no changes to them, except for continued landscape planting efforts. The Master Plan includes the following proposed improvements, listed in priority order. (It should be noted however that the improvements will be implemented based upon funds and/or labor available, therefore some less costly or less difficult projects may be accomplished sooner than others.)

1. *Terracing with Steps (Erosion Control)* - Planters under the trees and steps between the planters are proposed in the area along Tall Tree Trail that has experienced the most severe soil erosion. Tree roots are exposed in this area and something must be done before the trees begin to suffer or eventually die. Treated timber, brick or cement block can be used to construct the planters around the trees. The planters can be backfilled with topsoil and planted with shade loving evergreen ground cover that has interesting flowers for additional visual effect. The planters can be connected with steps to cover the exposed tree roots to prevent further erosion. The remaining trees along Tall Tree Trail should be planted at the base with groundcover that resists erosion. Wood chips can be placed in other areas that have experienced minimal erosion.
2. *Benches* - Sitting locations in the area of the playground equipment are proposed to provide a place for people to sit while others play on the equipment.
3. *Picnic Tables* - Located in the picnic pavilion.
4. *Wooden Sign for Announcements (Bulletin Board)* - There are currently two (2) bulletin boards on the Recreation Area that have to be addressed. The Master Plan proposes to eliminate the bulletin board adjacent to the Timbers entrance sign and to relocate the existing wooden bulletin board to the area adjacent to the holly trees that are closer to the entrance at Timber Turn so it is nestled in with an evergreen

- vegetative backdrop. When this bulletin board eventually needs to be replaced, it can be replaced by a similar bulletin board or a more durable pre-fabricated one that has glass enclosures to protect the contents.
5. Modular Climber - Located adjacent to the existing play equipment
 6. Charcoal Grill - Located adjacent to the picnic pavilion for use by pavilion users.
 7. Horseshoe Pit - Located under the trees adjacent to the ball field along Tall Tree Trail. The horseshoe pit can easily be constructed by community labor at minimal expense. The pit will have to be constructed so there are no tripping hazards while the pit is not in use. Additionally, the hardware (Horseshoes and metal stakes) will have to be made accessible to all residents so on-site storage will have to be provided somewhere nearby, for example, a locked weatherproof box with a combination lock fastened to the ball field backstop.
 8. Fire Pit - N/A
 9. Electricity - Located in the picnic pavilion to include lighting and exterior 120 v. lockable power outlets.
 10. Sandbox - Located adjacent to the existing play equipment. The sandbox will have to be constructed with a removable cover over it to keep out rainwater and to keep dogs and cats from using it as a litter box.
 11. Volleyball Court - Located under the trees adjacent to the basketball court and pole light. The volleyball court can easily be constructed by community labor at minimal expense. The court will have to be constructed so there are no tripping hazards while it is not in use. Additionally, the volleyball, poles and net will have to be made accessible to all residents so on-site storage will have to be provided somewhere nearby, for example, a locked weatherproof box with a combination lock fastened to the light pole nearby.
 12. Fitness Trail - Located in the wooded area along Rubert Circle. This trail can be constructed between the existing trees so that no trees are damaged or destroyed. The trail can be constructed of wood chips to keep costs at a minimum. Multiple fitness stations are proposed where people can walk or jog to various stations such as overhead ladder, parallel bars, balance beam, high bars, etc.
 13. Picnic Pavilion - A 12ft. x 20ft. picnic pavilion is proposed adjacent to the wooded area and basketball court. The structure can be located out of the root zone of the adjacent trees and also out of the extreme limits of the ball field. This location is considered the best location for the pavilion due to its location adjacent to the trees and the distance from the roads for a more pleasant experience while using it. The basketball court could also serve as a dance floor if desired. The structure is turned at an angle to make use of the view across the lawn area of the ball field giving a sense of openness. The floor of the pavilion can be easily constructed by community labor if brick pavers on gravel are used instead of poured concrete.
 14. Water - N/A
 15. Meditation Garden - Located in the wooded area between trees and adjacent to the fitness trail. The wooded area along Rubert Circle is of insufficient size to accommodate both a fitness trail and a separate meditation trail. The fitness trail also will not function well as a combined fitness and meditation trail. It was decided therefore to set aside an area for a meditation garden in lieu of a meditation trail. The meditation garden can be landscaped sufficiently to separate it from the fitness trail and the nearby proposed picnic pavilion to create a secluded quiet area for a bench for quiet sitting and meditation.

16. *Grass* - Reseeding of the ball field and existing lawn areas is necessary. Before any seeding is started, the ground must be raked sufficiently and topsoil must be placed on the areas to be seeded in order to replace that soil that has eroded over the years. The area should then be fertilized, limed, seeded, mulched with straw and kept watered until the grass has been mowed several times. Steep slopes should be sodded in lieu of seeding to prevent erosion of the topsoil and the new grass. This work should probably be performed by a contractor who has the ability to properly prepare seedbeds, to seed and sod, to water properly and to warranty the new grass for a specified period of time according to the terms of the contract.

IV. PLAN ACCEPTANCE

The Recreation, Maintenance and Development Committee will present the Master Plan to the Timbers Community Association members on:

*January 29, 2014 at 7:00 PM
at the Broadneck Library
1275 Green Holly Drive
Annapolis, MD 21409.*

The presentation is intended to inform the community of the planning procedures followed and the recommendations made by the Committee.

Prior to the presentation, the community will have an opportunity to carefully review the Master Plan Drawing that will be on display in the meeting room. After the presentation the community will have the opportunity to ask questions and to discuss any individual recommendations. The goal is to finalize and seek approval of the Master Plan through a vote of the membership at this meeting.