

Keith Bergman, Littleton Town Administrator welcomed the 30-35 attendees. This meeting on Recreation Needs will provide information to assist the Open Space and Recreation Implementation Committee complete the update to Littleton's Open Space and Recreation Plan.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council facilitated the meeting. Project funding is provided by the Town of Littleton and a grant from the State's District Local Technical Assistance program. The goals of the meeting purpose were to get information on the community's recreation needs, and to discuss where these needs might be met (at existing or potential town-owned properties).

Question 1. What Are Your Recreation Needs?

Responses:

Huge need for additional fields and renovation of existing fields

- Fields shared by high school and league sports
- Very active schedule of sports, cannot accommodate some of the league games
- Fields over-utilized
- HS teams are losing tournaments due to inadequate facilities
- Some fields unsafe
- Sometimes there are disagreements about who should use fields and when
- Lacrosse fields; soccer: 4 Littleton teams are going to State Finals—we should celebrate this

Youth sports have been increasing. Despite growth projections (showing decreases in next 15 years of school age children), Littleton is very attractive to families and youth may actually increase

Littleton schools were recently rated 13th in the state; sports teams also highly rated and need adequate fields.

Turf fields have an active constituency.

Turf field wouldn't need as much open space because they sustain heavier use (i.e., would reduce the need for additional fields because turf fields can be used longer hours during the day).

New, single-purpose fields would be better than existing fields, which were an "after-thought" to the school building construction.

Maintain agricultural quality of the town; whenever possible, keep agricultural uses visible from the street, with the recreation fields behind.

Need adequate parking along with fields.

Provide universal (handicap) access with any new fields, particularly because they will be level.

Fields used from 3 to 8 pm Monday – Friday, all day on weekends.

Acton has turf fields in use from 8 am until midnight

Open land is also important. We would not want to build too many fields and take away from the Town's open space.

Pick-up play takes back seat to organized sports.

It is a struggle to find space for youth boards to meet.

Meeting space is limited in Town; an indoor recreation center could help serve this need.

The Recreation Center could include indoor walking/track/soccer/basketball facilities.

Rec Center for adolescents was proposed several years ago.

Also, a community center.

Look at a multi-purpose area/center – several fields, dog walking area, trails, maybe a recreation center. A place for townspeople to gather.

Open Space/Recreation Survey done in May 2014 may not include all recreation needs. 278 people responded. The survey went out with water bills, was on the Town's website and handed out at Town Meeting. The survey is one measure of participation; this meeting, with 35 attendees, is another measure. Suggestions from both will be included in the Plan.

Regarding Town needs and priorities: Is cost included in the survey process? [Answer, no, because it is very difficult to estimate even a preliminary cost of a facility because costs are largely dependent on site conditions.]

Playgrounds seem adequate; there are enough playgrounds.

Long Lake is a gem. The Lake is beautifully maintained; docks could use a little additional maintenance, perhaps some seasonable flowers.

Working on a walking path along the entire Lake – beautiful space

What is the process for setting priorities? Residents vs. "the town" – how do we move an idea forward?

Fill from The Point construction may be available to use on playing fields? [A second commenter believed The Point fill would be unusable on playing fields.]

Bike and Walking trails. Connectivity is important: Bruce Freeman Trail by-passes Littleton. Also, trails to shopping and the train station.

On-road bike lanes.

Recreation services for adults/seniors; sports classes, age-appropriate recreation opportunities

Question 2: Where/how will these needs be met?

Using a map, the current field locations were reviewed: High School; Russell St. Elementary, Middle School and Town Hall; Shaker Lane Elementary; Saint Anne's and Koerper. Also, sites that have been mentioned as potential new field locations: Police Station; White Street/Russell Street; Morgan Property; Surrey Road; Delaney Drive – all Town-owned; as well as Couper Farm and Fletcher Property, privately-owned.

Also discussed were locations to meet other recreation needs, not just fields.

The following are comments about specific locations, followed by general comments:

Town Hall

Additional fields possible?

Shaker Lane

Re-do the fields here? Renovate? Add additional fields?

Police Station

Practice fields – to take the pressure off of other fields.

Delaney Drive

Potential practice fields

White Street/Russell Street

Central locus – could include one more field to go along with existing fields.

Surrey Road

Site has lot of ledge; difficult to develop for recreation

Morgan Property

Providing access could be costly

Could be a location for the complex discussed above, including fields and parking

Multiple fields, multiple uses, trails, parking, open space, major facilities.

Couper Property

Multiple fields, multiple uses, trails, connects to other sites; parking.

Could be site of major facilities and open space

Preserve front lands adjacent to Church Meadows for agriculture

Other

St. Anne's Church: Possible re-use for a recreation center and fields, should the property become available for sale

Look at focusing fields/facilities around schools.

Look at potential costs of transporting athletes to Devens' fields vs. constructing new fields.

Follow-up

There will be a second meeting later in the summer to discuss open space needs.

Get square footage of potential field properties