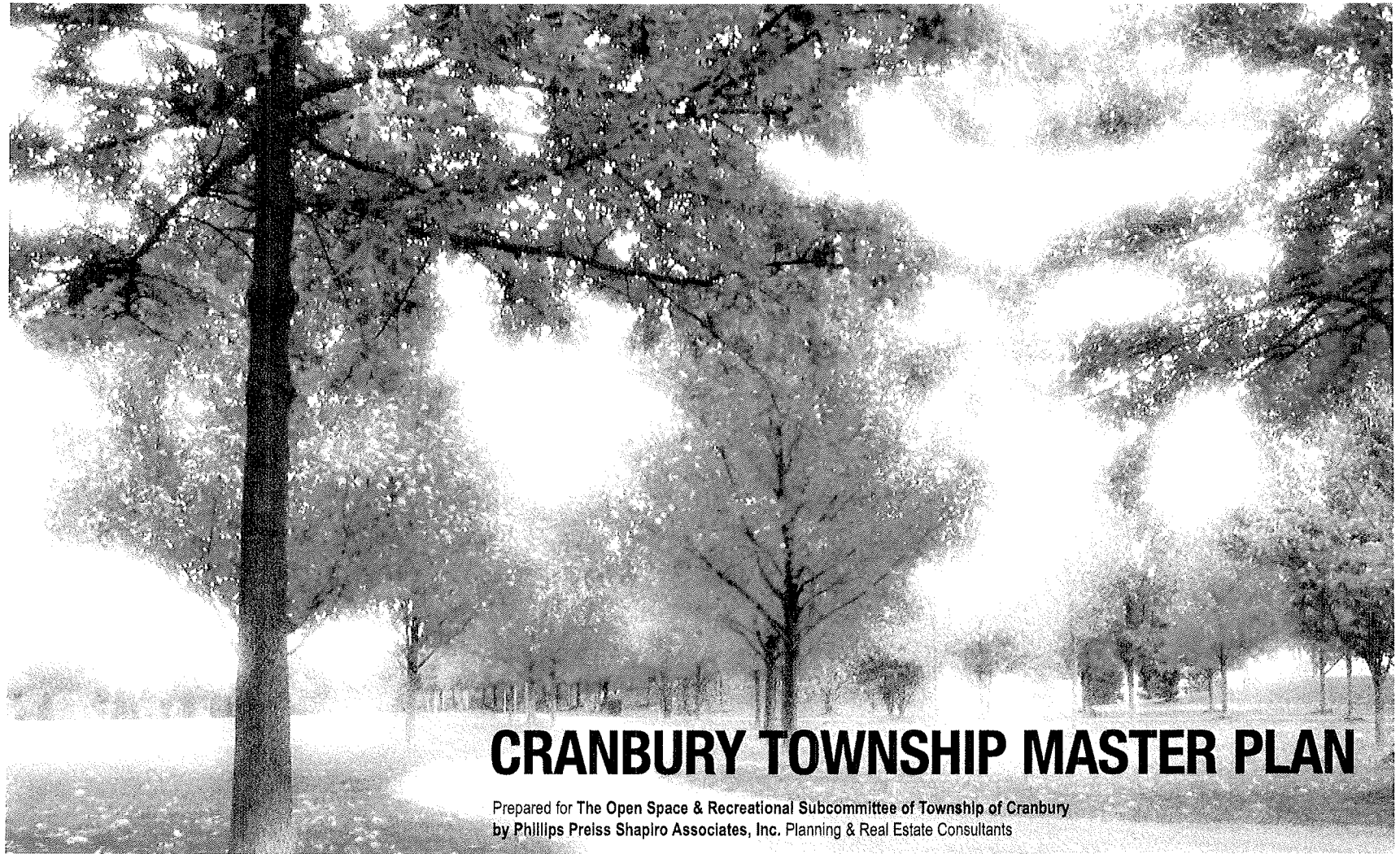


OPEN SPACE + RECREATION PLAN ELEMENT: 2007



CRANBURY TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

Prepared for The Open Space & Recreational Subcommittee of Township of Cranbury
by Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. Planning & Real Estate Consultants

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Township of Cranbury
23-A North Main Street
Cranbury, NJ 08512

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Adopted by the Cranbury Township Planning Board
October 4th, 2007



Dedication

This report is dedicated to the memory of Judy Dossin, an important and dedicated member of the Open Space and Recreation Subcommittee, who passed away in January 2007, just prior to the completion of the first draft.

Judy was chair of the Cranbury Parks Commission and a member of the Shade Tree Commission, and contributed her time, knowledge, energy and sincerity for the betterment of the Township for almost 30 years. Judy was committed to the growth and sustainability of Cranbury Township's parks and open space so as to enhance the quality of life for every resident and visitor to Cranbury.

Judy provided a significant amount of data on which this report is based, and was invaluable in helping to frame its policies and recommendations.

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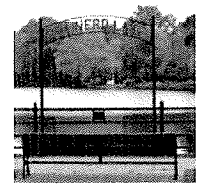
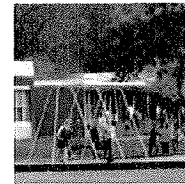
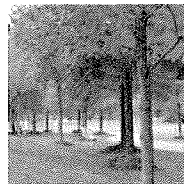
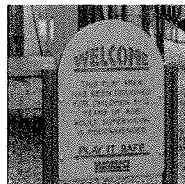
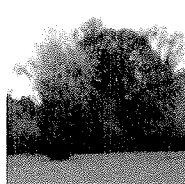
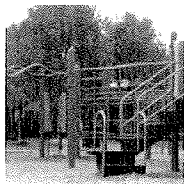
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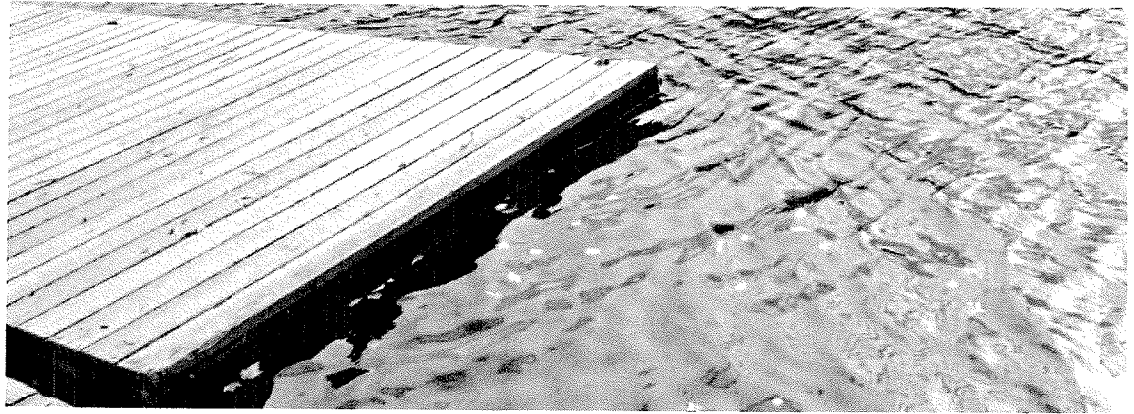
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Executive Summary





Introduction

This report is being forwarded to the Cranbury Township Planning Board for their consideration and adoption as an Element of the Cranbury Township Master Plan. The report was prepared by the Cranbury Open Space and Recreation Subcommittee, a committee that is comprised of professional consultants and representatives of various boards covering a wide range of interests and expertise. Extensive public input was sought through several community workshops, and through interviews with all those involved in open space and recreation planning and programming in Cranbury.

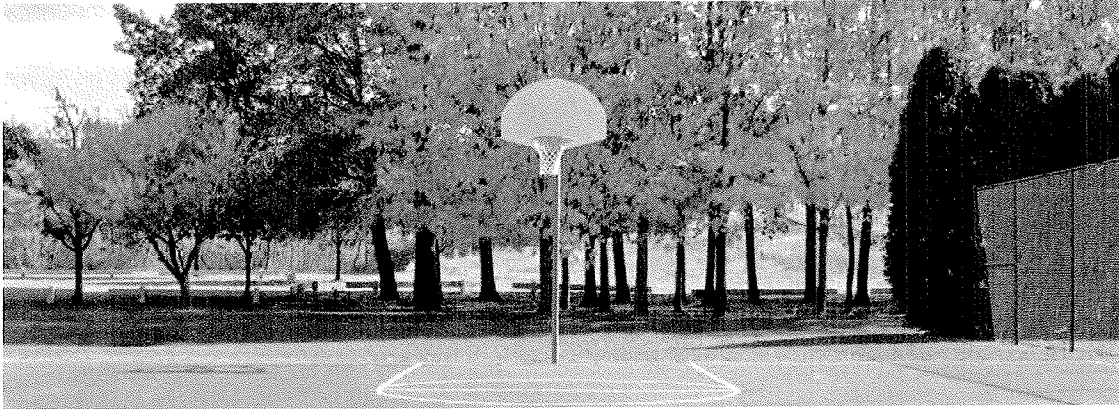
Scope of Analysis

The Subcommittee reviewed prior planning efforts, most notably the **1993 Master Plan** and the **2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan** for Cranbury. Projections of Cranbury's population and employment at full build-out were used as a basis of comparison with the National Parks and Recreation Association standards for the provision of active recreation facilities. Cranbury's 2005 population was estimated to be 3,947 and the build-out population is projected to be 4,612. Cranbury's current recreational facilities fall well within the range of acceptable facility ratios for threshold populations of 5,000 and even 10,000 persons. All of Cranbury's open space and recreational facilities were inventoried and evaluated—including active, passive, indoor and "alternative" recreation. A detailed utilization analysis was undertaken to determine future needs and to formulate recommendations over the short term (1-3 years), the intermediate term (3-6 years), and the long term (beyond 6 years).

Needs

The current and future open space and recreational needs were determined to be as follows:

- Youth and active adult needs: The increasing number of school-age children in Cranbury, and their increasing participation in formal sports programs, has given rise to the need for (1) greater



playing capacity for current field sports being offered in Cranbury (in the short term); (2) facilities to accommodate new field sports (in the short and intermediate term); and (3) a formal track and field facility (in the long term).

- Adult and senior needs: The needs for adults and seniors include improving accessibility by adding safe, secure pathways to existing parks and open spaces, as well as pathways within existing parks; providing benches for resting at regular intervals along these pathways; an indoor facility to accommodate senior programming; and, a community garden.
- Persons with special needs: The provision of direct, barrier-free pathways to and within parks and open spaces, and ensuring that all new or replaced play equipment or other recreational facilities and improvements continue to be ADA-compliant.

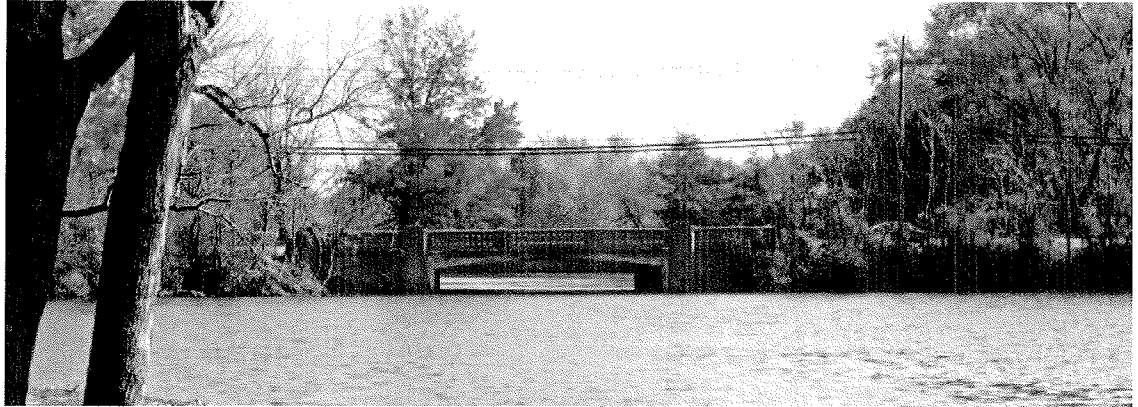
Active recreation facilities. The recommendations in the report can be grouped into three categories:

- Making minor changes and improvements to existing facilities to improve field conditions and optimize their utilization;
- Redesigning existing facilities to improve playing conditions and allow for greater utilization;
- Adding new facilities only when their needs cannot be met by the above two courses of action.

On this basis the recommendations are as follows.

- Making fields more multi-purpose (Short Term). Utilizing movable goals and other improvements would substantially help to meet the future needs for field sports by making them more multi-pur-

Recommendations



pose (i.e., allow fields to be utilized for different sports in different seasons, or even in the same season).

- Adding irrigation to existing fields (Short to Intermediate Term). The addition of irrigation would allow fields to be more heavily utilized during seasons of peak activity (fall and spring).
- Redesigning Cranbury-Millstone Park (Short to Intermediate Term). The current design does not allow for optimal space utilization. However, through a redesign, with irrigation and movable goals and fixtures, the number and type of sports fields, and the extent to which they could be utilized, could be substantially increased.
- Adding a track to the West property (Intermediate to Long Term). Although not an immediate or high priority, the development of a track around one of the soccer fields on the West property could serve multiple needs: accommodate track and field meets for the school, serve as a jogging facility for youth and active adults, and serve as a safe, secure and accessible walking facility for seniors and persons with special needs.
- Adding new fields on undeveloped Township open space (Long Term). In the short and intermediate term, the need for added play on Cranbury's outdoor fields can be met through a combination of measures described above. It is possible, however, that in the long term, Township-owned undeveloped parcels will need to be utilized for accommodating future needs. The Subcommittee evaluated 3 options—the Fischer, Updike and Hagerty properties' suitability for such a purpose—and determined that the Updike property would be the most suitable option.

Alternative Recreational Facilities

- Making walkways within Heritage Park barrier-free, keeping this Park the focus of alternative recreational facilities by not adding any active recreational facilities to it, and encouraging more active, team-oriented recreational pursuits to be played elsewhere in town, is recommended.

Passive Recreational Facilities

- Improvements to existing parks and open space. This includes a variety of improvements to Cranbury Brook Preserve, Unami Woods, Village Green and Village Park, primarily focused on extending unpaved pathways through the passive parks, and making pedestrian access to and within existing or future active and passive parks safe, secure and barrier-free.
- Greenways, Walkways and Bikeways. Adoption of a Stream Corridor Conservation ordinance is recommended, provided the ordinance allows for the extension of unpaved walkways through the stream corridors/greenways. The extension of trails and walkways through passive open space in an environmentally-friendly manner, better bikeway accessibility to all parks, and more bikepaths within certain portions of active parks, as appropriate, are also recommended.

Indoor Facilities

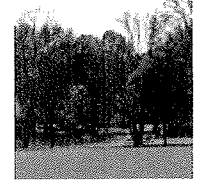
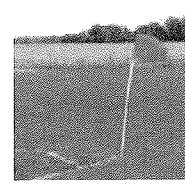
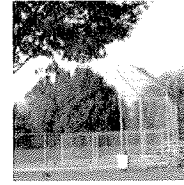
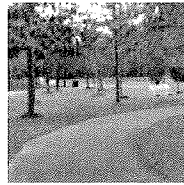
- Improvements to the newly designated Senior Community Center in Town Hall in the short term and the possible development of dedicated space for seniors in the long term is recommended.

Other

- Education and Awareness. Greater awareness of Cranbury's open space is recommended by more clearly signing and demarcating park entrances, and publishing a directory and map to allow for greater educational opportunities afforded by these resources.
- Acquisition. The Township should maintain a continued commitment to acquire open space for recreation and preservation of farmland and open space, as long as the acquisition is consistent with Cranbury's recreational and other spending priorities.



I. Introduction



A. Need and Purpose of Report

In May 2006, the Open Space and Recreation Subcommittee of Cranbury ("the Subcommittee") was appointed by the Cranbury Planning Board. Their charge was to develop a new and comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Cranbury Township Master Plan. The Subcommittee's initial charge was to focus on active recreation.¹ However, as work progressed on the plan, and following the first of two well-attended community workshops convened on the matter, the Subcommittee and the plan's focus was widened to incorporate all aspects of open space and recreation, including passive recreation, as well as recreation for seniors and persons with special needs.

The Subcommittee was formed in response to a proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance of the Township of Cranbury which had been adopted on first reading by the Township Committee and referred to the Planning Board for a recommendation. The proposed amendment sought to amend the definition of "open space" in section 150-7 of the Code of the Township of Cranbury ("the Code").² The definition of "open space" in the Code read, "Any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for agricultural uses or passive recreation." As the definition was formulated, no Township-owned open space could be used for active recreation. At the time, there were calls by various groups associated with active recreational activities in Cranbury to amend the Code because they felt there was a need for additional Township-owned land to be set aside for active recreation.

While the Planning Board did not necessarily disagree with this assertion, they felt it was necessary to conduct a thorough study and investigation into the need for such facilities, as well as the formulation of a comprehensive open space and recreational plan, before endorsing the proposed amendment. Although a new and comprehensive Master Plan for Cranbury was to be undertaken within the next year, the Planning Board felt that it was appropriate to conduct the analysis and possibly adopt the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan ahead of completing other elements. The Subcommittee therefore was appointed by the Planning Board in May, and began meeting in June 2006.

The purpose of this report is to set forth the full scope of the Subcommittee's proposed Plan, including the methodology whereby it was formulated, its goals and objectives, an inventory of existing open space and recreational facilities and resources, an evaluation of these facilities, a determination of future needs for the Township, and recommendations whereby such needs can be met.

1. For definitions of and distinctions between active and passive open space and recreation see Chapter II, Section A.

2. Cranbury Township Ordinance # 05-06-13, AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CRANBURY CONCERNING LAND DEVELOPMENT AND AMENDING THE DEFINITION OF "OPEN SPACE" IN SECTION 150-7 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CRANBURY

B. Methodology

The Planning Board recognized that the Open Space and Recreation Subcommittee would need to incorporate a broad range of expertise and interests in order to formulate an Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan that would meet the needs of all citizens, and to have a broad base of support for future funding and implementation. The appointed Subcommittee was chaired by Allan Kehrt of the Planning Board and consisted of representatives of the following: the Cranbury Township Planning Board (Mr. Kehrt and Joan Weidner); the Cranbury Board of Education (Ms. Weidner); the Township Committee (Pari Stave and Wayne Wittman); the Environmental Commission (Dietrich Wahlers); the Board of Recreation Commissioners (Beth Veghte); the Parks Commission (Judy Dossin); as well as the Township engineer (Cathleen Marcelli of Hatch Mott McDonald); Township planners (Richard Preiss and Elizabeth Leheny of Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates); and Planning Board attorney (Joseph Stonaker). In the fall, John Ritter of the Human Services Board was asked to join the Subcommittee in order to broaden the representation of the senior constituents in the Township.

The Subcommittee met once a month from June to September, and twice a month in October and November at Village Hall. The Subcommittee directed the scope of the study, and was able to achieve consensus on recommendations for the plan's implementation. Initially, the Planning Board's directive to the Subcommittee was to focus solely on active recreational space, with the draft to be complete by the Fall of 2006. However, due primarily to the feedback that the Subcommittee received from the community, particularly at the first of two community workshops held on the matter on July 17, 2006, there appeared to be dissatisfaction with the focus solely on active recreation, and a fear that in the long term, passive recreational needs would not receive equitable and fair treatment. The Subcommittee requested the Planning Board's consent to expand the scope of work to encompass passive recreation, as well as to focus more on the needs of adults and seniors, and for an extension of time to complete the assignment. The Subcommittee also requested that a representative of the Human Services Board be added to the Subcommittee to represent seniors. The Planning Board assented. The expanded scope resulted in an extended deadline to February 2007, and John Ritter of the Human Services Board was added to the Subcommittee.

Aside from collecting and analyzing data, a series of interviews was conducted with persons and organizations engaged in all aspects of open space and recreation in Cranbury.³ In addition, two community workshops—one focusing on active recreation, and the second on passive recreation—were conducted in Cranbury, which played a very important role in guiding the scope of the Subcommittee's work, providing direction on policies, highlighting needs and priorities, and in raising awareness of opportunities and constraints related to existing programs and resources.

3. A list of persons consulted and/or interviewed is found in Appendix "A."

On July 17th, 2006 the Subcommittee held the first public workshop, to discuss active open space and recreational facilities in Cranbury. Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. (PPSA) ran the meeting in the Cranbury School Large Room (23 North Main Street). The meeting was conducted in a work session format, with participants working in small groups to provide feedback and input on several topics and issues related to open space and active recreational needs, usage and improvements.

The feedback from the workshop was recorded and posted on the Cranbury website and was also translated into a series of charts and tables (reprinted in Appendix "B-1" of this report) and incorporated into the Subcommittee's analysis. This feedback formed the basis of the goals and objectives of this report (to be found in Chapter III, Section G of this report), and many of the recommendations.

A second community workshop, conducted in similar work session format, focusing primarily on passive recreation (but also including recreation for seniors and persons with special needs), was held subsequently on October 18, 2006. The results were similarly tabulated and posted on Cranbury's website (see Appendix "B-2" of this report). This second community workshop also significantly informed this study's goals, objectives and recommendations.

Following an additional meeting of the Subcommittee, this draft report was formulated and circulated amongst Committee members for their evaluation and consideration. Corrections were then made to the draft, and it is now being forwarded to the Cranbury Planning Board for their consideration at a community meeting on April 19, 2007. Copies are also being made available to the residents of Cranbury ahead of the meeting, so as to elicit input on the draft.

C. Scope and Organization of the Report

The intent of this Plan is to guide the acquisition and development of land and facilities in Cranbury Township to meet the open space and recreational needs of the community. This report is organized in a manner which first provides the framework and background data and analysis within which the Plan was formulated, before concluding with a set of recommendations for implementation of the Plan. Thus, Chapter II, the framework, first sets forth a definition of terms utilized so that all aspects of the Plan can be understood, followed by a discussion of the guiding principles and legal and funding framework within which the Plan was created.

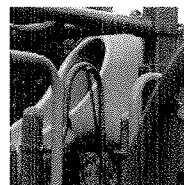
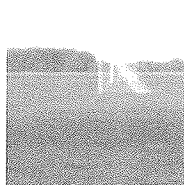
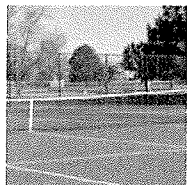
In Chapter III, the report evaluates past planning efforts in Cranbury, most notably the **2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan** and some aspects of the **1993 Master Plan** which are still relevant today. A projection is made of Cranbury's ultimate anticipated population and employment, which is then

utilized as a basis to compare the provision of certain recreational facilities in Cranbury with national standards. The results of two community meetings on recreation are detailed, and a somewhat controversial decision related to the plan for a new regulation baseball field is reevaluated. Finally, goals and objectives of this Plan are set forth.

In Chapter IV, Cranbury's recreational facilities (active, passive, indoor and "alternative" recreational facilities) are inventoried, and subsequently their utilization is examined in Chapter V. All of the preceding chapters—the framework, evaluation, inventory and utilization—are then used to determine what the future needs of the community are and how these needs can be met. The resulting analysis is detailed in the sixth and final chapter of the report, entitled "Needs and Recommendations."

The report also provides appendices which contain some of the more detailed data and analysis which were too lengthy and technical to include in the body of the report.

II. Framework



A. Open Space and Recreation Defined

According to the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), the statute of the State of New Jersey that enables municipalities within New Jersey to undertake master plans and adopt zoning ordinances to guide and control development within their jurisdiction, “open space” is defined as “any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space; provided that such areas may be improved with only those buildings, structures, streets and off-street parking and other improvements that are designed to be incidental to the natural openness of the land.”⁴ Recreation is not defined in the MLUL, but according to Cranbury’s former planning consultant, Harvey Moskowitz, a recreational facility is defined as “a place designed and equipped for the conduct of sports and leisure-time activities.”⁵

For the purposes of this study, both definitions are adopted and accepted as a means of providing an overall framework for the drafting of this Element of the Master Plan.

In addition to the above two definitions, primarily for the purpose of ensuring that this Open Space and Recreational Plan Element provides for an equitable balance between passive and active recreation, and that it serves the needs of all the residents of Cranbury Township, regardless of age or affiliation with any of the numerous organizations that provide recreational programming within the Township, it was felt that a definition of certain additional terms needed to be formulated and adopted. The Subcommittee determined that there were three distinct types of recreational activities that needed to be planned for in Cranbury—active recreation, passive recreation, and what it has come to call “alternative recreation.”

While there is some degree of overlapping of recreational activities across these three definitions, and while most parks and open spaces provide for two and sometimes all three forms of recreation within a single space, nevertheless the distinctions were felt to be useful to ensure proper planning and inclusion within the Plan.

4. Note that neither the terms “park” nor “recreation” are defined in the MLUL.

5. Moskowitz & Lindblom, *The Latest Illustrated Book of Development Definitions*, Center for Urban Policy Research, 2004



The three definitions are as follows:

Active Recreation. Leisure-time activities, where some level of physical exertion is required, and occurring in a formal, organized manner, on spaces designed and improved for specific active recreational pursuits. Active recreation typically involves organized sports, requiring the use of equipment and occurring in prescribed places such as fields, courts, or in designed facilities such as soccer, baseball/softball, football, lacrosse, basketball, volleyball, tennis and hockey.

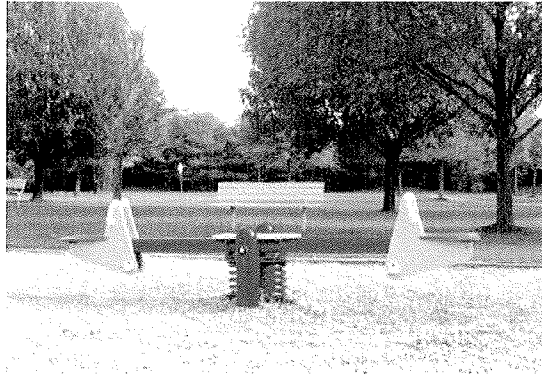


Passive Recreation. Leisure-time activities that are relatively inactive or requiring less physical exertion. Passive recreational activities are typically more self-directed, whether for individuals or groups, and usually occur within more natural environments and relatively undisturbed open spaces, such as walking, picnicking, nature- or bird-watching, dog walking, fishing, kite-flying and community gardening.



Alternative Recreation. Leisure-time activities, also involving some degree of physical exertion, but occurring in a more informal and less organized manner. Alternative recreation is also typically individually-oriented and occurs on open fields or along walkways, paths or streams, such as hiking, biking, jogging, skating (inline skating, rollerskating and skateboarding), Frisbee and canoeing.

B. Guiding Principle for Park and Open Space Development in Cranbury: Equity and Balance



In addition, definitions of other terms, such as indoor recreation, greenways, walkways and bikeways, are provided in a glossary in Appendix “C” to ensure a clarity of understanding with respect to the Plan.

Aside from the overall goal of providing Cranbury with a comprehensive and up-to-date plan for addressing its open space and recreational needs, both now and in the future, the Open Space and Recreation Subcommittee has utilized equity and balance as a guiding principle in formulating this Plan.

As was mentioned above, the Subcommittee was constituted by members that represented a broad range of boards and organizations who play a role in planning, funding, implementing and operating open space and recreational facilities and programs in Cranbury. It included members of the Township Subcommittee, the Planning Board, the Board of Education, the Board of Recreation Commission, the Parks Commission, the Environmental Commission, and the Human Services Board. Conscious of the critical perception that the Township focused too much of its programming and resources on the recreational needs of school-aged children, the Subcommittee strove to be as inclusive as possible in formulating the Open Space and Recreational Plan Element by seeking the participation, opinions and contributions of as many constituencies and residents as possible.

The Subcommittee did generally agree that most of the recreation facilities and programs in Cranbury are tailored to school-age children, but found that the perception of the inequity was perhaps greater than the reality. In the first instance, this inequity is true in virtually all municipal programs, owing to the fact that the degree of participation and amount of time spent participating in organized recreational programs is much higher amongst school-age children than the rest of the population. In addition, few of Cranbury’s residents are aware of the extensive programming that Cranbury provides for adults and seniors because much of it occurs in programs and venues not visible to the general public.

During the community workshops, every effort was made to include discussions and obtain feedback on the open space and recreational needs of all Cranbury residents, from small children to seniors, as well as those residents with special needs. In addition, on October 11, 2006 a Seniors Meeting was held to inventory the various needs of the seniors in the community, which included recreational needs. All of the information gathered during the community and senior meetings has helped inform the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element and aided in the efforts of the Subcommittee to make the Plan as balanced and equitable as possible in terms of addressing the needs of all Cranbury’s constituents, and all of its residents.

The determination of how parkland can be utilized and developed by a municipality in New Jersey is dependent to a large extent upon the Green Acres regulations which are promulgated by the State—even in those cases where the municipality has acquired or developed such parkland without Green Acres funding. These distinctions, which provide the legal and economic framework in which open space, recreational facilities and programs can be planned and developed, are discussed in greater detail below.

1. Green Acres Regulations

a. Funded Parkland

“Funded parkland” means parkland that a local government unit or nonprofit organization has acquired or developed with Green Acres (State) funding.

Under the current regulations that govern the use of parkland (these regulations change from time to time), if a property has been purchased partially or wholly with Green Acres funds, the local government unit or nonprofit organization which owns such land must ensure that such funded parkland is open and provides reasonable public access to all New Jersey residents, not just to those who are living within the jurisdiction in which it is located. (In other words, those parks and open spaces listed in Table 1 below may not be restricted to use by Cranbury residents only.)

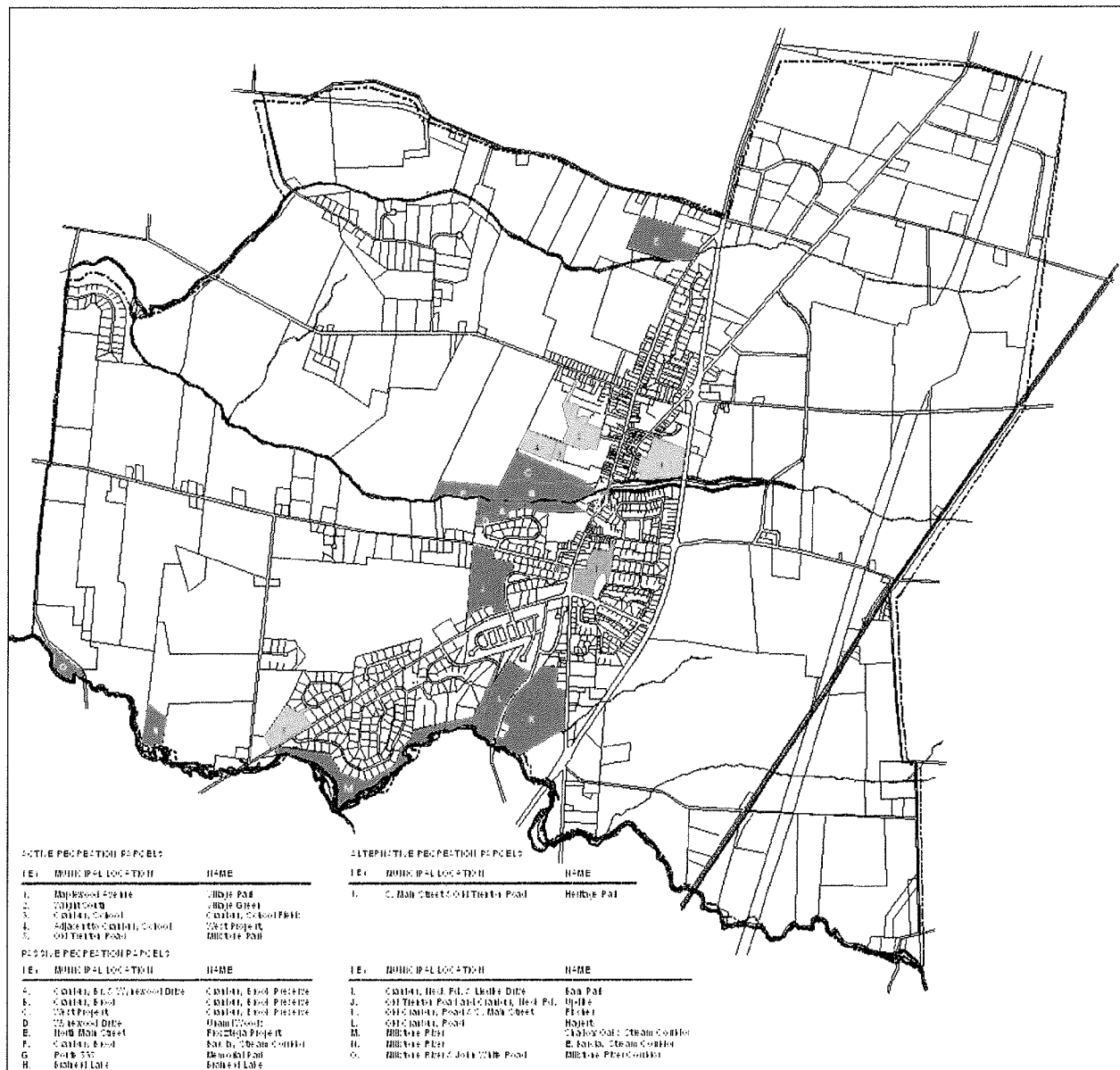
Table 1 FUNDED PARKS OR OPEN SPACE IN CRANBURY TOWNSHIP				
Name of Park or Open Space	Location	Block	Lot	Size (in acres)
1. Cranbury Brook Preserve	Cranbury Brook and Wynnewood Drive	23	95	15.4
2. Cranbury Brook Preserve ⁶	Cranbury Brook	23	70.02	20.03
3. Fischer Property	Old Cranbury Road and South Main Street	23	135	53.334
4. Frosztega Property	North Main Street	23	60.01	31.245
5. Unami Woods	Wynnewood Drive	23	135	2.76

time (yearly, seasonally, monthly, weekly, daily, hourly, or even for a single use); by user (individual, group, team or family); or by resident or non-resident status, as long as the charge for non-residents is not more than twice that charged to residents. Finally, fees may be differentiated on the basis of affiliation or by special interest group (seniors, disabled, children or students); and/or by organization (nonprofit, for-profit or corporate).

C. Legal Framework and Funding

A local municipality may, however, charge a reasonable fee for the use of funded parkland, provided those fees are then used for the maintenance, development or programming of the funded parkland. The fees can be assessed by

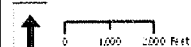
6. The 20.03 acre portion of this lot, also known as the West property, is part of the preserve, and is funded parkland.



Active, Alternative and Passive Recreation Parcels

Figure 1

- Active Recreation
- Alternative Recreation
- Passive Recreation



Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

Philips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
January 2007

Furthermore, a municipality may restrict or schedule the use of a funded facility to accommodate organized sports or other recreation or conservation purposes, provided the public is not denied reasonable access to the use of the facility.

Table 1 provides a listing of properties in Cranbury that were acquired with Green Acres funds (see Figure 1).

b. Unfunded Parkland

“Unfunded parkland” refers to parks and open space that are neither acquired nor developed through the use of Green Acres (State) funding, but that are being held by the Township for recreation and conservation purposes at the time Green Acres Funding is received. Unfunded parkland is also subject to Green Acres Regulations and may only be used for recreation and conservation purposes. Unlike “funded parkland,” however, a municipality has nominally greater discretion and control over the use of recreational facilities located on unfunded parkland in that it may regulate its use based on residency, provided it does so in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory way.

A municipality has greater discretion and control over the use of unfunded parkland, and may prioritize its use on the basis of a number of factors. However, it cannot fully restrict its use to Cranbury residents only.

Table 2 provides a list of unfunded parks and open space in Cranbury. (See also Figure 1.)

2. Funding

Municipalities primarily acquire and develop open space generally through three sources: (1) from general municipal revenues; (2) from out-right grants, matching grants and/or loan programs, provided by the

Table 2: UNFUNDED PARKS AND OPEN SPACE IN CRANBURY TOWNSHIP					
Name of Park or Open Space	Location	Block	Lot	Size (in acres)	
1. Barclay Stream Corridor	Cranbury Brook	23	12.02	7.72	
2. Barn Park	Cranbury Neck Road and Liedike Drive	21	4.11	0.978	
3. Cranbury Brook Preserve ⁷	West Property	23	70.02	14.31	
4. Hagerty	Old Cranbury Road	20	14	21.6	
5. Heritage Park	South Main Street and Old Trenton Road	18	44.01	13.46	
6. Millstone Park	Old Trenton Road	21	8.18	12.83	
7. Millstone River	East Barclay Stream Corridor	22	7	9.18	
8. Millstone River	Shadow Oaks Stream Corridor	20.06	41.02	46.628	
9. Millstone River and John White Road	Millstone River Corridor	22.01	2	8.80	
10. Updike	Old Trenton Road and Cranbury Neck Road	21	4	23.67	
11. Village Park	Maplewood Avenue	33	64	13.134	
12. Village Park	Maplewood Avenue	33	65	5.702	
13. West Property soccer/ lacrosse fields	Adjacent to Cranbury School	23	70.02	7.2	



7. A 14.31 acre portion of this lot, also known as the West property, is utilized for athletic fields, and is unfunded.

County, State and Federal government; or (3) through dedication or donation by the private or non-profit sector.

Descriptions of the funding from the private or nonprofit sector and through the County, state and federal government is provided below.

a. Private and Nonprofit Funding

Funding for open space and recreation projects can come from both the nonprofit and private sectors. Private sources typically include developers, corporations and residents. Developers of large-scale properties and corporations based in Cranbury may voluntarily deed land over to the Township in return for credits or density bonuses. Incentives to deed land for agricultural purposes or for open space in the township's A-100 zone (the area located predominantly to the west of the Village) are provided through lot averaging and density bonuses for clustering. Several large-scale properties have been acquired in Cranbury either through outright deed or through these zoning incentives.

The Parks Commission drafted a document, which is currently under review by the Township Board and Council, about the Township accepting gifts given in honor of an individual or organization. According to the document, a percentage of donations would be applied to the Cranbury Parks Trust, in an attempt to help maintain park structures and grounds. The interest of the Fund would be used in perpetuity for the betterment and maintenance of Cranbury's parks. The gifts could be in the form of cash donations, securities, life insurance, annuities, bequests, or charitable trusts.

b. Public Funding

(1) Garden State Preservation Trust

In June 1999, the New Jersey Legislature passed the "Garden State Preservation Trust Act," which lays out the framework for the annual distribution of a \$98 million trust fund for open space, farmland and historic resources. The Green Acres program established as part of that Act provides low-interest (2%) loans and grants to municipal and county governments to acquire open space and develop outdoor recreation facilities. Green Acres also provides matching grants to nonprofit organizations to acquire land for public recreation and conservation purposes. There are also tax exemptions from local property taxes available to eligible nonprofit organization that own recreation or conservation lands and permit public use of their private lands.

(2) Green Trust Planning Incentive

Another program is the Green Trust Planning Incentive funding category. The Planning Incentive

funding category awards 50 percent grant and 50 percent loans to municipalities to acquire lands identified in an Open Space and Recreation Plan. Municipalities that wish to participate in the program must prepare and adopt an Open Space and Recreation Plan, as well as establish and collect an open space tax.

(3) Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund

In 2001, voters in Middlesex County approved a \$188 million referendum to fund the county's Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, which acquires land for conservation, recreation, farmland or historic preservation.

(4) Planning Incentive Program

More recently, the acquisition of open space and the development of parks and recreation has been enormously aided by a program known as the Planning Incentive Program (PIP). The Planning Incentive Program in New Jersey provides grant and loan funding to qualifying local governments provided they have undertaken two important steps: first, that they have enacted an open space tax; and second, that they have adopted an Open Space and Recreation Plan.⁸

A qualifying local government must have established, and be collecting, an open space tax. For this to occur, the open space tax must be approved by voter referendum. Municipalities may assess a tax for one or more of the following purposes, as determined by the local government:

- (a) acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (b) development of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (c) maintenance of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (d) acquisition of farmland for farmland preservation purposes;
- (e) preservation of historic properties, including the acquisition of such properties for historic preservation purposes; and/or
- (f) payment of debt service on indebtedness issued or incurred by a local government for any of the purposes stated in (a), (b), (d) or (e) above.

Cranbury adopted an open space tax in 2000 based upon a voter referendum passed in November 1999. The amount assessed in Cranbury initially was three cents per one hundred dollars of assessed value of real property. In November 2006, Cranbury voters passed a new referendum reducing the tax to two cents per one hundred dollars of assessed value. The funds are placed in an interest-bearing trust fund, for the acquisition, development, maintenance and management of lands for conservation,

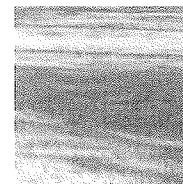
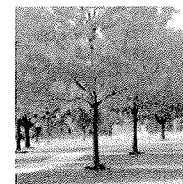
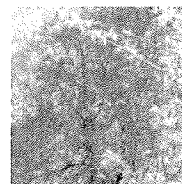
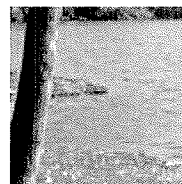
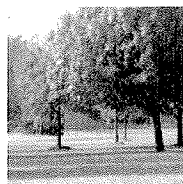
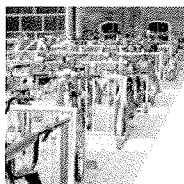
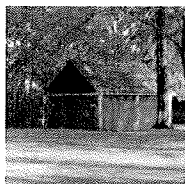
8. The 2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan, adopted by Cranbury, was primarily aimed to qualify Cranbury for the Planning Incentive Grants under the PIP.

farmland preservation and recreation purposes, including related debt service. Cranbury has utilized such funds to purchase Unami Woods and the Fischer properties.

(5) Federal Funding

There are also various grants available through the federal government. However, these grants are extremely competitive and are generally geared towards large-scale or high-profile projects.

III. Evaluation



A. Reexamination of Cranbury's 2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan

1. The 2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)

In 2000, the Township prepared an **Open Space and Recreation Plan** ("2000 OSRP" hereafter), whose main purpose was to enable Cranbury to avail itself of funding via the State's Planning Incentive Program (described more fully in Chapter II, Section C). The **2000 OSRP** was prepared in accordance with the Open Space and Recreation Guidelines published by the Green Acres Bureau of Planning in the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The plan was based on the Open Space and Recreational Plan Element of the **1993 Cranbury Township Master Plan**, which garnered public input through discussions with representatives from the Park Planning Commission and the Recreation Commission, input from the Greenway and Pathway Planning Board Subcommittee, and from the general public during the public hearing process. The **2000 OSRP** also included additional insights from the Park Planning Commission and from the Cranbury Recreation Commission.

The central finding of the **2000 OSRP** was that for the most part, Cranbury's park and recreation facilities which existed at that time, were judged to be adequate to meet the demands of the existing population. However, based on an analysis of the park and recreation inventory, and a projection of future needs, the report indicated that the following additional facilities were needed:

- 1) additional facilities to provide for a greater variety of recreation resources (i.e., hiking and biking trails);
- 2) a youth center and/or senior citizen center;
- 3) a comprehensive greenway system with bicycle paths, jogging paths and nature trails; and
- 4) additional ballfields, including an additional Babe Ruth field (the regulation ballfield at Village Green) and an additional Little League field.

The plan recommended the following actions be undertaken in order to meet the above needs:

- 1) new residential development should be encouraged to provide neighborhood parks;
- 2) the Township should continue to require developers of planned industrial parks to provide recreational facilities;
- 3) a youth center/senior citizen centers should be considered within the proposed municipal complex;
- 4) the greenways, conservation areas and open space areas should be identified on site plans and subdivisions;
- 5) active participation in the Farmland Preservation Program should be continued;
- 6) lot averaging development should be encouraged to limit development in critical environmental areas⁹;

9. For a definition of lot averaging, see Appendix C, Glossary of terms used in this report.

- 7) conservation easements along stream corridors should be required to protect water quality and provide for walking and jogging paths;
- 8) where deed restrictions and easements cannot be obtained, the Township should acquire properties adjacent to the Township's streams; and
- 9) the Township should acquire the 50.4 acre Updike parcel for possible open space, recreation or future municipal use.

2. Reexamination: Progress made in implementing the recommendations of the 2000 OSRP

Each of the 2000 OSRP's recommendations is discussed below.

a. Neighborhood parks in new residential developments

No new neighborhood parks have been provided in conjunction with new residential development since 2000, primarily because residential development since 2000 has not been substantial and few have been of a size which created the need for, nor the means to provide neighborhood parks. However, as part of their approvals, two larger residential developments did set aside land for the purpose of providing parks and open space in the future. The Four Seasons age-restricted development set aside a 21.6 acre parcel (the "Hagerty property") on Old Cranbury Road, while a 32.67 acre parcel (the "Updike property") was set aside between Old Trenton Road and Cranbury Neck Road, and a ± 1 acre parcel was set aside for the Barn Park, both as a result of the Sharbell single-family subdivision.

b. Recreation in Planned Industrial Parks

In most instances, site plan approval for some of the larger warehouse/flex developments in Cranbury have included small-scale, on-site recreation facilities, such as outdoor seating areas or paved areas for basketball hoops. Only one ballfield was created in Cranbury within the warehouse/industrial sector, on the Prudential/Aetna property on the corner of Prospect Plains Road and South River Road (Block 5, Lot 2.04). However, its lack of use led to its abandonment.

c. Youth center/senior center

In hindsight, the provision of a dedicated youth and/or senior recreation center for a Township with as small a population base as Cranbury—both at present and as anticipated at full build-out—appears to be unrealistic and economically infeasible.¹⁰ However, the long-term plans for Village Green includes the possibility of the library vacating its present space within the Cranbury school and building a standalone library across the parking lot just to the west of the tennis courts (see Chapter IV, Section B). Such plans may include the provision of a room for indoor recreation for seniors. The plans for moving the library to a standalone building is, however, not projected to occur in the foreseeable

10. As Indicated in Table 3 on in Chapter III, Section D, the threshold population for a community center is 25,000 persons.

future.

d. Greenways and conservation areas to be identified on Site Plans

Little in the way of development applications—subdivisions or site plans—since 2000 have included lands identified for conservation purposes or for greenways, primarily because few properties proposed for development have incorporated such areas. Nevertheless, this Plan recognizes the importance of doing so, and Cranbury may have the opportunity to ensure that such areas on privately-owned property would not be developed nor disturbed when approvals for development on such properties are sought.

e. Continued participation in Farmland Preservation Program

Cranbury has continued to actively participate in this program and has continued to acquire or otherwise ensure that its farmland is maintained and protected.

f. Encouraging Lot Averaging¹¹

Again, few opportunities have arisen since 2000 in which this preservation tool could be utilized, but it remains a valid goal and methodology of preserving open space in the future. Lot averaging was successfully implemented in subdivisions approved prior to 2000.

g. Stream Corridor Conservation

Land adjacent to Cranbury's streams—the Millstone River and Cranbury Brook in particular—have been acquired for the purpose of protecting the stream corridors in Cranbury and adding to the Township's inventory of open space (see h., below). The Township is also in the process of considering the adoption of a Stream Corridor Conservation Ordinance which would ensure the conservation of the natural environment and the protection of corridors located along Cranbury's identified streams. Note that an Excellent Boy Scout trail has been added along Cranbury Brook.

h. Stream Corridor Acquisition

Some land, including stream corridors along the Millstone River and Cranbury Brook, have been acquired by the Township (see parcels 1, 2 and 3 in Table 1, and parcels 1, 3, 7, 8 and 9 of Table 2).

i. Updike Property

The Township was able to acquire, at no cost to the taxpayers, the 1-acre Barn Park (see Table 2, parcel 2) located on the corner of Cranbury Neck Road and South Main Street, and a 32.67 acre portion of the Updike parcel (see Table 2, parcel 10), located between Old Trenton Road and Cranbury Neck Road,

11. See Appendix C for definition of lot averaging.

for park and open space purposes, by permitting a clustered single-family development on the Sharbell property.

In conclusion, many of the recommendations of the 2000 OSRP have been successfully implemented, and the remaining recommendations remain valid for the Township's future.

1. 1993 Master Plan

Plans for greenways, walkways and bikepaths first appeared in master plans for Cranbury in the **1993 Cranbury Master Plan**. The Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan provided a plan for a greenway system, including bikepaths, jogging paths and nature trails to meet the growing demand for these facilities in Cranbury. The greenway system was proposed to be a linear park system along streams, woodland edges and property lines. The stated purpose of this linear open space system was to preserve stream corridors and wetlands, to link existing and proposed parks, to link residential centers, and to provide additional recreational amenities in the Township. A pathway plan was prepared by the Greenway and Pathway Planning Board subcommittee and was integrated into the Master Plan. Up to 1993, the greenway system had been created in part through land dedications from development which included Millstone Park along the Millstone River (part of the Shadow Oaks approval) and Heritage Park (part of the Morris Brothers approval). However, the land dedication along the Millstone River was not wide enough for use as a pedestrian pathway and the park locations were relatively isolated and not easily accessible to Township pedestrians. The Plan recommended easements, expanding buffer areas along the stream corridors of 75 feet to stream edge, and utilizing clustering and lot averaging to concentrate development in appropriate areas.

2. The Cranbury Open Space and Recreation Plan (2000)

The Cranbury Open Space and Recreation Plan prepared in 2000 ("**2000 OSRP**") proposed a new greenway system along streams, woodland edges and property lines. The plan noted that many of the properties located along the Millstone River, Cranbury Brook and Cedar Brook were preserved through the Farmland Preservation program. However, these properties were not accessible to the general public. In those instances where greenway areas could be identified on parcels that were entering the Farmland Preservation Program, the plan recommended that public access to greenways along those streams be provided, prior to the participation of that particular parcel in the Farmlands Preservation program.

B. 1993 and 2000 Greenway, Walkway and Bikepath Plans

The 2000 OSRP recommended the following actions and policies related to greenways and pathways be pursued by Cranbury:

- a. The greenways identified in the plan should be identified on site plans and subdivisions to allow the municipality to acquire the reserved areas or negotiate conservation easements. (The 2000 OSRP anticipated that most could be acquired or preserved by using lot averaging or cluster techniques.)
- b. Conservation easements along stream corridors should be required to protect water quality and provide for walking and jogging paths. A conservation easement of 75 feet on both sides of a stream corridor was recommended.
- c. Where deed restrictions and easements cannot be obtained, the plan recommended that the Township acquire properties adjacent to the Township's streams in order to create the proposed greenway system.

Figure 2 shows the location of the proposed greenways based upon an updated map prepared by Cranbury Township's engineering consultants in 2004.

C. Build-out Projection of Population and Employment

In 2005, the Township undertook a build-out analysis to determine what the ultimate total population and employment of the Township would be.¹² Cranbury's population in 2005 was estimated to be 3,947 persons, and the total number of persons who were employed and working at jobs within Cranbury was 6,290.

With regards to residential uses, approximately 717 acres of land could be developed resulting in the formation of approximately 275 new households, and a total of 665 additional residents.¹³ Added to the existing population, the total population at build-out would be 4,612.

The build-out analysis calculated total additional employment possible in Cranbury based on remaining vacant land and the type and intensity of employment-generating land uses permitted by the zoning ordinance. All the vacant commercial parcels east and west of Route 130 were included. The results revealed that there are 1,143.73 acres of vacant commercial land which could result in an addition of 9.7 million gross floor area, 2.9 million square feet of which could be devoted to office use, 6.8 million square feet which could be devoted to warehouse use, and 42,000 square feet of which could

12. Cranbury Township COAH Build-Out Analysis. September 1, 2005.

13. This number is based on an average household size of 2.42 persons per family. This average was derived by dividing Cranbury's total population (3,227) by the total number of households (1,091) in 2000.

CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

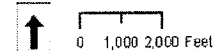
Figure 2

Proposed Greenway Park System*

Legend

Stream Corridor and Greenway Park System

* Based on a map prepared by Killam
Associates in August 2004



Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. April 2007



be devoted to other uses. Utilizing standard indices of number of employees per nonresidential floor area, the additional number of employees was estimated to be 3,515. Therefore in total, 9,805 employees may be possible in Cranbury at full build-out.

D. National Open Space and Recreational Standards

In order to provide the community with a sense of how the provision of Cranbury's active recreational facilities stack up against other communities nationwide, Cranbury's existing recreational facilities were compared with open space standards established by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)¹⁴, considered to be the authoritative source on the subject.

It should be noted that these standards are not differentiated by age or by the nature or size of the community (suburban versus urban, small towns versus large cities, etc.), and thus only provides a general framework within which to judge the adequacy of the provision of various active recreational facilities. The ratios are based upon the number of residents within a community.¹⁵

As is shown in Table 3, Cranbury's existing facilities fall well within the range of acceptable facility ratios determined by the NRPA for facilities whose threshold populations are 5,000 or even 10,000 persons. Only in cases where the threshold population for a particular facility equals or exceeds 20,000 is Cranbury seen as lacking.

E. Results of the Community Meetings

As described in Chapter I, Section B under methodology, this Plan's scope, direction and policies were driven to a large extent by input from the residents of Cranbury who attended two community workshops on open space and recreation, one focusing on active recreation, the other on passive recreation. A synopsis of the results of the two community meetings is provided below. A more complete description, including graphs and tables, can be found in Appendix B-1 and Appendix B-2.

1. Results of Community Meeting on Active Recreation

The full results of the workshop can be reviewed in Appendix B-1. The issues and overall themes discussed included:

- a. **What are the best and worst things about active recreational space in Cranbury?** Accessibility and well-maintained fields are the best aspects of active recreation in Cranbury. The overuse of fields is the worst aspect.

14. National Recreation and Park Association, *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*, 1996.

15. Note that no recreational industry standards are formulated or recommended on the basis of the numbers of employees. The demand for recreational facilities is typically generated by resident populations. Moreover, in New Jersey, recreational activities are typically conducted within the municipality in which one lives, not where one works.

- b. **What improvements should be made to existing active recreation facilities in Cranbury?** Better irrigation of the fields and improved maintenance of specified facilities received the most votes.
- c. **Does Cranbury need additional active recreational facilities for sports/programs currently served?** The participants indicated the greatest demand for more soccer fields and more multipurpose fields.
- d. **Does Cranbury need additional recreational facilities for new sports/programs not current served?** The addition of a track to the town received the most votes.
- e. **If additional active recreational facilities are needed, what factors would be the most important in determining which parcel should be chosen?** Compatibility with neighboring land uses is the highest priority for residents in the selection of additional land for active open space; cost to Cranbury taxpayers and preservation of natural environment were close seconds.
- f. **What are the top three priorities to be addressed in the OSRP?** The issue given the highest priority was a need for the plan to demonstrate a demand for additional active recreation facilities. Improved maintenance of current facilities was also given a high priority.
- g. **What other important issues should be brought to the attention of the Subcommittee?** The issue most frequently mentioned was a need for additional facilities for seniors, followed by the creation of bike paths and increased attention on passive recreation.

Table 3

COMPARISON OF CRANBURY'S ACTIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES COMPARED TO NEED ON THE BASIS OF NATIONAL STANDARDS¹⁶

Type of Facility	National Recreation and Parks Standards (NRPA)	Number Provided in Cranbury	Location/Park
Baseball Fields (Regulation Size)	1/5,000 population	1	Village Green—Regulation baseball field*
Basketball Courts	1/5,000 population	3	Village Park—1 School—2
Community Centers**	1/25,000 population	None	---
Field Hockey Fields	1/20,000 population	None	---
Football Fields	1/20,000 population	None	---
Little League Fields	1/5,000 population	2	Village Park—1 School—1
Playgrounds/tot lots	No population-based standard	6	Village Park—2 Heritage Park—1 Millstone Park—1 School—2
Running Track (quarter-mile)	1/20,000 population	None	---
Soccer Fields	1/10,000 population	7	West property—2 large-sided Millstone Park— 2 small-sided, 1 practice School—2 large-sided
Softball Fields	1/5,000 population	1	Village Park—1
Swimming Pools***	1/20,000 population	1	Cranbury Swim Club— outdoor pool, private
Tennis Courts	1/2,000 population	5	Village Park—2 School—3
Trails	1 system per region	4	Village Park—bicycle circuit Heritage Park— bike/ skateboard/ walking path Unami Woods—walking trails Cranbury Brook Preserve— Scout Trail
Volleyball Courts	1/5,000 population	None	---
T-ball/minor baseball field	1/5,000 population	2	Village Park—1 Millstone Park—1

* The regulation field at Village Green is presently under construction.

** For a definition of "community center," see Appendix C.

*** Note that the Four Seasons age-restricted development also has a pool, tennis court and bocce court, but were not included since these are restricted to residents of that community and their guests.

16. Cranbury's current population is 3,227. At full build-out, it is projected to be 4,612.

2. Results of the Community Meeting on Passive Recreation¹⁷

a. What are the best and worst things about passive recreational space in Cranbury?

There were a range of answers regarding the best things about passive open space. However, there was near unanimous agreement that amongst the best things is the fact that Cranbury has abundant passive open space. Other attributes listed by more than one group were that: there was a good geographical distribution of passive open space within the township; some parcels are preserved in their natural state; and that there are walking paths in Heritage Park. The groups were more closely aligned when it came to listing the worst aspects of passive open space in Cranbury. All of the groups mentioned the need to either improve connections between parks and pathways/bikeways, or to improve access to the parks. Several groups mentioned both. In summary, passive open space is one of the best aspects of recreation and open space in Cranbury, but pedestrian access and connections between the parks, neighborhoods and the downtown, could be improved.

b. In terms of greatest need to least need, how would you rank the following passive recreational facility and improvement needs in Cranbury?

- Walking/jogging trails at existing parks
- Rollerblading/bikepaths at existing parks
- Gazebos, picnic areas, sitting areas at existing parks
- Boating facilities/access at Brainerd Lake
- Linking parks and open space to Cranbury's existing sidewalks/pedestrian path system
- Vehicular access and parking at Cranbury's undeveloped parklands and open space
- Walking trails along stream corridors
- Accommodating persons with special needs
- A bikepath system through Cranbury's existing streets
- An extension of the bikepath through Cranbury's existing parks
- Other needs (please add to list)

There was a consensus amongst groups regarding the need for and improvements to passive open space in Cranbury. Better irrigation of the fields and improved maintenance of specified facilities received the most support. Four out of the five groups listed linking parks and open space to Cranbury's existing sidewalks/pedestrian path system as the highest priority, while three out of five groups listed creating a bikepath system through Cranbury's existing streets as the second highest priority. All five groups listed improving vehicular access and parking at Cranbury's undeveloped parklands and open space as the least-needed improvement, while providing boating facilities/access at Brainerd Lake was the second lowest priority.

17. Included in this meeting were topics related to the recreational needs of seniors and persons with special needs, both active and passive.

c. *What are the most important considerations in the implementation of Greenways along existing streams in Cranbury?*

- Cost to taxpayer
- Access to the Greenway for biking and rollerblading
- Preservation of the environment
- Privacy of landowners through which the Greenway passes
- Avoidance of disruption to farming
- Access to Cranbury residents for walking
- Development of picnic areas, shelters and other improvements along the Greenway
- Vehicular access and parking at various points along Greenway
- Safety
- Other (please add to list)

The groups were unanimous in choosing preservation of the environment as the most important consideration in the implementation of greenways along existing streams in Cranbury. Four out of five groups also listed access to greenways for Cranbury residents for walking as an important consideration. Cost to taxpayers, avoidance of disruption to farming, safety, and privacy of landowners were listed by all groups as important considerations. Access for biking and rollerblading, development of picnic areas, shelters and other improvements along the greenway, and vehicular access and parking at various points along the greenway were generally listed as low priorities amongst the groups. One of the discussion groups added another two categories as important considerations: better demarcation of greenways, and clarification of paths.

d. *What do you believe are the greatest adult/senior recreational needs in Cranbury, and how would you recommend these needs be met?*

There were a variety of responses to this open-ended question. However, there were a number of common themes such as: the need for interconnected bikepaths and walking trails for seniors; safer walking spaces in town for seniors; a fixed track for jogging or walking; maximization of opportunities for walkways for seniors; and the creation of resting places or benches where appropriate. Many of the responses related to programs for seniors. Amongst the identified needs were better programming and organized events, equitable funding for all senior activities, and more recreation programs for seniors. A number of groups mentioned that there should be a senior center (developed with input from seniors), or at least a dedicated activities space for seniors that would be easily accessible to them. Better cohesion of the different senior groups and improved communication within the senior community was also mentioned. Finally, a desire for a tennis wall for adults or seniors to practice on their own was raised.

e. What improvements and facilities need to be added to existing and future parks to accommodate persons with special needs?

There were a variety of responses to this question. More than one group mentioned the need for safe walkways and the fact that it was difficult for persons with special needs to get to Brainerd Lake, the picnic area and gazebo, as well as the benches in Village Park. One group recommended that a review be undertaken of existing facilities to bring them into compliance with the American Disabilities Act (that is, to make them barrier-free). Another group commented that there was a need to also make Cranbury's passive open space areas, not just the active recreational areas, accessible to people with special needs.

f. Ranking of priorities for implementing parks and open space plan.

- Improvements to existing active recreational facilities
- Development of needed new active recreational facilities
- Improvements to existing passive recreation facilities
- Development of passive recreation facilities
- Acquisition of additional open space
- Implementation of greenways (acquisition, easement purchases, improvements, etc.)
- Recreational needs for adults/seniors
- Other

Cumulatively, acquisition of additional open space came out on top, although it was only the top priority for two groups. Three groups rated development of passive recreation facilities highly. Two groups rated either improvements to existing active recreational facilities or maintenance of existing active recreational space, as the top spending priority. Development of needed new active space and implementation of greenways was not rated highly by any group.

g. What other important issues should be brought to the attention of the Subcommittee?

Comments from the groups included:

- Two groups requested a reevaluation of the regulation baseball field at Village Green (the Babe Ruth Field), and one group suggested that an all-weather track at that space which would serve a larger majority of community.
- Would like to see a track
- There is a need for shuffleboard
- Maintenance of Boys Scouts/Eagle Scout projects
- Handicapped parking on Main Street with handicapped-accessible curbs

- Van to transport seniors to events; health fair
- Porta-johns are not handicapped-accessible
- Who will maintain, manage and oversee new open space areas?
- Where will funding for more open space come from?
- There should be speed limits near parks, especially crossing Old Trenton Road;
- There should be sidewalks connecting neighborhoods to parks, especially on Old Trenton Road
- Do not dissect any open space, i.e., keep it all passive or keep it all active
- Open space is a necessity to Cranbury—the large vistas of farmland are a heritage to the town
- East of Route 130 there is an opportunity for additional active recreational space.

At the time of the Open Space and Recreation Committee's formation, one of the most debated open space and recreation issues in Cranbury was the Township Committee's decision to fund and implement the construction of a regulation baseball field within a new township park to be developed on the Wright South parcel, to be known as "Village Green." (This baseball field has been more commonly referred to as the "Babe Ruth baseball field.") Many residents in Cranbury, including some of the participants in the community workshops, requested that this decision be rescinded or at least reconsidered. The Subcommittee discussed this issue within the context of moving forward with a comprehensive open space and recreation plan. The Subcommittee undertook a thorough examination of the history and basis of the decision. It also examined the plans that were approved for Village Green in the context of the way in which the baseball field would help to meet Cranbury's needs and fit into the overall Open Space and Recreation Plan Element that it was charged with developing. Following this investigation, the Subcommittee decided not to recommend rescission of the plan; in fact, the Subcommittee endorsed the plan. The basis for that decision is described below.

Approximately twelve years ago, Cranbury's Township Committee first discussed the need for a separate regulation-size ballfield in town, a ballfield that subsequently came to be referred to as the "Babe Ruth Ballfield."

This name is somewhat misleading because this regulation field would not only be used by the Babe Ruth league, but by school students, older children and adults, and by adult leagues. Beth Veghte, the chairperson of the Recreation Commission, brought this need to the attention of the Township Committee, with support from both Cranbury School and the Babe Ruth League. It was noted that Cranbury did not have a regulation-size baseball field and, therefore, Cranbury School students, older children, and adults were forced to play baseball on fields in neighboring towns. The Township

F. Reevaluation of the Village Green Plan

Committee was persuaded of the need for a separate regulation-size baseball field and turned its attention to finding a suitable location.

The suggested site for the regulation-size ballfield was the open field on the West Property. However, this concept was met with some resistance over the course of the ensuing discussions—a period of about two years—because the Cranbury Township Environmental Commission had proposed deed-restricting the same land within the West Property for the purposes of an open space preserve, a recommendation that was obviously in conflict with the concept of locating the regulation-size ballfield in the same location.

Around this same time, the Township Committee was considering a subdivision of the then 50-acre Wright South parcel of land (which it had just acquired), which was located to the north and west of the Cranbury School. The idea was for the Township to create two lots, one of which would remain in farmland preservation, the other of which would be held in reserve by the Township for future municipal purposes. The Wright South parcel then became the logical site for the proposed regulation-size baseball field, because it was felt that the West parcel would be better suited to be a preserve and Wright South would be better suited to be utilized for active recreation and other municipal purposes.

In order to gather public input on the questions of whether or not to have a regulation ball field on the Wright South parcel, and what other facilities could and should be developed on the parcel alongside it, in 2002 the Township hired the firm of Brown & Keener (landscape architects, urban designers) to conduct a community “charrette.” Members of various boards and organizations involved in recreation in Cranbury were invited to participate, as were other stakeholders (such as the School and nearby neighbors), as well as members of the public at large.

The charrette was concluded with a broad consensus among stakeholders and residents that the Wright South parcel should be used for the following purposes:

- a regulation baseball field;
- land designated for a library/community center;
- an open town green; and
- land designated for additional vehicular access and parking.¹⁸

18. To date, only the expansion of the parking lot along the south side of Wright South has been implemented. Also, soil on the property has undergone remediation for the purposes of removing contaminants in the site's soils—a remnant from prior agricultural activities on the parcel.

Following the charrette, a subcommittee was formed to implement the concepts gathered in the consensus-building exercise. The subcommittee was chaired by Pari Stave (of the Township Committee) and by Bob Brown (of Brown & Keener), and included the chairs of the Parks and Recreation

Commissions, as well as representatives of the School, Babe Ruth baseball, and adjacent neighbors. EDAW, an engineering firm specializing in recreational master planning and engineering, was brought in as a subconsultant to Brown & Keener.

A final “master plan” was presented to the Township Committee in 2003. The plan was also reviewed by the Planning Board. Though the latter body did not vote, the minutes of Township Committee meeting of November 22, 2004, wherein the subject was discussed, clearly show the thorough review and official endorsement of the plan (see Figure 3. For a transcript of the entire discussion, see Appendix “D.”)

Essentially, the reasons why Wright South was considered suitable, and remains suited for the accommodation of the regulation baseball field, and the West property was considered, and is still considered, best suited as a preserve, is as follows. A large portion of the West property consists of woods and natural vegetation, which is a more logical choice for a preserve than for active recreation. In addition, the establishment of the regulation baseball field on Wright South would allow the boys to stop utilizing Cranbury School’s dual-purpose softball/baseball field—an inconvenient and inappropriate arrangement given the different facilities’ requirements and the different dimensions for softball as opposed to baseball.¹⁹ Moreover, the provision of a baseball field for older youths and adults separate from the softball field would free the school’s field to be dedicated solely to girls’ softball—a requirement of Title IX, and a boon to the ever-increasing popularity and participation of girls in sports. Finally, the Wright South property is particularly suited to its proposed use as a regulation baseball field because it is cleared, relatively level, and also because it is proximate to other school playing fields and the school/municipal parking lot. Finally, there is sufficient space on Wright South not only to develop the baseball field, but possibly provide for additional Township recreational facilities and even possibly other municipal facilities, such as a standalone library.

Much in line with the goals and objectives of both the **1993 Master Plan** and the **2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan**, the goals and objectives for this Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan are as follows:

1. To provide a sufficient number and variety of facilities to meet the present and future active and passive recreational needs of all segments of Cranbury Township’s resident and employee populations.
2. To provide parks and recreational facilities in locations that are easily accessible to Township resi-

G. Goals and Objectives, 2007

19. The infield and outfield dimensions of a regulation girls’ softball field are different than a regulation boys’ baseball field. In addition, the infield of a regulation girls’ softball field is supposed to be all-dirt, whereas a regulation boys’ baseball infield is required to be grassed.



CRANBURY WRIGHT SOUTH PROPERTY

SCHEMATIC MASTER PLAN

11.22.2004

EDAW

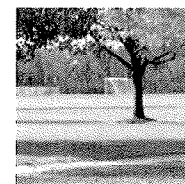
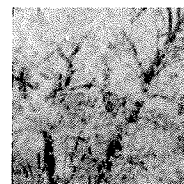
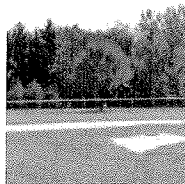
• BROWN & KEENER BRESSI URBAN DESIGN

Figure 3

dents (especially to children, seniors and persons with special needs), and to employees.

3. To provide active recreational facilities while preserving environmentally-sensitive areas and opportunities for passive recreation, including scenic vistas and historic structures.
4. To utilize existing Township-owned land for expanding recreational opportunities before acquiring additional property.
5. To utilize the Township's scarce resources in a cost-effective manner, which provides the widest range of benefits to all residents.
6. To maximize the utilization of existing recreational facilities before developing new facilities.
7. To develop recreational facilities being cognizant of impacts on adjacent land uses.

IV. Inventory of Recreational Facilities



A. Introduction

In Cranbury, spaces dedicated or set aside for open space and recreation often allow for different forms of recreation, that is for active recreation, passive recreation, and “alternative recreation” (see Chapter II, Section A for definitions). For example, Village Park has a number of ballfields primarily focused on providing for active recreation. However, there are also walking trails and a gazebo on the lakefront, allowing for passive recreation, while some of the areas within the Park are utilized for pickup games, or “alternative recreation,” as the term is referred to in this Plan. This Plan recognizes the value of utilizing many parks and open spaces to serve all three forms of recreation. The Plan does not generally support separating them, but recognizes that certain of Cranbury’s parks were intended to be left in that natural state for passive recreation, where active recreation and even alternative recreation would be inappropriate. However, insofar as parks primarily devoted to active recreation are concerned, passive recreation and alternative recreation should not be discouraged.²⁰

For the purpose of analyzing the inventory of recreational facilities in Cranbury, however, as well as to study their utilization and to evaluate the extent to which they are serving their needs or the need for improvement, parks and open spaces in Cranbury have been divided along the lines of “active recreational facilities,” “passive open spaces and recreational facilities,” and “alternative recreation” facilities, while recognizing that some of these parks serve multiple purposes. Additionally, “Indoor Recreation Facilities” has been added as a separate category, because they are specialized and can accommodate all types of recreational activities.

B. Active Recreational Facilities

Only 53 acres, or ±6 percent, of the over 866 acres of land which are classified as open space and parks in Cranbury are devoted primarily to active recreation. This includes the open space and recreational facilities on the Cranbury School property. The active recreational acreage is allocated as follows: 19.32 acres at Village Park; 12.83 acres at Cranbury- Millstone Park; 7.2 acres at the West Property; approximately 9 acres at the Cranbury School; and approximately 5 acres of private recreational space at the Cranbury Swim Club.

The types of active recreational facilities found in Cranbury Township parks are summarized in Table 4. Village Park on Maplewood Avenue in the center of the Village contains one regulation size Little League field; one softball field; one T-ball field; two tennis courts; one bicycle circuit; one basketball court; one dirt mountain (sometimes referred to as “Cranbury Hill”), which is utilized for biking, climbing, sledding, etc.; one playground designed for children of

20. The one exception is Heritage Park, which was designed specifically to encourage “alternative recreation,” particularly for younger children and older adults and seniors, and where formal organized active recreational activities are to be discouraged.

Table 4
INVENTORY OF ACTIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN CRANBURY TOWNSHIP

<u>Recreational Facility</u>	<u>Village Park</u>	<u>Cranbury-Millstone Park</u>	<u>West Property</u>	<u>Cranbury School</u>	<u>Cranbury Swim Club</u>	<u>Total</u>
Regulation Little League Fields	1	0	0	1	0	2
Softball Fields	1	0	0	0	0	1
T-Ball/Minors Fields	1	1	0	0	0	2
Small Sided Soccer/Lacrosse Fields	0	1	0	0	0	1
Large Sided Soccer/Lacrosse Fields	0	0	2	2	0	4
Practice Fields for Soccer/Lacrosse (half fields)	0	3	0	0	0	3
Basketball Courts	1	0	0	2	0	3
Tennis Courts	2	0	0	3	0	5
Tot Lot/ Playground	2	1	0	2	0	5
Bicycle Circuit	1	0	0	0	0	1
Outdoor Swimming Pool	0	0	0	0	1	1

ages 2-5 years with swings and another playground designed for children of ages 5-12 years with swings. In the winter months an ice-skating rink is provided. (There are also facilities for more passive forms of recreation, including informal trails along Brainerd Lakefront, a gazebo and facilities for boating and picnicking.)

Cranbury-Millstone Park on Old Trenton Road contains one T-ball/minor league baseball field; one playground; one small sided soccer field; and two practice areas. It also provides swings and a playground for smaller children.

The West Property and the adjacent School fields, both of which are located off Main Street behind Cranbury School, contain a number of active recreational facilities. The School property contains one softball/baseball field; two large sided soccer fields; a playground; three tennis courts; and two basketball courts. The West property contains two large sided soccer fields.

The only private active recreational facility in Cranbury is the Cranbury Swim Club which is located adjacent to Cranbury-Millstone Park on Old Trenton Road, and provides an outdoor swimming pool and play area.

A more detailed inventory of each of the active recreation facilities, including maps of each, are provided on the following pages.

C. Alternative Recreation

There is one park in Cranbury Township whose primary purpose is to meet the needs of “alternative recreation” in Cranbury—that is, developed parkland with fields and improvements that can be used for non-organized active recreational pursuits, like walking, jogging, biking, skating, kite flying and dog walking.

D. Passive Recreational Facilities

Cranbury’s passive recreational facilities and open space inventory contains properties which were dedicated to the Township as part of residential subdivisions; properties acquired with Township funds for open space preservation; and properties acquired by funds made available through Middlesex County and the State. These areas are used for passive recreational activities and many of them contain environmentally sensitive areas that are protected through conservation easements.

There are two predominant types of passive recreational facilities in Cranbury. The first are large open spaces or parcels consisting of open fields and wooded areas which provide habitat for wildlife and valued scenic vistas to residents and visitors. The second type are greenways, walkways and bike-ways, some of which are located within the larger preserved open space parcels, but many of which are located along stream corridors on private property and farmland, or along local streets running through Cranbury. For analytical purposes the inventory presented below is divided into “Passive Parks and Open Spaces” and “Greenways, Walkways and Bikeways.”

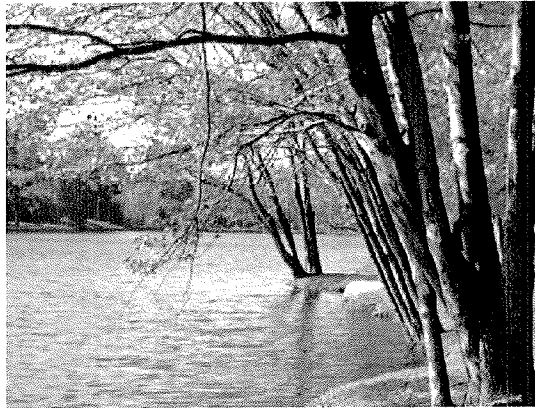
1. Village Park

LOCATION: Maplewood Avenue and Memorial Drive.
Vehicle and pedestrian entrance off of Maplewood Avenue; a pedestrian entrance off of Bennett Place; a pedestrian entrance off Maplewood Avenue across from PNC Bank lot (see Figure 4).

BLOCK: 33
LOT(S): 64 and 65
ACREAGE: 13.134 + 5.702 = 18.836
(19.32)
FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded
FACILITIES:
1 Little League field
1 T-ball/minor league field
1 softball field
1 basketball court
2 tennis courts
1 play structure for tots
1 play structure for older children, plus swings
1 dirt mountain lake
pavilion
gazebo
picnic grove
bicycle circuit
ice-skating rink

IRRIGATION & MAINTENANCE:

The Little League field is irrigated. The softball and T-ball fields are not. Generally, the fields are well maintained. However, without irrigation and constant use, the outfield of the softball field suffers from wear and tear. The remainder of the park is well maintained.

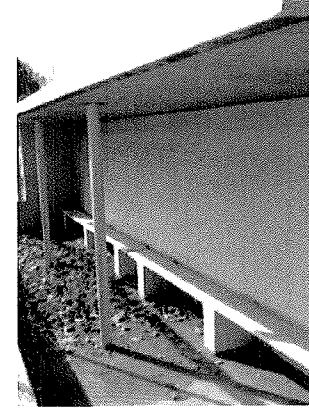


FUNCTION:

Village Park provides a variety of active recreational facilities serving the community, as indicated above. The regulation Little League field has 60-foot baselines, a pitching distance of 46 feet, and an outfield fence 200 feet from home plate. The field also has two permanent dugouts, an electric scoreboard, a batting cage, a storage shed, a permanent outfield fence, and two bleachers. The playing surface is irrigated.

The T-ball/minor league field includes bleachers and two team benches. The softball field has a 40-foot pitching distance and features two team benches, two bleachers, one bench facing the field, and three picnic tables along the third-base line. The park also has a basketball court and two tennis courts, as well as a play structure for children ages 2-5 and a play structure for children ages 5-12, with swing sets for children of varying ages. These facilities are in generally good condition and are well maintained. However, the area beyond the outfield fence of the Little League field is poorly drained and the dugouts have a tendency to flood.

Furthermore, Village Park has a "dirt mountain" (the result of piling dredged spoils from Brainerd Lake), known as Cranbury Hill, which is utilized informally by residents for climbing, biking, sledding, etc. There is a bicycle circuit



behind the dirt mountain. A designated rectangular field area is flooded in late fall to provide a regulation ice-skating rink, which is generally in existence from December through March, depending on the weather.

In addition, the park offers a picnic grove including outdoor barbecue

grills; a pavilion (also including barbecue grills), a water fountain, water faucet, electrical box/outlet and picnic tables. The gazebo also provides an electric outlet. The pavilion and gazebo can be reserved by residents or groups for private parties or outings.

Brainerd Lake lies along the south side of Village Park. There are benches and picnic tables along the riverbank, as well as a floating dock which can be used for fishing or to launch boats. An informal walking path is provided along the lakefront.

Village Park is the venue for Cranbury's July 4th fireworks celebration (actually celebrated on July 5th), as well as summer concerts and movies.

Village Park provides a variety of active recreational facilities serving the community.

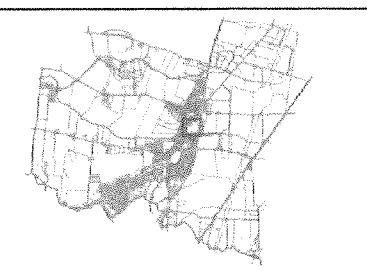


CRANBURY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Figure 4
Village Park

Legend

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Structure for ages 0-5 | Crucifix |
| Structure for ages 6-12 | Porta-Potty |
| Regulation Little League field | Fagade |
| Basketball court | Water fountain |
| Batting cage | Trash can |
| Bench | Pedestrian Path |
| Steeple | Bike Path |
| Deck | Park Boundary |
| Dayport | Crucifix (marker for 1st hole) |
| Gazebo | |
| See Park (winter) | |
| Pavilion (with 2 grills and 3 picnic tables) | |
| Picnic benches | |
| Soccer field | |
| Scoreboard | |
| Shed | |
| Swings | |
| Water field/Miscellaneous | |
| Tennis court | |



0 100 200 Feet

Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. July 2006

2. Cranbury-Millstone Park

LOCATION: Old Trenton Road
(see Figure 5)

BLOCK: 21

LOT(S): 8.18

ACREAGE: 12.83

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded

FACILITIES:

- 1 T-ball/minor league field
- 1 short-sided practice soccer field
- 2 practice spaces
- 1 short-sided games-only soccer/lacrosse field
- 1 play structure for older children with swings
- Picnic grove

PERMANENT/MOVABLE GOALS:

Movable

IRRIGATION & MAINTENANCE:

The Cranbury-Millstone Park fields are not irrigated. Generally the park is well maintained, but as described below, heavy use coupled with the lack of irrigation has caused some of the fields to fall into a poor state. This led the Recreation Commission to designate one of the fields as a game only field. They also closed down another practice area for rehabilitation.

FUNCTION:

Land for Cranbury-Millstone Park was dedicated as a result of the approval of the adjacent Shadow Oaks clustered single-family subdivision. Cranbury-Millstone Park has one T-ball field and four soccer fields of various sizes and purposes. Presently, one soccer field is reserved for games only, two are practice fields, and one field is located partially in the outfield of the T-ball/minor league field. This field is not available while the T-ball field is in use, and is used for soccer practice only. None of the fields at Cranbury-Millstone Park



are irrigated. In order to combat the wear and tear caused by overuse of the soccer fields, the Recreation Commission has experimented in the past with rotating both the use and actual positioning of the fields. This year the Commission fenced off one of the practice fields to prevent any use whatsoever, so that it could be rehabilitated. Next year this field will be put back in use, and another of the fields within the Park will be set aside for a year. Because the T-ball/minor baseball field is oriented towards the northwest, that is, with the batters looking into the sun in the morning, and fielders in the afternoon, the field can only be used either in the early morning or in the evening.

Cranbury-Millstone Park is located at the outskirts of the Village, and at the edge of Cranbury's residential areas. It has frontage on and is accessible only from Old Trenton Road, a heavily-traveled arterial roadway. Although there is an off-street parking lot within Millstone Park, many people park on the shoulder of Old Trenton Road, especially if they are using the small children's playground at the far eastern end of the park. Concerns have been raised that the on-street parking is unsafe on such a busy street and that residents coming from the neighborhoods across Old Trenton Road are at risk of an accident when crossing the street.

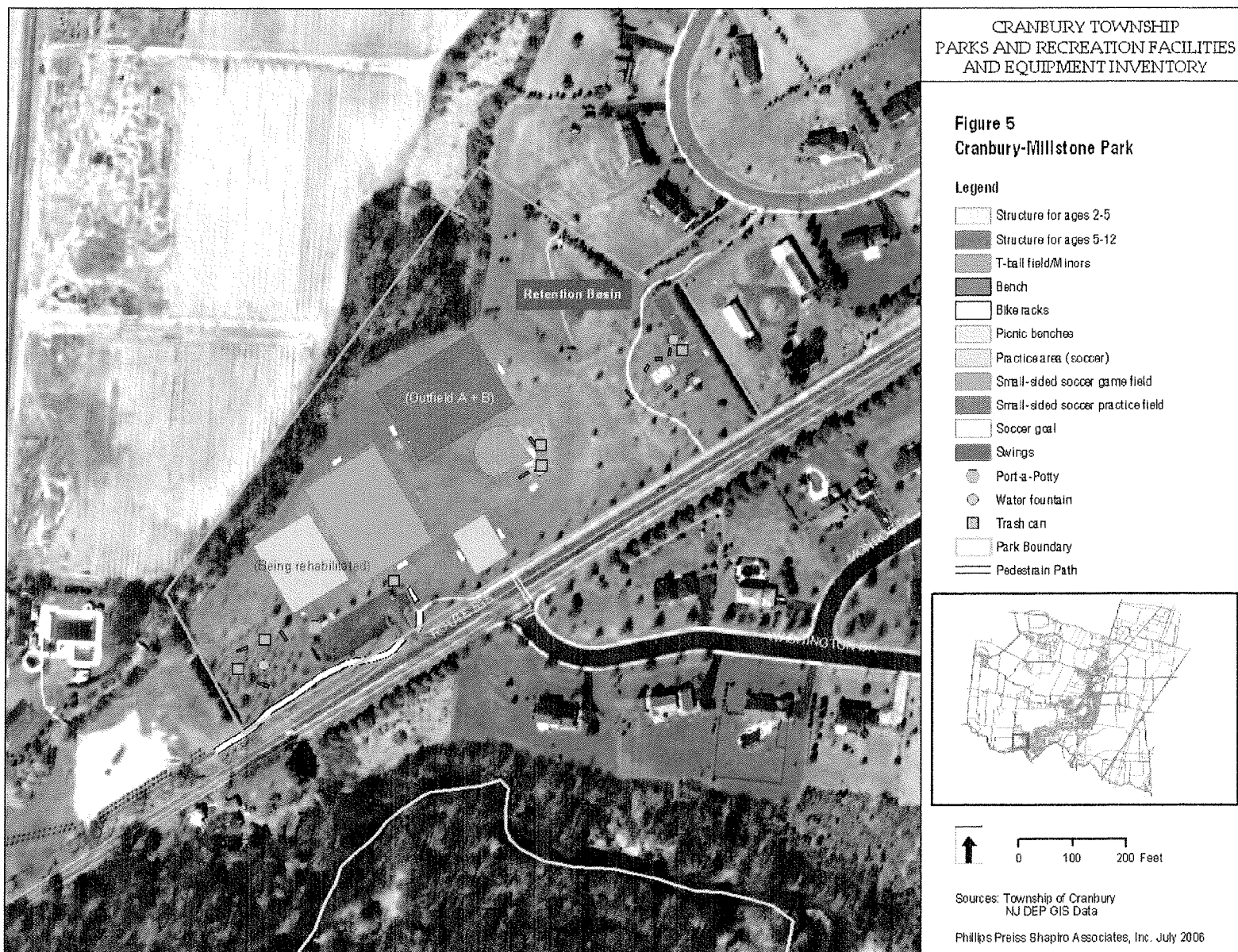
In 2001, arsenic-contaminated soil was discovered in Cranbury-Millstone Park. Results of tests taken showed that



the contamination was confined to a low-lying area of the creek running along the Park's boundary, and were not present on or immediately adjacent to the ballfields. Several abandoned barrels were discovered in the park near Old Trenton Road which were thought to have been the source of the contamination.

These barrels may have contained arsenic-based pesticides used in farming until the late 1970s. Levels of up to 27 parts per million—slightly above those acceptable by the State—were found. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) requires arsenic levels above 20 parts per million to be cleaned up. Upon receiving the results, the Township ordered the barrels to be removed and had the area fenced off from the public. As part of the sanctioned plan to remediate the contamination and bring it up to standards acceptable to the State, a remedial action work plan was filed with the NJDEP. The remediation is complete and the NJDEP has issued a "No Further Action" letter, verifying that it is no longer a threat to public health and safety. The Township has also filed a deed notice on the contamination. In addition, The Township also planted "thorny" bushes to restrict access to the area of original contamination.

In order to combat the wear and tear caused by overuse of the soccer fields, the Recreation Commission has experimented in the past with rotating both the use and actual positioning of the fields.



3. West Property Soccer Fields

LOCATION: Adjacent to Cranbury School.
Entrance off North Main Street
(see Figure 6)

BLOCK: 23

LOT(S): 70.02

ACREAGE: 7.2

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded

PERMANENT/MOVABLE GOALS:
Permanent goals

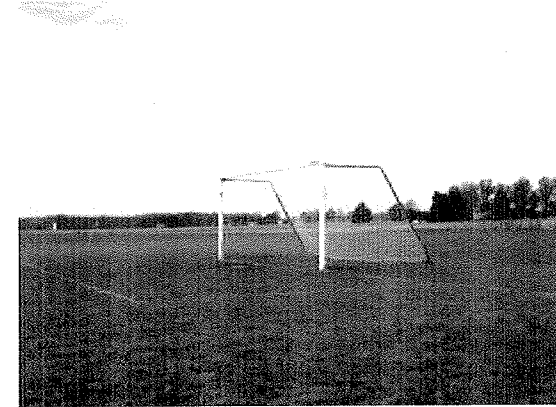
FACILITIES:
2 large-sided soccer fields; also used seasonally for lacrosse

IRRIGATION & MAINTENANCE:
None of the fields are presently irrigated. However, the fields are well maintained and currently are seeded and aerated each year. When the regulation ballfield at Village Green (the "Babe Ruth Field" to be located on the Wright South parcel) is constructed, the Township plans to provide irrigation to the two soccer fields on the West property as well. The fields are set slightly above grade to facilitate drainage.



FUNCTION:
When the Township created the two fields on the West property, it decided that the two fields would be game-only fields. This decision was based upon the fact that these fields would not be irrigated, and could be subject to damage if constantly used for practice as well as games. The fields are used in the fall and spring for soccer games and for lacrosse games in the spring.

The fields have soccer goals permanently fixed in the ground, which makes it difficult for the field to be adapted for multipurpose use, such as for lacrosse, and potentially for other sports, such as field hockey. Once the fields are irrigated (and to the extent that the permanent goals are removed and replaced by movable goals), heavier utilization, and the use of the fields for multiple sports—soccer, lacrosse and field hockey—will be facilitated.



When the Township created the two fields on the West property, it decided that the two fields would be game-only fields.



4. School Fields

LOCATION: Adjacent to Cranbury School
(see Figure 7)

BLOCK: 23

LOT(S): 70.02

ACREAGE: 9.0

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Neither. Board of Education property.

PERMANENT/MOVABLE GOALS:
Permanent goals

FACILITIES:

- 1 multipurpose field used for baseball/softball and for soccer and lacrosse
- 1 large-sided soccer and lacrosse field
- 3 tennis courts
- 2 basketball courts
- Long jump
- Shot put
- 2 playgrounds
- 2 gymnasiums (one of which can be subdivided into 2 spaces)

IRRIGATION & MAINTENANCE:

The School fields are not irrigated. The tennis courts were resurfaced in 2004.

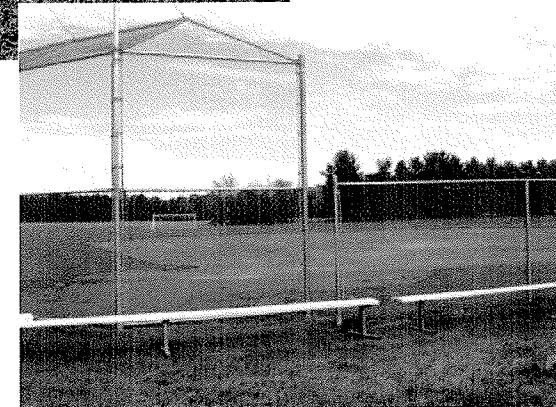
FUNCTION:

The school fields consist of two large-sided fields, one used for multiple purposes—for baseball/softball primarily, but also for soccer and for lacrosse. The second field is used for soccer and lacrosse only. The fields are used for practices by the school teams during the week and club teams on the weekends. The fields are presently in fair to good condition. Because of their heavy usage, they are limited to practice only, allowing the fields on the adjacent West property to be

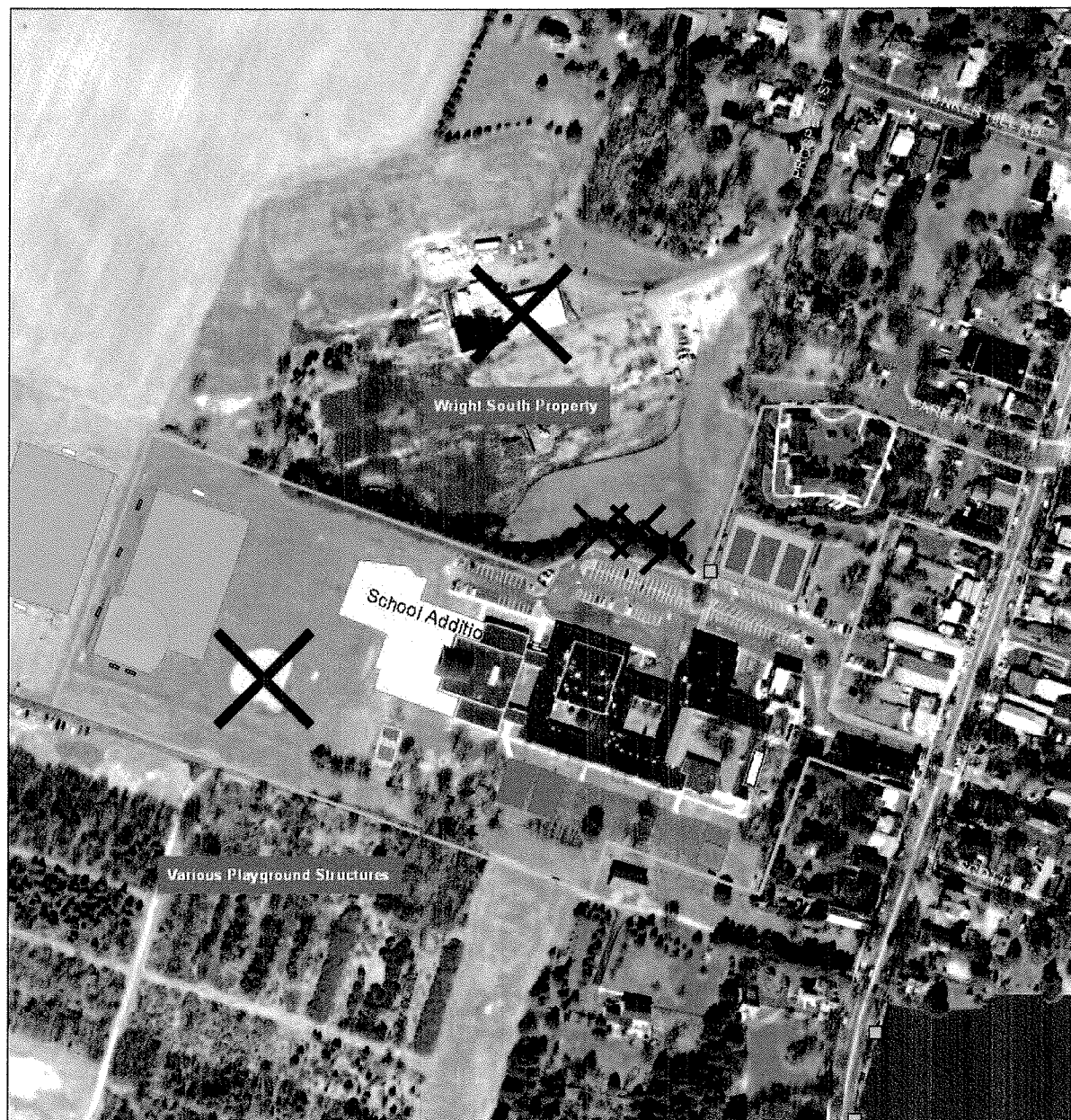


reserved for games. There are also three tennis courts used both by the School as well as by local residents. Adjacent to the fields are a long-jump pit and shot put circle, which are used by the school track team for practice. The School also has two basketball courts, two playgrounds, and two indoor gymnasiums.

There is room for another multipurpose field between the School and the baseball field. However, in the long term, this space is being reserved for the expansion of the school building, to the extent it is necessary (see Figure 2).



The fields are used for practices by the school teams during the week and club teams on the weekends.

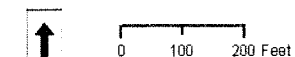
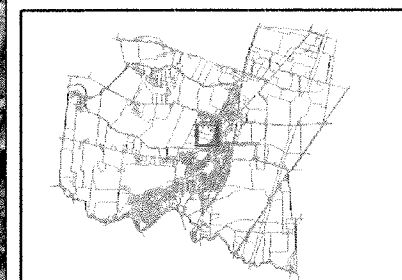


CRANBURY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Figure 7
School Fields

Legend

- Structure for ages 5-12
- Baseball field
- Basketball court
- Bench
- Bike racks
- Shed
- Large-sized soccer/lacrosse field
- Soccer goal
- Swings
- Tennis court
- Trash can
- Park Boundaries
- No longer exists



Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. July 2006

1. Heritage Park

LOCATION:

Located south of the Village, with frontage on South Main Street, Stockton Street and Bergen Drive. Main entrance with parking on South Main Street near Old Trenton Road. Pedestrian entrances on Stockton Street and Bergen Drive (see Figure 8).

BLOCK: 18
LOT(S): 44.01
ACREAGE: 13.5

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded

FACILITIES:

- 1 bike/skateboard/walking path
- 11 benches around east end of path
- 5 single green trash receptacles
- Play structure
- 1 picnic table
- Tercentennial Foundation with stone benches

FUNCTION:

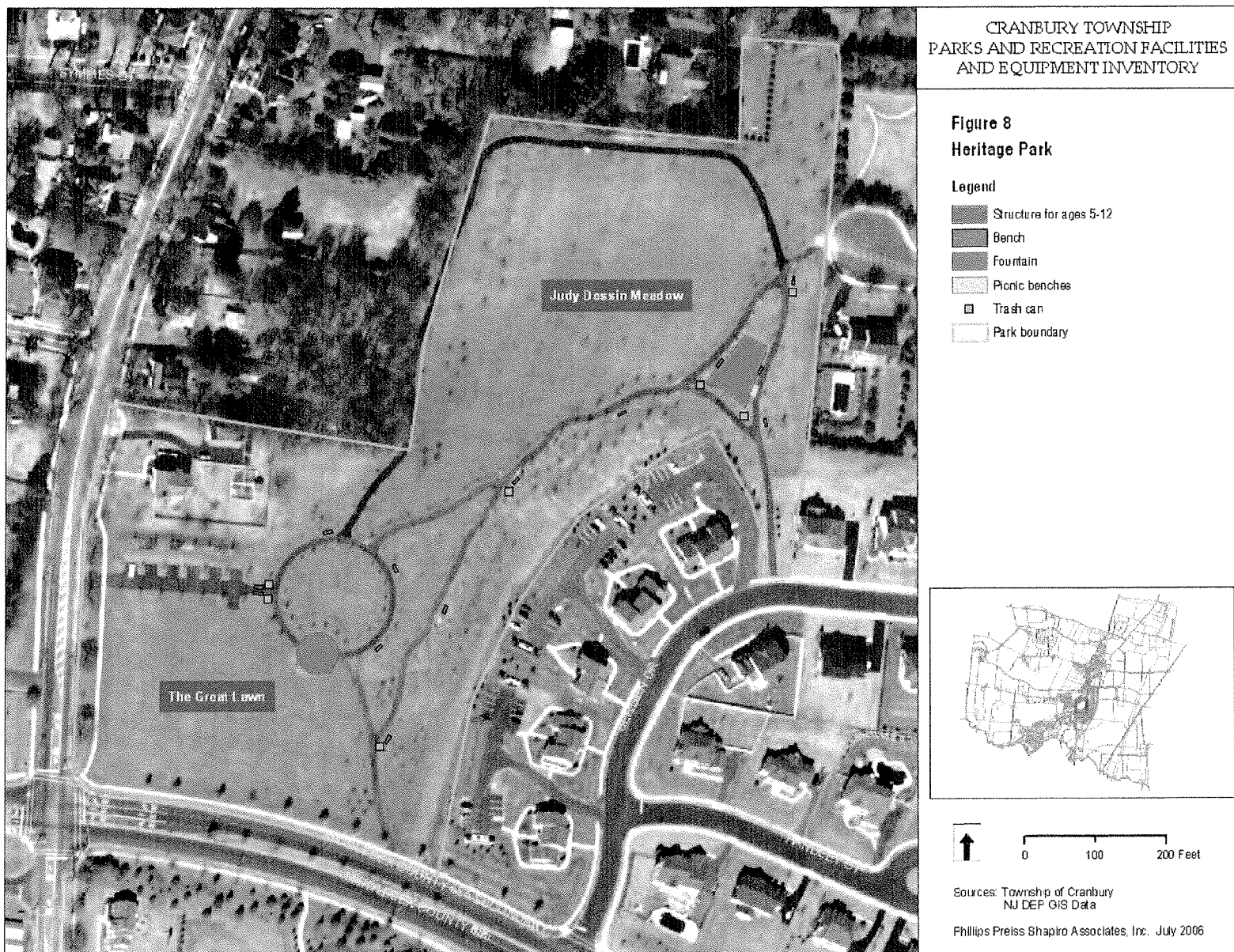
Heritage Park's primary purpose is to provide "alternative recreation," as defined in this plan (see Chapter II, Section A), which means unorganized, informal recreation on open fields and landscaped areas. Heritage Park's designation as an "alternative" recreational park, from conception, was intended to provide park space for Cranbury residents not participating in organized team and field sports, and to recognize the need and desirability of providing residents—especially adults and seniors—with other forms of community recreation. Some of the recreational activities that are provided for in Heritage Park include walking, strolling, jogging, biking, inline skating, skateboarding, Frisbee, kite flying, reading, dog walking, bocce, and yoga. In addition, community events are held on the Great Lawn, and ceremonial events are held at the fountain area. The park also has a tot lot which primarily serves small children in the immediate neighborhood.

At the time of its conception and planning, Heritage Park's "alternative recreation" focus was intended primarily to address an "age-based imbalance issue" (see Chapter II, Section B for a more complete discussion of this issue). Village Park and Millstone Park, which were the two parks in existence at the time in Cranbury, were both active recreational parks with team and field sport facilities in place. The age group primarily served by Village and Millstone Parks' facilities is school-age children. Heritage Park was intended to expand the scope of recreational options for adults and seniors, but included recreation facilities to serve small children, as well as informal, unorganized games for persons of all ages. Although Heritage Park is often seen as falling under the broad umbrella of active recreational parks within Cranbury, its "alternative" recreational status and designation is what allows Cranbury Township to offer a balanced park system with facilities serving residents of all ages.

On January 2, 2007, at a Township Committee meeting, Mayor David J. Stout proclaimed that the Great Meadow in Heritage Park would be forever known as "Judy Dossin Meadow" in honor of Judy Dossin, who lived in Cranbury for nearly 30 years and devoted a great part of her life to preserving open space and parks in Cranbury. Judy served as chair of both the Parks Commission and Shade Tree Commission for many years. She also served on the Recreation Commission and the Open Space and Recreation Subcommittee, and was instrumental in providing information and guidance in this Open Space and Recreation Plan Element. Judy was a strong believer in "alternative recreation," and felt it was important to retain Heritage Park for this primary purpose in the future.



Great Meadow in Heritage Park will be forever known as "Judy Dossin Meadow" in honor of Judy Dossin, who lived in Cranbury for nearly 30 years and devoted a great part of her life to preserving open space and parks in Cranbury.



1. Barclay Stream Corridor

LOCATION: Cranbury Brook (see Figure 9)
BLOCK: 23
LOT(S): 12.02
ACREAGE: 7.72
FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded
FACILITIES: Walking trails

FUNCTION:

The Barclay Stream Corridor runs along the north side of the Cranbury Brook to the west of the Cranbury Brook Preserve. It is located at the southern boundary of the former Barclay Farm property. The property is heavily wooded and undeveloped, and its primary purpose is stream corridor preservation.



2. Barn Park

LOCATION: Cranbury Neck Road
and South Main Street
(see Figure 10)

BLOCK: 21

LOT(S): 4.11

ACREAGE: 0.978

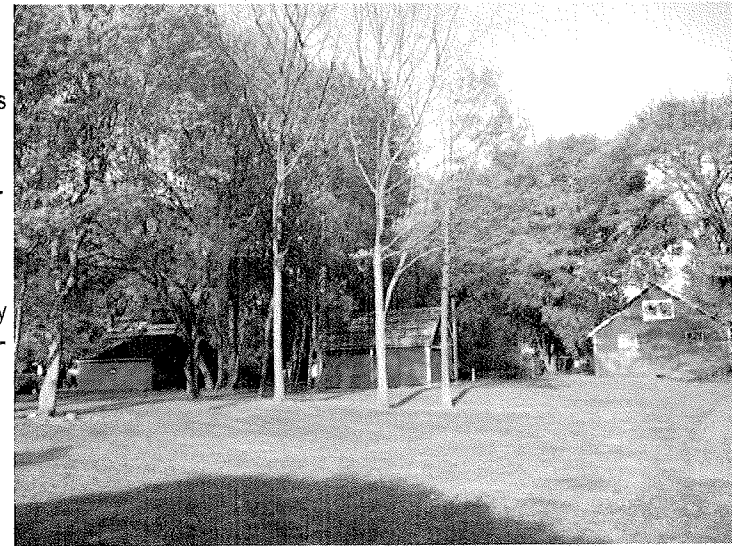
FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded

FACILITIES: Historic barns, in varying
states of disrepair

FUNCTION:

The Barn Park was originally part of the larger Updike property. It was deeded to the Township during the approval and development of the Sharbell cluster single-family subdivision adjacent to it, and with which it is linked by a pathway sys-

tem. Three barns remain from the former Updike farm: the wagonhouse; the corncrib; and the potato barn. The Township is currently investigating ways in which the barns can be preserved and rehabilitated, and reused for public/private use. In addition, the Township hopes to move, as well as to reconstruct an historic haybarn on the property as well. A paved pathway provides access to the park from Cranbury Neck Road, and from the Sharbell subdivision.



3. Updike Property

LOCATION: Old Trenton Road
and Cranbury Neck Road
(See Figure 10)

BLOCK: 21

LOT(S): 4

ACREAGE: 32.64

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded

FACILITIES: Undeveloped open space,
presently in agricultural use

FUNCTION:

Sharbell Development Corporation (Sharbell) was the contract purchaser and developer of the original, larger Updike tract, consisting of the entirety of Block 4, Lot 21, which totaled ± 51 acres. Sharbell developed a 20-lot resident cluster/subdivision by using lot averaging, resulting in 16 single-family detached dwellings and four open space lots on approximately 20 acres. Outside of this cluster of single-family homes, Sharbell dedicated 2 parcels to the Township:

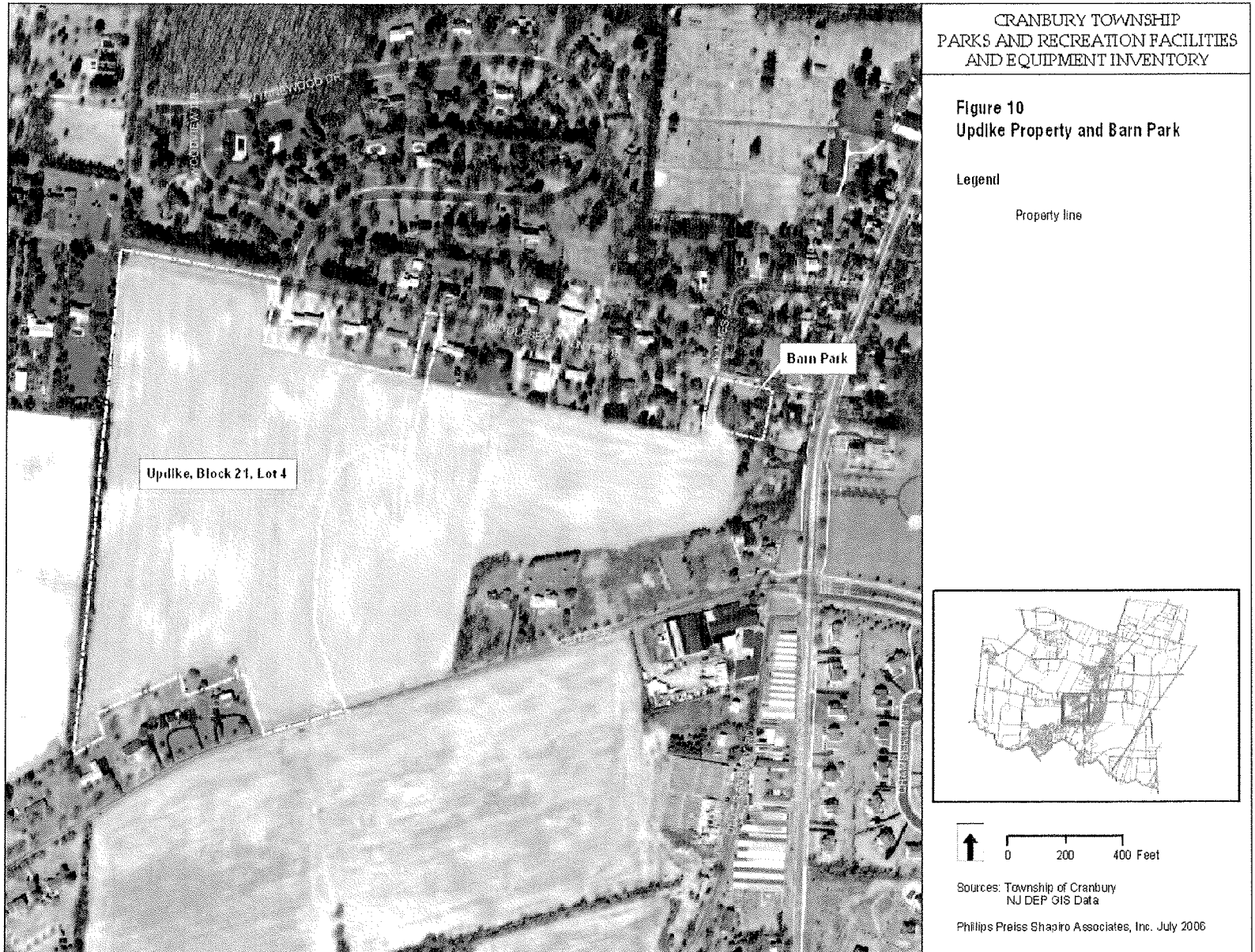
a one-acre parcel on the corner of Cranbury Neck Road and South Main Street, which became Barn Park (see above); and a 32.66-acre portion west of the subdivision, located between Cranbury Neck Road and Old Trenton Road which is now referred to as the "Updike property." The property is level and cleared of vegetation. It contains no wetland areas or areas of other environmental constraints, and is presently farmed.

According to the Developer's Agreement²², Sharbell acknowledged and agreed that active recreational facilities could be constructed on the ± 32.66 -acre dedicated parcel provided that the Township: (a) install a 200-foot-wide dense landscape buffer between any such facilities or parking lots serving such facilities and the proper-



ty lines of any of the 16 lots within the single-family development; (b) does not install or permit the installation of lights; (c) prohibits any and all night-time recreational activities; and (d) prohibits the use of Liedike Drive as a means of providing access to the recreational facilities.

22. Developer's Agreement between Township of Cranbury and Sharbell Development Corporation. January 24, 2003. Page 6.



4. Brainerd Dam

LOCATION: North Main Street
(see Figure 11)

BLOCK: 33

LOT(S): 68

ACREAGE:

FUNDED/UNFUNDED:

FACILITIES: 4 benches
2 trash receptacles
1 water fountain

FUNCTION:

This open space area is located along the east side of Main Street, where it crosses Brainerd Lake. There are benches for people to sit on and enjoy scenic vistas of the lake. Brainerd Dam is directly across Main Street from Memorial Park.



5. Memorial Park

LOCATION: South Main Street next
to the Cranbury Firehouse
and Cranbury Brook
(Figure 11)

BLOCK: 23

LOT(S): 72

ACREAGE: 0.50

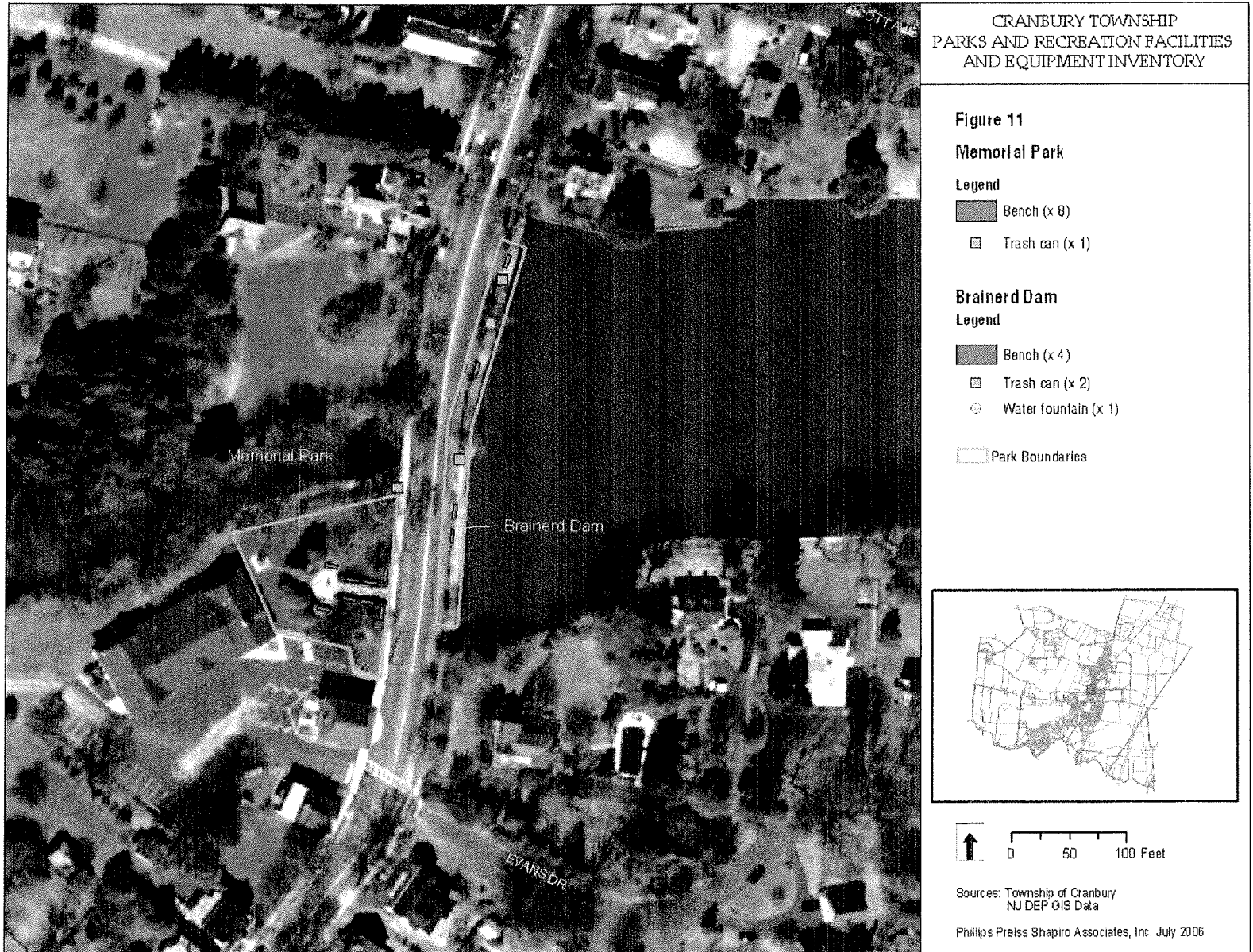
FUNDED/UNFUNDED:

FACILITIES: 1 Memorial statue to
Cranbury's veterans
6 benches
1 rescue box

FUNCTION:

Memorial Park is a small, landscaped park located adjacent to the Cranbury Firehouse on Main Street and across the street from Brainerd Dam and Brainerd Lake. A monument and flagpole (the Cranbury Memorial Veterans' Monument), honoring the servicemen and women from World War II through Vietnam, is located in the park's center. Benches, seating areas and tended flowerbeds are arranged around the monument. Historical markers on the site of the former Old Grist Mill are also located in the park.





6. Cranbury Brook Preserve (3 Sections)

Section 1

LOCATION: Cranbury Brook and
Wynnewood Drive
(see Figure 12)

BLOCK: 23

LOT(S): 95

ACREAGE: 15.40

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Funded

Section 2

LOCATION: Cranbury Brook
(see Figure 12)

BLOCK: 23

LOT(S): 70.02

ACREAGE: 20.3

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Funded

Section 3

LOCATION: West property (see Figure 12)

BLOCK: 23

LOT(S): 70.02

ACREAGE: 14.31

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded

FACILITIES: Partially developed
open space
Natural vegetation and wildlife
Trails along Cranbury Brook

FUNCTION:

Cranbury Brook Preserve is located on either side of Cranbury Brook, starting at the West property adjacent to Cranbury School, and extending westward. The preserve actually consists of three sections: two of the sections are located north of the Cranbury Brook (Block 23, Lot 70.02), and one section is located to the south of the Cranbury Brook (Block 23, Lot 95). The major purpose of this park is to preserve and protect the Cranbury Brook stream corridor.

All three parcels are heavily wooded and have been retained in their naturally-vegetated state. However, some walking trails have been cut through a portion of the stream corridor.

Block 23, Lot 70.02 consists of a 14-acre portion of the West property. This portion of the West property was set aside for passive recreation and the preservation of natural lands on the north side of the Cranbury Brook. The West Property conservation area was acquired by the Township using Green Acres funding. The parcel was acquired with the intention that it be the first piece of an extended Greenway system planned along the entirety of Cranbury Brook, to be used for passive recreation uses, and to protect water quality. In 2004, the Township Committee (Ordinance # 11-04-28) designated this lot for passive recreation and conservation uses. This area is joined by preserved Green Acres lands along the brook, as well as a restricted portion of the Barclay South property bordering the brook.

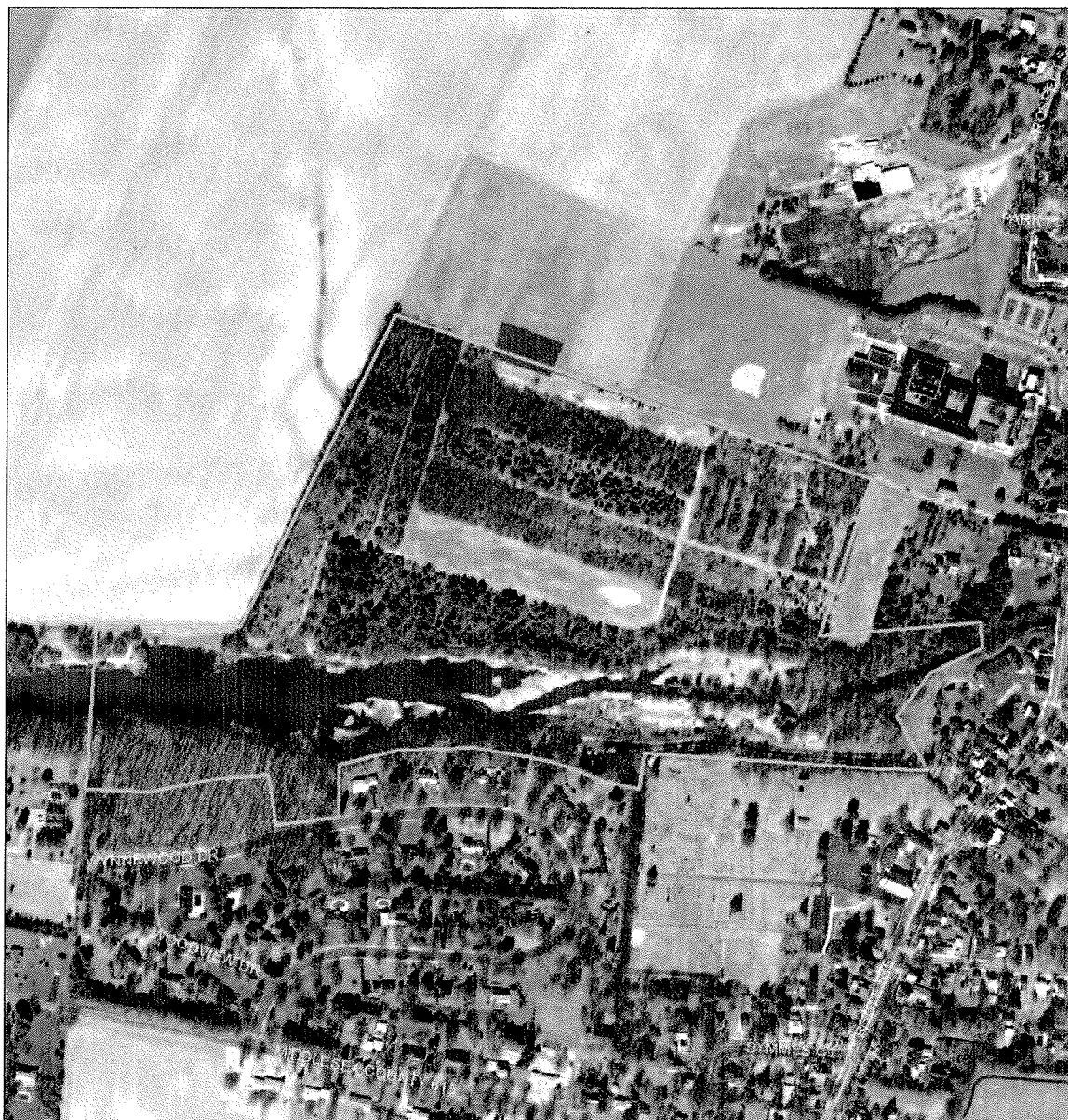
There are nature trails for walking and jogging on Block 23, Lot 70.02 created by the Boy Scouts. The preserve is used



The major purpose of this park is to preserve and protect the Cranbury Brook stream corridor.

for walking, jogging, bird watching, fishing and the enjoyment of nature. The preserve is closed to motorized vehicles. Access to the Cranbury Brook Preserve is provided by means of a gravel driveway which starts on North


Main Street across from Brainerd Lake and extends westward along the school property boundary and ends in a parking lot located just south of the two soccer fields on the West property. A pedestrian entrance to the preserve is to the left of the driveway, just before it enters the parking lot. Access to the south side of the Cranbury Brook is via Unami Woods Park located on Wynnewood Drive at the end of Woodview Drive.

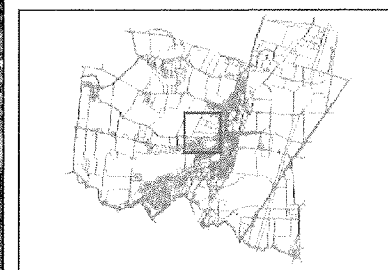


CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Figure 12
Cranbury Brook Preserve

Legend

 Park Boundary



0 200 400 Feet

Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. July 2006

7. E. Barclay Stream Corridor

LOCATION: Millstone River (Figure 13)
BLOCK: 22
LOT(S): 7
ACREAGE: 9.18
FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded
FACILITIES: Undeveloped open space

FUNCTION:

The E. Barclay Stream Corridor is located on the north side of Millstone River, on the southern portion of the former E. Barclay farm. It remains in its natural, undeveloped, wooded state, without walking trails or other types of passive recreational improvements. Its primary purpose is stream corridor protection.



8. Fischer Property

LOCATION: Old Cranbury Road
and South Main Street
(Figure 14)

BLOCK: 19

LOT(S): 11 and 12

ACREAGE: 53.334

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Funded

FACILITIES: Undeveloped open space

FUNCTION:

The Fischer Property is located along the north side of the Millstone River. The southerly end, which is adjacent to the Millstone River, is part of the Millstone River Greenway. Aside from its frontage on the Millstone River, the Fischer property extends some distance northwards and has approximately 1,500 feet of frontage on Old Cranbury Road to the west, and 1,000 feet of frontage on South Main Street to the east. The property is considered to be a gateway property to historic



Cranbury Village, since it is one of the first properties seen when entering the village along Main Street from the south. The County contributed to the Township's acquisition of the parcel in 2004. The remainder of the funding used to acquire the parcel was derived from the open space preservation tax. The Fischer property's Conservation Restriction

Agreement states that the parcel should be used "exclusively for Open Space and Recreation purposes." The property is not served by Township water or sewer services.

9. Hagerty Property

LOCATION: Old Cranbury Road
(Figure 14)

BLOCK: 20

LOT(S): 14

ACREAGE: 21.6

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded

FACILITIES: Undeveloped open space

FUNCTION:

This tract of land on the west side of Old Cranbury Road was set aside as open space as part of a settlement of a lawsuit with the developers of the larger Hagerty property for an age-restricted single-family clustered development. The developer, K. Hovnanian Co., deeded the land to the Township in 2005 when the developer built "Four Seasons at Cranbury." The parcel is fairly long and narrow, bordering the Millstone

River to the south and Old Cranbury Road to the east. It is also located across the road from the Fischer property. The property contains mostly open fields, but also has wooded areas, primarily along its borders.

The land was dedicated to the Township for "any and all lawful public purposes including but not limited to open space preservation."²¹



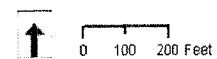
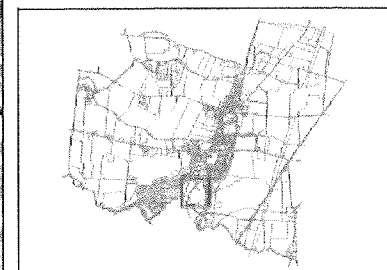
21. Deed of Dedication. 805603P-050. August

CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Figure 14
Hagerty and Fischer

Legend

Property line



Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

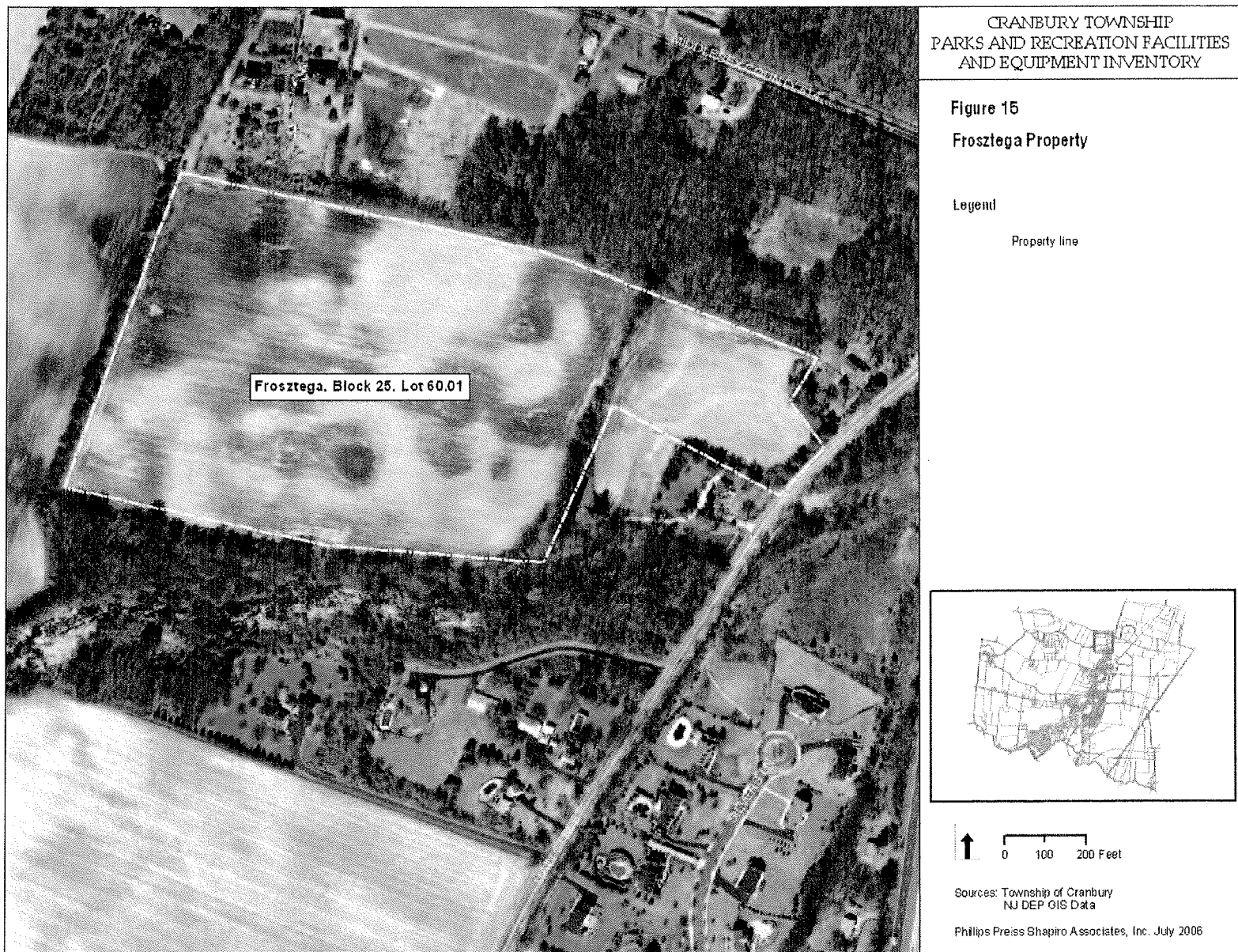
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. July 2006

10. Froszttega Property

LOCATION: North Main Street (Figure 15)
BLOCK: 25
LOT(S): 60.01
ACREAGE: 31.245
FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Funded
FACILITIES: Undeveloped open space
in agricultural use

FUNCTION:

The Froszttega Property is jointly owned by the Township, the State of New Jersey's Green Acres Program and the Delaware and Raritan Greenway, Inc. It is located on the Cedar Brook, which is a tributary of the Millstone River. While the property does front on Main Street, that portion of the roadway is elevated above the property, such that no direct access can be provided. While some sort of "bridge" could be provided, this would prove to be an expensive way to provide access for the public. Its primary purpose is therefore to remain in agricultural use, free from the pressures of development. On January 12, 2007 the Township held an auction to lease the land for one year to a qualified bidder. The use of the parcel under the lease is restricted to the planting and harvesting of field and row crops only.



11. Millstone River Corridor / White Property

LOCATION: Millstone River and
John White Road (Figure 16)
BLOCK: 22.01
LOT(S): 2
ACREAGE: 8.80
FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded
FACILITIES: Undeveloped open space

FUNCTION:

In December 2004, the Cranbury Township Committee (Ordinance # 12-04-31) authorized the acquisition of an access conservation easement or other permanent right of public access to, and the use of the property, located on John White Road in Cranbury known as Block 22.01, Lot 2 ("the White Property"). The purpose was to provide for passive recreation and conservation. Additionally, an easement on permanently protected farmland owned by the Delaware & Raritan Greenway, Inc. ("D&R Greenway"), known as Block 22, Lot 11 (the "Kiesler" farm), is located adjacent to the White property. The Township helped the D&R Greenway in its acquisition of this easement in exchange for a permanent right of public access.


The parcel is part of the larger conservation corridor that is being assembled by the D&R Greenway to provide public access to the Millstone River in Cranbury, Plainsboro, East Windsor and West Windsor Townships. In fact, the path along the Cranbury Brook extends for a considerable distance into Plainsboro. The Greenway is intended to protect the wetland areas and water quality of the Millstone River. The White parcel affords access to the Millstone River and contains a wetland, a floodplain, and is forested with black willow and a variety of other wetland and floodplain shrubs and trees.

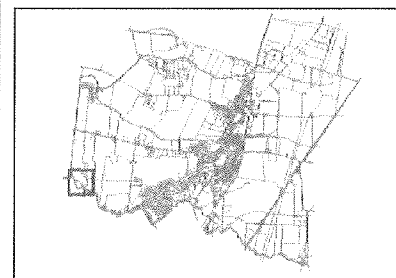



CRANBURY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Figure 16
Millstone River Corridor

Legend

 Park Boundary



 0 100 200 Feet

Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. July 2006

12. Shadow Oaks Stream Corridor

LOCATION: Millstone River
(see Figure 17)
BLOCK: 20.06
LOT(S): 41.02
ACREAGE: 46.628
FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Unfunded
FACILITIES: Undeveloped open space

FUNCTION:



This parcel was dedicated to the Township by the developers of the Shadow Oaks development in 1986. The parcel is located along the Millstone River and joins the Hagerty property with Old Trenton Road across from the entrance to Millstone Park.

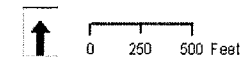
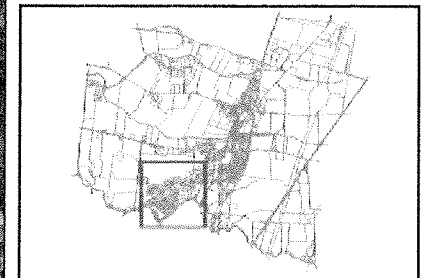
Access to the property could be provided via a curb-cut off Washington Road in the Shadow Oaks development.

CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Figure 17
Shadow Oaks Stream Corridor

Legend

-  Park Boundary
-  Pedestrian path



Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. July 2006



13. Unami Woods

LOCATION: Wynnewood Drive
(see Figure 18)

BLOCK: 23

LOT(S): 135

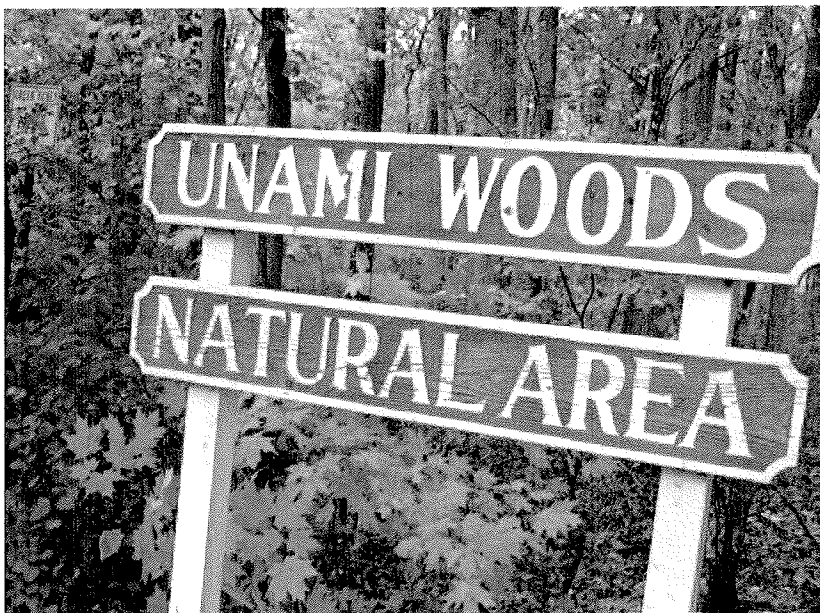
ACREAGE: 2.75

FUNDED/UNFUNDED: Funded

FACILITIES: Partially developed
open space
Trails

FUNCTION:

Unami Woods is located adjacent to the Cranbury Brook Preserve and helps protect the stream corridor. The property is a wooded, natural preserve and provides a habitat to a large variety of birds, small animals and deer. Some walking trails exist in the woods, but this park has intentionally been left in its rugged and untended natural state. Pedestrian access to Unami Woods is provided via Wynnewood Drive at the end of Woodview Drive.




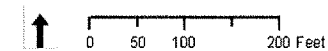
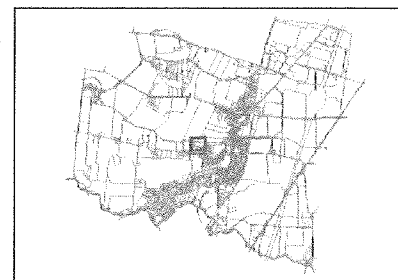


CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Figure 18
Unami Woods

Legend

 Park Boundary



Sources: Township of Cranbury
NJ DEP GIS Data

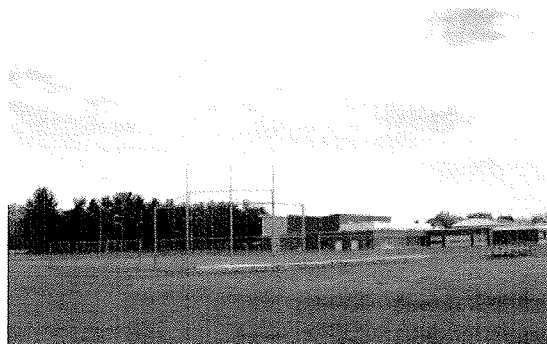
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc. July 2006

Cranbury's indoor recreational facilities are comprised of a number of spaces which are utilized for multiple purposes and activities by various organizations from organized sports teams to exercise classes for seniors. The facilities include the two gymnasiums at Cranbury School, the Cranbury Senior Community Center in Town Hall and space within the First Presbyterian Church of Cranbury, the United Methodist Church of Cranbury and the American Repertory Ballet's Cranbury Studio.

1. School Gymnasium

LOCATION: Within Cranbury School
 BLOCK: 23
 LOT(S): 70.02
 FACILITIES: 2 gymnasiums
 (one of which can be separated into two sections)

FUNCTION:
 The Cranbury School has two gymnasiums. The older school gym is used as the school auditorium for plays, concerts, etc. The newer gym, finished in 2003, can be separated into two sections designated as gymnasium A and B. Both gyms are used by School affiliated teams and groups, as well as Township organizations. Cranbury Recreation uses the gyms for youth and adult basketball, volleyball, and aerobics classes. The Cranbury-Plainsboro Little League uses both gyms for evaluations and clinics for softball and baseball. The Cranbury Recreation summer camp uses the gym in the summer months. There are also groups from outside Cranbury that are entitled to use these facilities.



2. Cranbury Senior Community Center

LOCATION: Town Hall, 23A Main Street
 BLOCK: 21
 LOT(S): 4
 FACILITIES: A senior community center
 FUNCTION:

In Fall 2006, the Township designated the "recital room" in Town Hall for use as a Senior Community Center.²³ This room will be used for educational sessions, counseling, social events, arts and crafts, games, clubs, movie series, meetings, and as a drop-in center for seniors. \$20,000 of a Middlesex County grant has been earmarked for furnishing the room. The room will have a Grand Opening as soon as the grant money becomes available and the room is furnished.

3. Presbyterian Church of Cranbury

LOCATION: 22 South Main Street
 (across the road from Town Hall)
 BLOCK:
 LOT(S):
 FACILITIES: An indoor multipurpose room
 FUNCTION:

The Senior Fellowship at the First Presbyterian Church of Cranbury is open to all seniors in the community regardless of religious affiliation or belief. The Senior Fellowship offers Monday and Thursday exercise classes, theater outings, picnics, garden tours, foliage trips and other events.

E. Indoor Recreational Facilities

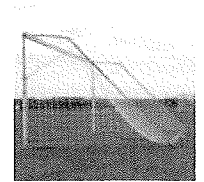
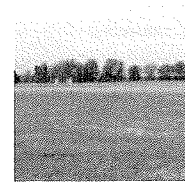
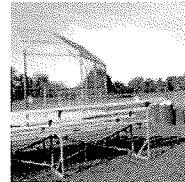
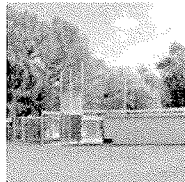
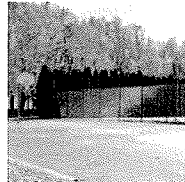
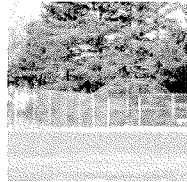
4. Additional Spaces

LOCATION: American Repertory Ballet's
 Cranbury studio,
 29 North Main Street
 United Methodist Church:
 21 North Main Street

BLOCK:
 LOT(S):
 FACILITIES: Indoor dance space
 FUNCTION:
 Tai-chi (at the Methodist church) classes will soon be added to the Senior recreation offerings. A dance sampler class has been scheduled at the American Repertory Ballet's Cranbury studio (29 North Main Street). This may evolve into multiple types of dance classes being offered based on the response of seniors to the sampler class. The Recreation Commission will also be sponsoring two trips for seniors in 2007. The Commission will pay for the bus costs, and the seniors will pay for the tickets.

23. Note that currently, various Township boards utilize the space for meetings at night and during weekdays.

V. Utilization



In order to assess Cranbury's current and future need for active recreational facilities, the Subcommittee undertook a detailed examination of the utilization of the Township's existing facilities. The results of this analysis are found in this chapter.

Together with facility usage on a seasonal, weekday and weekend basis, the Subcommittee collected information on who is using Cranbury's facilities, that is, Cranbury residents versus non-residents, as well as what leagues/facilities Cranbury residents use that are outside of Cranbury. The Subcommittee examined and evaluated the scheduling and priority system by which the Recreation Commission proposes to schedule the Township's facilities. All of this information was used to evaluate the extent to which Cranbury's recreation facilities are being under- or over-utilized, and to help inform the Subcommittee's recommendations for improving, expanding or adding to Cranbury's inventory of active recreation facilities.²⁴

A. Inter-Municipal Use



Feedback from residents and those involved in recreational programs in Cranbury indicated that there was a problem, or at least a perception of a problem, that Cranbury's active recreational facilities were often being utilized by teams or organizations that were comprised of high percentages—and in some cases almost exclusively—of non-Cranbury residents, and that often, such teams received priority in utilizing Cranbury's facilities over Cranbury residents. At the same time, this feedback was counterbalanced by evidence that substantial numbers of Cranbury residents were participating in team sports that played either exclusively or the majority of their games at facilities outside of Cranbury. The Subcommittee therefore began the utilization investigation by focusing on determining exactly who was using the Township's recreational facilities, and whether this "inter-municipal" use was equitable and balanced.

Most sports teams in which Cranbury residents participate and which play in Cranbury have members who are non-Cranbury residents. However, the proportion of resident to non-resident players fluctuates from team to team, and from year to year, even within the same league (see Table 5). For example, the Cranbury Soccer Club has 54 Cranbury residents and 91 non-residents, translating into a resident participation rate of only 37 percent. However, in 2006 the Under 10 year-olds Boys Force Club team had over 70 percent Cranbury resident participation; whereas the Under 12 year-olds Girls

24. Utilization of Cranbury's passive recreational facilities and alternative recreational facilities was determined to be light; no need was seen by the Subcommittee to examine such utilization in detail.

Table 5
CRANBURY RESIDENT/NON-RESIDENT RECREATIONAL TEAM PARTICIPATION

<i>Cranbury Soccer Club</i> <u>Team</u>	<u>Number of Teams</u>	<u>Cranbury Residents</u>	<u>Non-Cranbury Residents</u>	<u>Number of Home Games</u>	<u>Number of Away Games</u>
U9G Cougars		0	12	5	5
U9G Eagles		7	7	5	5
U10B Force		12	0	5	5
U12G Stingrays		1	13	5	5
U12B Crush		8	7	5	5
U13G Crushers		7	10	5	5
U13G Revolution		8	7	5	5
U14G Liberty		10	7	5	5
U15G Falcons		0	0	5	5
U15B Blaze		3	13	5	5
U18B United		0	15	5	5
<i>Life Skills Through Soccer</i>					
U10B Milan	1	8	3	5	5
<i>Lacrosse</i>					
Lightning Girls 7/8	2	15	35	1	23
Lightning Girls 5/6	1	2	26		
Lightning Girls 3/4	3	25	n.a.	0	33
Lightning Boys 8	1	7	n.a.	0	33
Lightning Boys 7	1	4	n.a.	0	33
Lightning Boys 6	1	9	n.a.	0	33
Lightning Boys 5	1	2	n.a.	0	33
Lightning Boys 4	1	6	n.a.	0	33
Lightning Boys 3	1	n.a.	n.a.	0	33
<i>Cranbury Soccer Association</i>					
Over 30	1	2	18	5	5
Over 40	1	6	23	7	7
Semi-pro	1	0	21	7	7
<i>Cranbury Plainsboro Little League—Softball</i>					
Rookie	3	13		0	
Minor	3	15		0	
Major	2	14		0	
<i>Cranbury Plainsboro Little League—Baseball</i>					
T-Ball	5	10	30	15	15
Farm	11	45	76	20	46
Minor	10	40	80	20	51
Major American	6	28	44	21	39
Major National	6	24	48	13	47
Recreation - Tball	4	40	1	all	0
<i>Pop Warner Football/Cheerleading</i>					
Flag Football	1	6	24	n.a.	n.a.
Mitey Mites	1	5	23	n.a.	n.a.
Jr. Pee Wee	1	10	25	n.a.	n.a.
Pee Wee	1	3	23	n.a.	n.a.
Midget	1	3	30	n.a.	n.a.
Cheerleading	5	6	92	n.a.	n.a.



Stingrays had less than one percent Cranbury resident participation. Nevertheless, both teams played half of their games in Cranbury and half of their games elsewhere.

The Cranbury-Plainsboro Little League (CPLL) has T-ball, Farm, Minor, Major American and National baseball teams which in 2006 played only 30 percent of their games in Cranbury, even though Cranbury residents made up 40 percent of the teams. Life Skills Through Soccer (LSTS) had over 70 percent resident participation, and played only half of their ten games in 2006 in Cranbury, whereas the Cranbury Soccer Association (CSA) had just over 11 percent resident participation, and played half of their 38 games in 2006 in Cranbury. On the basis of this evidence, it appears that within individual programs there may be a bias towards non-resident usage, but this bias is counterbalanced in the other direction in terms of Cranbury residents playing a majority of their games outside of Cranbury.

Other Cranbury leagues have heavy Cranbury resident involvement, but do not play their games in town. Seventy Cranbury children participated in the Lightning Lacrosse League in 2006. Although some of the teams from the girls' league practiced on the school fields and West Property, all of its ± 28 games were played in West Windsor, and none in Cranbury. The CPLL Rookie, Minor and Major softball teams had 42 Cranbury resident participants and played no games in Cranbury.

There are also leagues in which Cranbury residents participate that are administered by out-of-town organizations and in which all of the practices and games occur out-of-town. For example, the Pop Warner Football and Cheerleading provided data to Cranbury which showed the involvement of 33 Cranbury youngsters. However, given the lack of football facilities in town, all of the practices and home football games (in which both the football players and cheerleaders participated) were played in West Windsor.

Forty-eight Cranbury residents participate in the East Windsor Police Athletic League travel and recreational soccer league. Cranbury residents also participate in the Hightstown East-Windsor Youth Baseball League (HEWYBL) which offers baseball, basketball and flag football to area residents (including Cranbury), as well as the Princeton-Cranbury Babe Ruth league which offers baseball for 13 to 18 year olds.

There are recreational facilities which are “officially” restricted to use by Cranbury residents. For example, the tennis courts at Cranbury School are used only by the Cranbury School team, and not by any out-of-town teams. There are also teams which must use out-of-town facilities because no such facilities exist in Cranbury itself. For example, the Cranbury School track team, which boasts ±107 resident members, practices by using the lawn area around the outside of the West soccer fields, and competes at other schools. (All meets are away meets.)

As indicated above, a concern voiced by residents at the public meetings and to individual Subcommittee members was that the Town’s facilities were being used predominantly by non-residents. Those in opposition to non-resident use suggested that a fee should be levied on out-of-town users, or more radically, that out-of-towners should be restricted from using certain facilities altogether.

The information gathered by the Subcommittee from the Recreation Commission and other sources indicates that usage of Cranbury facilities by nonresidents is not overwhelming. An examination of the evidence indicates a much more balanced view of inter-municipal use. Cranbury residents use facilities in neighboring towns, participating in leagues in East Windsor, West Windsor, Plainsboro, Princeton and Hightstown, amongst others. Furthermore, some local leagues practice and play games exclusively at facilities outside of Town. This may be something many residents of Cranbury are not aware of. In addition, as indicated in Chapter II, Section C of this Plan, according to Green Acres regulations, neither “funded” and “unfunded” parkland can be restricted to usage by Cranbury residents only, although a priority ranking system and/or fee system which favors local residents can be adopted. (Such a system has been drafted and is about to be implemented in Cranbury, as will be described in Section B of this Chapter.)

In an effort to acknowledge the quid pro quo nature of the local sports leagues, the Subcommittee does not support the levying of any higher fees on non-Cranbury residents, or preventing non-residents from using the town’s facilities. However, it does support the institution of a priority system that favors Cranbury-sponsored recreation programs, the Cranbury School and other Cranbury-affiliated teams.

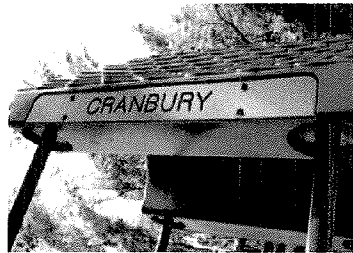


Finally, it should be recognized that there are also substantial advantages to allowing non-residents to play in Cranbury leagues. Cranbury is presently a town of under 4,000 people, and it is only able to offer certain active recreational opportunities in the form of organized leagues because the participation of non-residents fills out enough teams to allow for league play. Without these non-residents, there would be insufficient participation to make the leagues viable. This is particularly true for the traveling teams, which rely on the participation of non-Cranbury residents to survive. In conclusion, insofar as inter-municipal use is concerned, non-Cranbury residents should be included and welcomed by Cranbury residents in all active recreation programs, until evidence to indicate a severe imbalance to the detriment of Cranbury can be found.

B. Scheduling Priority System

1. Township Priority List

One way in which Cranbury can better regulate the use of the Township's active recreational facilities, as well as to derive more efficient utilization of these facilities, is by using the Field Use Priority List, which the Recreation Commission recently drafted. At the present there is no comprehensive policy related to which group has priority in "booking" the use of certain facilities. A number of residents have complained that sometimes groups made up mostly of non-residents are given priority ahead of taxpaying citizens. The drafting and implementation of the Township-endorsed Field Use Priority List will go a long way towards resolving this problem.



The priority list would most likely apply to the small-sided soccer fields at Millstone Park; the large-sided soccer field/lacrosse fields at the West property; the baseball/softball fields at Village Park and Millstone Park; the tennis courts at Village Park; and any open areas at Township Parks such as picnic areas or the gazebo at Village Park.

The Subcommittee also endorses a policy that Township residents be permitted to utilize all fields and facilities for pickup games or other informal recreational purposes during times when such fields are not reserved.

2. School Facilities Priority List

The Board of Education of the Township of Cranbury also has a priority listing when groups other than the school wish to utilize their facilities. Insofar as the use of recreational facilities is concerned, these include the playgrounds, tennis courts, basketball courts, gymnasium, designated areas of the macadam, and playing fields. The Board of Education is committed to making these facilities avail-

able to the community, provided such use does not interfere with the educational program of the schools, that the groups comply with safety rules of the Board of Education, and that they comply with acceptable standards of behavior.

The priority list for utilizing school facilities in Cranbury, in descending order, is as follows:

1. Uses and groups directly related to the schools and the operations of the schools;
2. Uses and organizations indirectly related to the school;
3. Departments or agencies of the municipal government;
4. Other governmental agencies;
5. Community organizations formed for charitable, civic, or educational purposes;
6. Non-Cranbury organizations formed for charitable, civic or educational purposes.

Not-for-profit organizations or private social functions are permitted to utilize school facilities. Groups seeking the use of the school's facilities must submit their request in writing, and certain procedures are followed so that permission for such use is granted.

Data used to determine the levels of utilization of Cranbury's active recreation facilities was provided in the form of Recreation Commission records, which show teams/organizations/individuals that have reserved a facility for use with the Commission.²⁵ Data from Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 (representing outdoor play over a full school year) was used.

While a very full picture emerges as to when and by whom the facilities are used, the utilization information provided does not indicate teams/organizations/individuals that have not officially reserved a facility. This analysis may therefore slightly undercount usage. It should be seen as a conservative estimate because it only details "official" use of the field and does not factor in any "pickup" games or other impromptu use. Data was gathered for the spring and fall only because they represent the seasons of peak usage.

The tables included in the analysis below of the four active recreational facilities analyzed—Village Park, Millstone Park, the West property and the School fields—provide a synopsis of their utilization. More detailed tables showing actual scheduling is provided in Appendix E.

C. Utilization of Active Recreation Facilities

25. Only those facilities which the Recreation Commission indicated had a high demand for use were included. For example, the basketball courts at Village Park and outside at the School were not included, since there is no problem scheduling either of these facilities.

1. Village Park Utilization

a. Utilization

The active recreational facilities evaluated at Village Park include the regulation Little League field, the T-ball/Farm ball field, the softball field and the tennis courts. Table 6 provides a summary of utilization of the facilities in Spring and Fall. More detailed scheduling is provided in Appendix D-1.

Table 6
VILLAGE PARK UTILIZATION

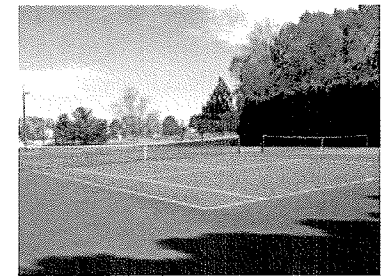
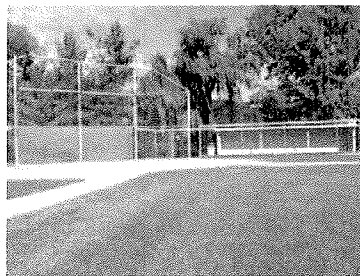
<u>FIELD</u>	<u>FALL</u>	<u>SPRING</u>
Little League #1	Weekdays: Light	Weekdays: Full
	Weekends: Light	Weekends: Light Sundays
T-ball/Farm Ball	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED	Weekdays: Light
	Weekends: NOT RESERVED	Weekends: Light
Softball	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED	Weekdays: Full
	Weekends: NOT RESERVED	Weekends: NOT RESERVED— Saturdays, Light Sundays
Tennis	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED	Weekdays: Full
	Weekends: NOT RESERVED	Weekends: NOT RESERVED

The Cranbury-Plainsboro Little League (CPLL) uses the regulation Little League field in the spring for their “Major National” teams for boys aged 10-11 years; “Major American” teams for boys aged 11-12 years; and their “Minors” teams for boys aged 8-9 years. CPLL uses the field on weekday evenings and on Saturdays in the spring. The Central Jersey Baseball League uses the field on Sundays in the spring and on Saturdays and Sundays in the fall, as well as a couple of days during the week.

The T-ball/Minor league field is used by the CPLL in the spring by co-ed “T-ball” players aged 5 to 6 years and co-ed “Farm” ball players aged 6 to 7 years. Minors also use the field which includes bleachers and two team benches. The field is not reserved in the fall.

The softball field at Village Park is used by the Cranbury School team in the spring during the week for practice and games. It is used by adult softball teams at night and by church teams on Sundays. The CPLL softball teams play all of their games in Plainsboro. This includes the softball “Rookie” team for girls aged 7-8 years; “Minors” team for girls aged 9-10 years; and “Majors” team for girls aged 11-12 years. The Recreation Commission keeps the field open on Saturdays and one night during the week in the spring to allow use of the field by Cranbury residents who may not be affiliated with any organized team to do so, as well as to allow those using the Pavilion for private parties, family reunions, etc. to do so without interruption by a softball game or to use the field for their own enjoyment. The field is not reserved in the fall.

The tennis courts are used by the school team on weekdays in the spring, but are otherwise free. The



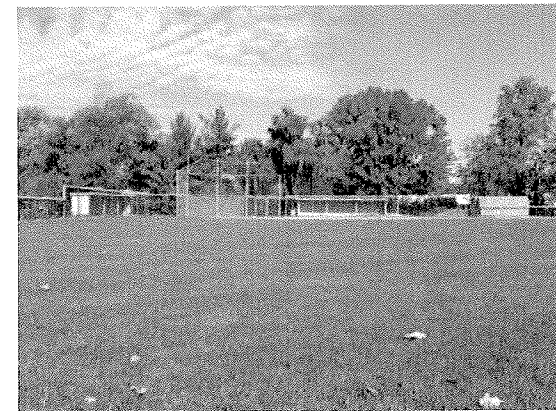
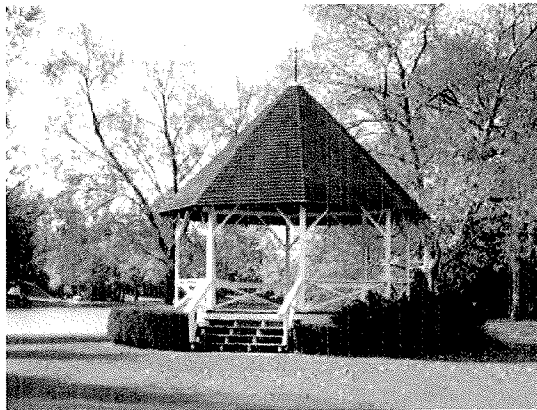
courts are used more regularly by residents, but without an “official” permit by the Recreation Commission.

b. Evaluation

Since the Little League, T-ball/Farm ball and softball fields are all underutilized in the fall, the Subcommittee considered redesigning/reusing Village Park to create a more multi-purpose field which could increase usage in both the spring and fall. The two areas where the Subcommittee thought that this could potentially occur would be on the current Little League field or the current softball field since the T-ball field is too small to be reconfigured for any other use.

First, the Subcommittee examined whether it was possible to make the larger softball field available as a large-sided soccer field. Upon closer examination, it was decided that the existing softball field would not be appropriate for soccer because in order to fit the field in, the gazebo would have to be moved or removed which the Subcommittee thought was unacceptable given the significance of the gazebo to the community.

Next, the Subcommittee investigated relocating the Little League field and replacing it with either a multipurpose field or another softball field, both of which could make use of a largely underutilized area beyond the Little League field’s outfield. This scenario would involve the relocation of the Little League field to either the current Village Park softball field or to Millstone Park, or a new as-yet undetermined new park space. After carefully considering these options, the Subcommittee decided relocating the Little League field was not tenable. First, the cost of moving or replacing Little League fixtures such as the permanent dugouts, fencing, scoreboard, batting cage, etc. for a minor gain in space did not seem like a worthwhile tradeoff. Second, the Subcommittee concluded that the Little League field belonged in the center of town, and not in a more remote location. Third, it was clear from discussions that the Little League field has been perceived of historically as “part of the community,” and moving it out of the Village would not be supported. Fourth, since its predominant use is by younger children, it would not be as accessible if it was moved to another location, such as Millstone Park. Fifth, transferring the field to the current Village Park softball field would involve possibly moving the gazebo and adding an outfield fence to the picturesque area adjacent to Brainerd Lake, thereby



disrupting the scenic vista. Finally, the area beyond the Little League field is poorly drained, so that relocating the softball field to this location would not create a good outfield condition, or alternatively, require substantial costs to remediate.

The Subcommittee also investigated whether a moveable fence could replace the existing Little League fence which might allow greater use of the outfield for other uses. As indicated above, the area beyond the Little League outfield is wet, and it would probably be costly to remediate this area for other active recreational uses. Moreover, the baseball season begins in March and extends through the summer and fall months. Although the field is not in constant use, the fence would have to be constantly put up and taken down. Finally, the field is a game field and overuse would most likely result in wear and tear that would be unacceptable for game play.

In conclusion, the Subcommittee recommended not making any changes to the location, type or nature of the active recreational fields in Village Park, with the possible exception of slightly reorienting the softball field to avoid foul balls hitting the play areas and pavilion (see Chapter VI, Section B for Recommendations). Although there is under-utilization of certain fields at certain times, for the reasons cited above, it does not make sense to change them.



2. Cranbury-Millstone Park

a. Utilization

The active recreational facilities evaluated at Cranbury-Millstone Park include a short-sided games-only soccer field; a T-ball/Minors field; two halves of a short-sided practice field located in the baseball field's outfield and known as "Outfield A" and "Outfield B"; and a practice area. Since the T-ball/Minors field and Outfield A and B are part of the same field, they cannot be used at the same time. There is a second practice area which is currently being rehabilitated and is not in use, but will be in the coming season (see Figure 4).

Table 7
CRANBURY-MILLSTONE PARK UTILIZATION

<u>FIELD</u>	<u>FALL</u>	<u>SPRING</u>
Soccer Field #1	Weekdays: FULL Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Saturday afternoon	Weekdays: Light Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Saturday afternoons
Practice Space	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED on Monday, Friday Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Saturday afternoons, Sunday morning	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED on Mondays and Wednesday. Weekends: NOT RESERVED
T-ball/Outfield A/Outfield B	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED Weekends: NOT RESERVED	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED on Monday and Friday afternoons Weekends: NOT RESERVED

The Cranbury Soccer Club uses the games-only field on weekday afternoons in the fall and all day Sunday and a part of Saturday morning for their teams of children 10 years old and younger. Cranbury Recreation uses the field on Saturday mornings in the fall, as well. In the spring the field is rarely used during the week, but is fairly well used on the weekends by Cranbury Soccer Club and Life Skills Through Soccer's boys under 10 years old team. The field is free on Saturday afternoons in the spring and fall.

Life Skills Through Soccer uses the available practice field during the afternoons and evenings Tuesday through Thursday in the fall and on Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons. The field is available at all other times. Cranbury Soccer Club and Cranbury Recreation Soccer Program use the field on most weekday afternoons in the spring. The field is available on the weekends.

The T-Ball/Minors baseball field was designed to be a regulation Little League Field. However, due to orientation of home plate facing directly northwest, the sun is in the batters' and/or fielders' eyes for much of the day making the field only usable early in the morning or in the evening. Consequently, the field is used by Cranbury Recreation T-Ball and CPLL T-Ball teams on weekday evenings in the spring and by CPLL Farm Ball on Saturday mornings. The field is not reserved in the fall.

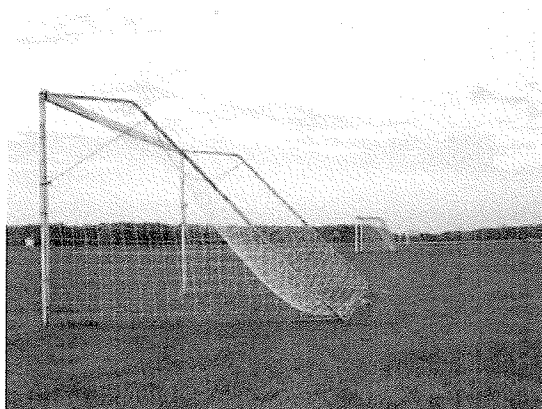
The Cranbury Soccer Club uses Outfield A and B to practice during weekday afternoons and evenings in the spring. The infield is not reserved in the fall. The outfield can be reserved.



b. Evaluation

The underutilization of the T-Ball/Minors baseball field prompted the Subcommittee to consider whether the Park could be redesigned to accommodate a T-ball field with the proper orientation, which would allow for heavier use. This also prompted the Subcommittee to consider making more efficient use of the park space in general, because there were large open areas around the existing fields that were not in use. The summary of the Subcommittee's recommendations in this regard are detailed in Chapter VI.

Table 8 WEST PROPERTY		
FIELD	FALL	SPRING
Soccer Field #1	Weekdays: FULL Weekends: FULL	Weekdays: Light Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Saturday mornings
Soccer Field #2	Weekdays: FULL Weekends: FULL	Weekdays: Light Weekends: FULL



26. The lacrosse schedule was fairly light and therefore not evident in Table 7. A more detailed schedule is provided in Appendix D-3, which shows use of the fields for lacrosse.

3. West Property Fields

a. Utilization

The active recreational facilities evaluated on the West property include two large-sided, game-only soccer fields, which are also occasionally used for lacrosse.²⁶ (See Table 8 and Appendix D-3.)

In the fall, the West property soccer fields are used on weekday afternoons for games by the Boys and Girls, Junior-Varsity and Varsity Cranbury School Soccer Teams. On the weekends, the field is fully scheduled for game by Cranbury Soccer Club, Life Skills through Soccer and Cranbury Soccer Association.

In the spring, the fields are not used on weekday afternoons, but experience light use in the evenings by Cranbury Soccer Club and Lightning Lacrosse. On weekends in the spring, Soccer Field #1 is not reserved on Saturday mornings, but is fully booked the rest of the weekend by Lightning Lacrosse, Life Skills Through Soccer, Cranbury Soccer Club and Cranbury Soccer Association. Soccer Field #2 is fully booked on the weekends by the same lacrosse and soccer leagues as Field #1.

b. Evaluation

The West property fields are in very good condition and are in high demand. As part of the construction of the regulation baseball field within the new Village Green park to be located on the Wright South parcel, the Township plans to add irrigation to the West properties, as well. The current West property fields are set slightly above grade to allow for good drainage.

The soccer goals on the field are fixed in the ground and are immovable. While lacrosse practice is accommodated on these fields as well, the permanent presence of the goals on the fields makes it impossible to host lacrosse games. (There is not enough space between the soccer goals to accommodate a full-size lacrosse field, including lacrosse goals.) Given the good condition and high demand for these fields, implementing moveable goals would make them more multipurpose and increase their utilization for different sports.

4. School Fields

a. Utilization

The active recreational facilities evaluated on the School property include 2 multipurpose fields: a baseball/softball field that, when not in use, accommodates a large-sided soccer/lacrosse field in its outfield; and a large-sided soccer/lacrosse field. Neither field is in good enough condition for games, and are instead used for practices only. (See Table 9 and Appendix D-4.)

The larger, multipurpose field is used in the fall by the school soccer team on weekday afternoons, and the Cranbury Soccer Club and Central Jersey baseball league on weekday evenings. The Cranbury Soccer Club uses the field on Saturdays and the Central Jersey baseball league uses the field on Sunday afternoons. In the spring the Cranbury School boys baseball team uses the field for practices and games on weekday afternoons. The Cranbury Soccer Club and Central Jersey baseball league use the field on weekday evenings. Cranbury Soccer Club and Girls Lightning Lacrosse use the field on Saturdays. The field is not reserved on Sundays in the spring.



The soccer and lacrosse field is used by the Cranbury School soccer team on weekdays in the fall. Aside from Saturday mornings when the field is used by the Cranbury Soccer Club, the field is not used on the weekends in the fall. In the spring, the field is not reserved on weekday afternoons. The Cranbury Soccer Club and Lightning Lacrosse uses the field on weekday evenings and on Saturdays. The field is not reserved on spring Sundays.

b. Evaluation

The school fields are not irrigated and are not in good enough condition for games. While there appears to be space to the east of the baseball/soccer/lacrosse field for at least one more soccer/lacrosse field, this space is reserved for the school's expansion, so that the construction of another athletic field here may not be prudent.

Similar to the West property fields, the soccer goals on the school fields are immovable, which make it

Table 9
SCHOOL

FIELD	FALL	SPRING
Baseball/Soccer/ Lacrosse field	Weekdays: FULL Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Sunday mornings	Weekdays: FULL Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Sundays
Soccer/ Lacrosse field	Weekdays: FULL Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Saturday afternoons and all day Sunday	Weekdays: NOT RESERVED in afternoons (booked in evenings) Weekends: NOT RESERVED on Sundays

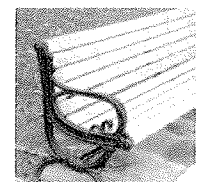
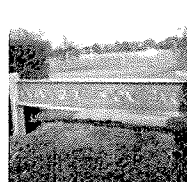




difficult for the fields to accommodate lacrosse, and also impact play when the field is used for baseball and softball. The utilization of moveable goals would allow the fields to be used in a more multipurpose fashion.

When the regulation baseball field in the new Village Green park is completed on the Wright South property, the Cranbury School boys baseball team will practice and play their games on the regulation baseball field, and the Cranbury School girls softball team will be able to practice and play games on the school field. Presently, field layout requirements and dimensions are different between softball and baseball. (For example, a girls' softball field is supposed to have an all-dirt infield, while the boys' baseball field's infield is supposed to be grassed.) This separation will allow the girls' softball field to be constructed according to the applicable standards for game play. (In other words, this field can be designed and used as a dedicated softball-only field.)

VI. Needs and Recommendations



A. Needs

1. Introduction

In determining the need for additional active recreational facilities in Cranbury in the future, the Subcommittee relied on a variety of sources of information: current and future anticipated demographic trends; an evaluation of current and anticipated levels of participation in organized sports; and the present under- or over-utilization of current recreational facilities, which is reflected in Chapter V. The Subcommittee also took into consideration the future addition of teams and sports, to the extent that they are known, who will vie for field space along with existing teams. In addition to raw data and numbers, the Subcommittee also consulted with representatives from the Recreation Commission and the Board of Education to clarify future demand, and also took the feedback of the community workshop on active recreation into account.

Insofar as passive recreation and alternative recreational space is concerned, none of the data or input from the public indicated an over-utilization of alternative recreation facilities or passive open space facilities. In fact, the opposite appears to be the problem with passive recreational space—underutilization. Improvements such as cutting walkways and trails through wooded areas, and placing signage at entrances and markers along the way to publicize and guide users, is what appears to be needed in Cranbury. In the case of alternative recreation, it also appears that there is sufficient space to meet the needs of Cranbury residents. Improvement to existing space, rather than added space, is what is called for.

2. Youth and Active Adult Needs

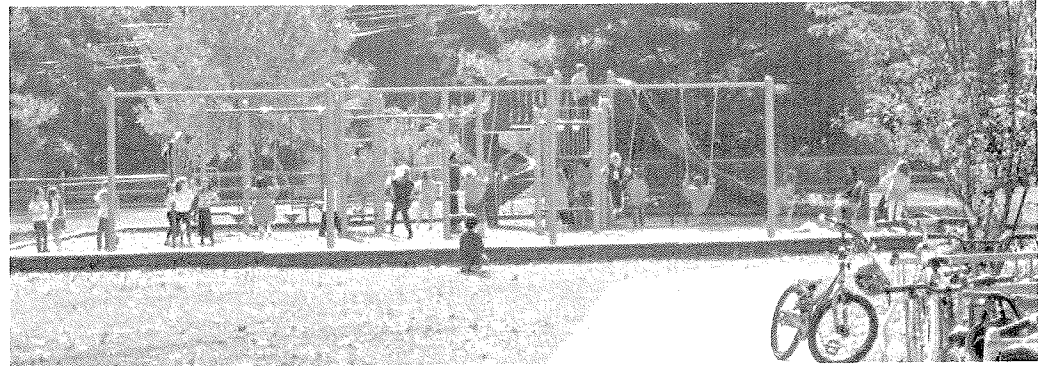
The community build-out analysis discussed in Chapter III (at Section C) indicates that, at full build-out, approximately another ±665 residents, many of them schoolchildren, will be added to Cranbury's existing population. The Subcommittee's intension is not to implement a Plan which calls for the recreation facilities in Cranbury to be able to accommodate all of these future residents and children at this time, but rather to provide a Plan which accommodates all the recreational needs in the present and short-term future (next 5 years), with plans in place to expand and accommodate future needs, if and when this population is added.

Currently, it appears that a higher proportion of Cranbury's children are playing at least one sport, and also that many children are playing multiple sports. With this increased participation, there are three sets of needs. One is to provide additional space or improvements to existing spaces so that they can sustain heavier usage. This is particularly imminent for current popular sports—especially soccer and baseball/softball. The second set of needs is to accommodate new sports which can be played on existing fields in a more multipurpose fashion, or on new fields, such as field hockey and boys' lacrosse.

The latter would require existing space to be more heavily utilized—again, a question of whether the existing fields can sustain additional play beyond what is currently occurring. The third and final set of needs are new facilities for sports which are likely to need a separate, designed or dedicated facility, or the addition of new dedicated improvements at existing fields. An example is track and field, which could be designed around and coupled with an existing soccer field, or provided as a separate facility on its own.

With respect to the first set of needs, it appears that the ever-increasing popularity of and participation of youth and adults in certain sports—soccer and softball/baseball in particular—has given rise to the need for a greater playing capacity for field sports in Cranbury. This translates into either added fields or increased maintenance of existing fields to sustain heavier usage.

Furthermore, there is currently a large bubble (a baby boom echo) of young children moving through the Cranbury school system. The present need is for facilities/fields to accommodate these smaller children. They are currently being accommodated, but only barely so, and somewhat inadequately, by splitting existing fields into smaller fields to accommodate the larger numbers, e.g. splitting the small-sided soccer fields, such as at Millstone Park, into two even smaller fields. However, as this group ages, there will be a need for large-sided soccer fields, and also to accommodate lacrosse/field-hockey, baseball and softball as well.

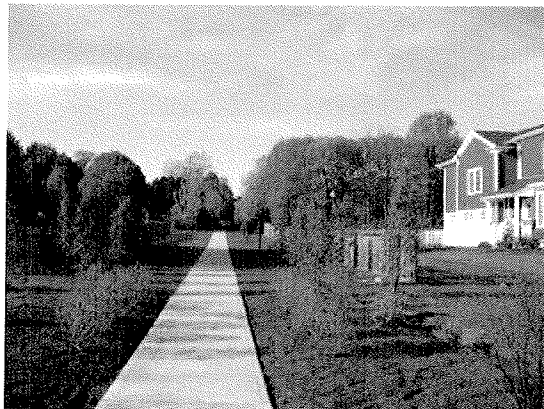


With respect to the second set of needs, there also appear to be new sports that both the School and Recreation Commission wish to add. This includes field hockey (for girls), girls' and boys' lacrosse and wrestling (boys), which the Cranbury School Board recently contemplated adding to their sports program. If added to the school's sports program, field hockey would practice and play games during the fall and lacrosse would practice and play games in the spring. Unfortunately the school fields are insufficiently sized and improved to accommodate lacrosse games, and as a result they would have to be played on Township-owned fields. The most obvious way to accommodate these new sports would be to add fields to Cranbury's inventory of active recreational facilities—such as on one of the parcels the Township owns (Updike, Fischer or Hagerty). Boys' lacrosse and field hockey could utilize existing Township fields if these fields were designed to be more multipurpose-oriented. However, because the existing fields are already so heavily utilized for other sports, they are subject to

significant wear and tear. As such, under present arrangements, they are going to be difficult to accommodate.

Finally, with regard to the third set of needs, there is one sport in particular for which there appears to be a demand which would require either a dedicated space or for permanent improvements to be added to existing fields in order to be accommodated: track and field.

The Cranbury School's track and cross country teams are co-ed, non-cut teams which have drawn significant student participation over the last couple of years—107 students in 2006. At present, there is a shot put ring and a long-jump pit at the school, but the only comprehensive set of track and field facilities available for practice and meets are at other schools.



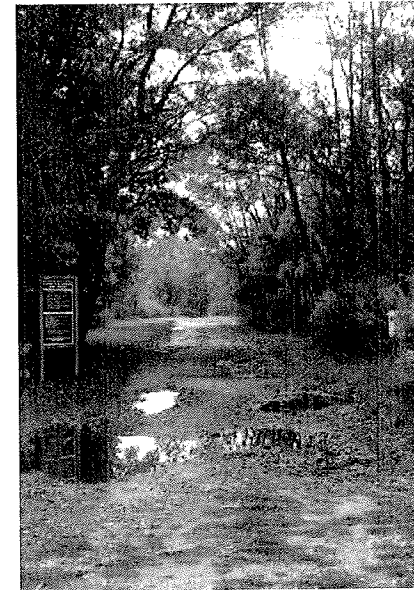
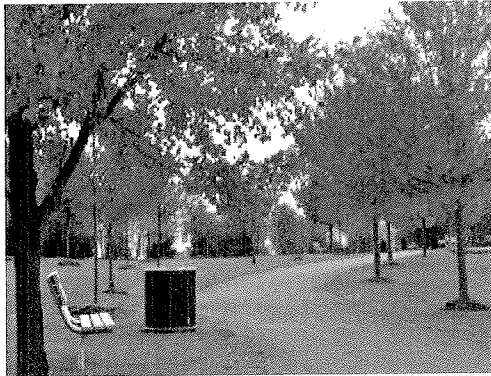
The extent to which these needs can and should be accommodated is dependent on a number of factors, the two most important of which are whether the accommodations would involve substantial cost—additional land, newly-constructed fields, substantial new fixtures and specialized equipment—and the extent of the need. In this respect, it appears that some of the needs—soccer, softball, baseball, lacrosse and field hockey—could be accommodated by three relatively straightforward improvements, rather than developing new fields. These are: (1) making better use of existing space through redesign (Millstone Park, for example, utilizes space inefficiently); (2) making the existing fields more multipurpose-oriented where possible (by removing permanent fixtures and replacing them with movable fixtures, or by overlapping fields that are used for different sports, e.g., soccer field in the outfield of softball or baseball fields); and (3) by instituting a maintenance program (irrigation chiefly) which allows for heavier use, thereby abandoning the current practice of making certain fields “game only” fields, or the need to exclude play on some fields for an entire season, and then rotate fields seasonally so as to allow them to recover from damage from overuse.

3. Adult and Senior Needs

The recreational needs for active adults and seniors were based on input from the Human Services Subcommittee, as well as feedback from the Seniors meeting on October 11, 2006. Seniors in wheelchairs and seniors who can't walk long distances without resting would benefit from better accessibility to Cranbury's parks, and once inside the parks, better access to the facilities which they use. Better access to Village Park, the new Village Green Park and Heritage Park—which have facilities that cater to the needs of seniors—are particularly important. Direct, paved and barrier-free paths, utilizing a combination of the existing sidewalk system in Cranbury along with linkages to paved walkways in the parks, are needed. In places where these paths are shared with bikes and rollerbladers or skaters,

the paths should be made sufficiently wide to ensure that the seniors not only can be bypassed, but that they feel safe while walking on these paths. This is particularly important in Heritage Park, which has been historically perceived of as a safe and comfortable venue for adults and active seniors to engage in alternative recreational pursuits.

Since seniors may need to rest at intervals while walking, the addition of benches and other places to sit should be placed at regular intervals along the paths, and at places that offer scenic views.



In the passive parks, the development of safe and secure non-paved walkways and trails that are accessible to seniors are needed. This may mean such improvements as clearing a sufficiently wide path of vegetation, providing paths with less-steep gradients, providing stone, rocks or wooden planks or woodchips on the path to ensure secure footing or elevating the path above swales and localized ponding. Also providing signage to direct people to these walkways, along with trail markers, would be helpful, not only to seniors, but to all who use them. Again, benches at regular intervals for resting are also needed.

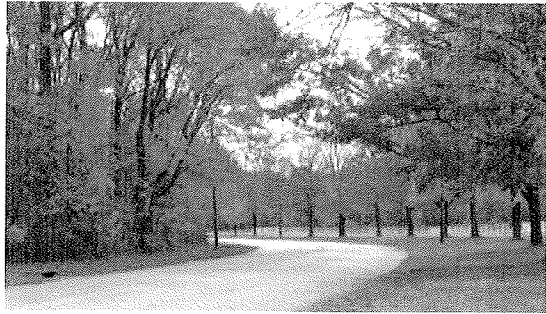
There does not appear to be a need for additional alternative recreational facilities—such as adding bocce courts, shuffleboard or horseshoes—at any of the existing parks. Seniors have expressed a desire for a swimming facility. However, there is a realization that the addition of indoor community facilities or an indoor swimming pool is economically unrealistic given Cranbury's small current and anticipated population. Seniors will have to continue to rely on opportunities in neighboring communities.

Adults and active seniors are to a large extent more reliant on recreational activities that occur indoors rather than outdoors. In the fall of 2006 the Township dedicated the "recital room" in Town Hall for use as a Senior Community Center. This room will be used for educational sessions, counseling, social events, arts and crafts, games, clubs, a movie series, meetings and as a drop-in center.

Indoor active physical recreation will be distributed amongst three facilities in town. There are two sessions of a senior exercise class at the Presbyterian Church; Tai Chi has been scheduled at the Methodist Church and a Senior Dance-Fitness class is being held in the ARB's Princeton Ballet School

on Main Street, close to Town Hall. There are also plans to add a yoga class.

There will be two bus trips for seniors this year, and the Township will subsidize the cost of the bus ride.



The Senior Community Center located in the basement of Town Hall is not considered to be the optimal size for such a facility. Seniors have expressed a desire for new space outside of Town Hall for this purpose. Realizing that a dedicated senior center may not be economically feasible, the seniors are working under the assumption that some indoor space could be co-located with a freestanding library (such as the one visualized at Village Green).

Seniors have also expressed a desire for a community garden in Cranbury, which obviously would not be exclusively used by seniors. An accessible location and a nearby water source would ensure that the garden is well-used. The southernmost portion of the Hagerty property, owned by the Township, has been suggested as an appropriate location for such a community garden.

Some Cranbury seniors have either given up driving altogether or try to keep their driving to a minimum because of safety concerns. Transportation to and from senior recreation facilities and programs is therefore important. Consideration ought to be given to providing transportation alternatives for this purpose. The possibility of providing such assistance, such as sharing a vehicle used by the Cranbury Schools, or providing a dedicated vehicle for transporting seniors, should be examined. Possible funding sources and assistance needs to be researched. If the latter is not feasible, then reliance on volunteers will have to continue. Since many volunteers are reluctant or have given up on transporting seniors because of concerns of personal financial liability in the event a senior is injured, a viable solution must be found to ensure insurance coverage is provided to these volunteers.

Better advertising and publicity of senior recreational programs is also needed. Use of the Cranbury Township website is planned, along with having a dedicated section in Cranbury News. However, a more effective communication strategy is needed for seniors who do not have web access.

Finally, a staff-person, perhaps in a part-time position, or the addition of such responsibility to an existing staff-person in the Township, to help plan and administer senior activities (including recreation) is

needed. Again outside funding, small amounts of which appear to be available from Middlesex County for this purpose, should be investigated.

4. Persons with Special Needs

Of primary importance in better serving persons with special needs, the Township needs to make its pedestrian pathways not only to parks, but within its parks and open spaces, barrier-free. This includes connections between the Township's sidewalk system and parks, and between the parking lots within Township parks, as well as to both the walking paths, recreational facilities and amenities within the parks.

In addition, when upgrading and/or replacing play equipment or other recreational fixtures or improvements within the parks, the Township should continue the practice of ensuring that such equipment is ADA-compliant (i.e., meeting the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act).

1. Active Recreational Facilities

The Subcommittee's recommendations related to active recreational facilities can be grouped into three categories:

- Making minor changes and improvements to existing facilities to improve field conditions and optimize their utilization;
- Redesigning existing facilities to improve playing conditions and allow for greater utilization;
- Adding new facilities only when their needs cannot be met by the above two courses of action.

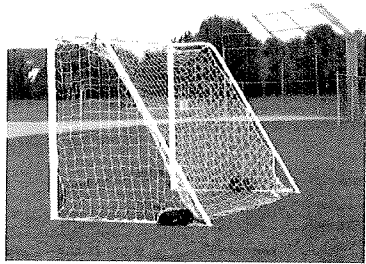
Consistent with the Goals and Objectives of this Plan, the Subcommittee looked first to make the first two types of improvements, which are less costly, to avoid to the extent possible, adding new facilities or developing as-yet-undeveloped, Township-owned open spaces in Cranbury. Where available, rough estimates of cost have been added to the proposed recommendations. In addition, a relative time frame for implementing the recommendations has also been included, i.e. short-term (1-3 years), intermediate-term (3-6 years), and long-term (beyond 6 years).

a. Making Existing Fields More Multipurpose (Short-Term)

The Subcommittee's primary recommendation is to make all fields in town with the exception of Village Park (i.e., all fields at the School, on the West Property and at Millstone Park), more multipurpose by using movable goals (soccer-turf goals/movable field-hockey and lacrosse goals), and other fixtures in locations that would allow flexibility in:

B. Recommendations²⁷

27. It should be noted that as a prelude to implementing the recommendations herein, especially those related to utilizing Township-owned property for recreational purposes, the definition in the Cranbury Code of "open space" needs to be amended. See page 7 of this report for a discussion of this subject.



- Expanding or contracting the size of field /space used;
- Using the fields for different sports in the same season or in different seasons (soccer /lacrosse /field-hockey, softball/baseball);
- Using the fields for all types of play, including practice /pick-up games/ adult leagues; and
- Allowing field markings for different sports to be changed as each sport or age group requires.

Millstone Park already has movable soccer goals, but the West property and the School fields do not, making it difficult to adapt these fields for different sports. With the possible addition of the boys' and girls' lacrosse teams and girls' field hockey teams to the school programs, the need for more multipurpose fields would be imminent and the transition from permanent to movable goals would be a relatively simple way to maximize field utilization.

Time Frame: Short Term

Facilities: West Property, School fields

b. Adding Irrigation to Existing Fields (Short- to Intermediate-Term)

The active recreation fields in Cranbury are heavily utilized. One of the most frequently mentioned weaknesses relating to Cranbury's active recreation facilities at the July community workshop was that many fields were over-utilized and in poor condition; in other words, better maintenance of Township fields was needed. In order to maintain good field conditions, the Township currently irrigates some game fields such as the Little League field in Village Park, or sets aside certain fields and restricts their use for a season, such as one of the practice fields in Millstone Park.

The Subcommittee sought the advice—through Tom Witt, the Township Administrator and long-time head of public works—of experts in the field of turfgrass management, on the benefits of irrigation. (Their full responses are excerpted in Appendix F.) Essentially, irrigation, along with properly-designed plantings, drainage and other maintenance and management practices, does allow fields to sustain heavier usage in the fall and spring when field is at its peak usage.

As such, the Subcommittee recommends that in order to maximize field utilization while not sacrificing the overall quality of field conditions, more fields should be irrigated. The athletic fields in Cranbury are most heavily utilized in the spring and fall, which unfortunately correspond to the most appropriate times to renovate the turf grass. However, irrigation provides a valuable tool to enhance turf grass management during the summer months when the fields are less utilized. Enhancing turf grass growth during periods of drought through the use of supplemental irrigation can also provide for more use. The West Property fields are scheduled to be irrigated at the time that the Village Green regulation ballfield (at Wright South) is irrigated. However, the School fields and the fields at Cranbury-Millstone Park would also substantially benefit from irrigation.

The Subcommittee is confident that with the addition of irrigation to the Village Green ballfield, to the fields at the School and the West property, and to the redesigned fields at Millstone Park (see below), no new fields need to be added to Cranbury's inventory of active recreational facilities in the short term.

Time Frame: Short Term

Approximate Cost: West Property is scheduled to be irrigated. Millstone Park (\$110,000 for irrigation; \$10,000 a year to maintain the irrigation system).²⁸

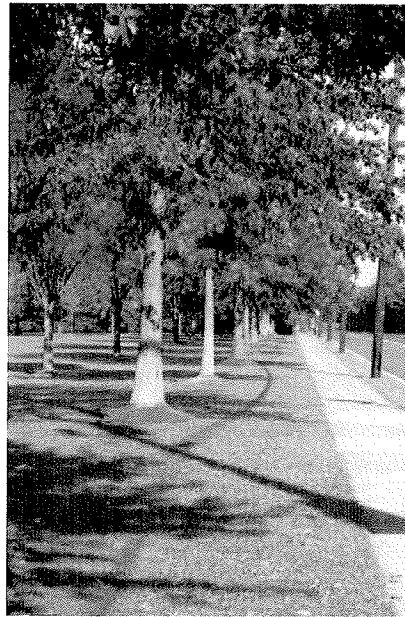
Facilities: West Property, School fields, Millstone Park

c. Redesign of existing facilities

i. Redesigning Cranbury-Millstone Park (Short- to Intermediate-Term)

In the Subcommittee's consideration of existing facilities, it became clear that the current design of Millstone Park does not allow for optimal space utilization. The orientation of the T-ball/Minors baseball field restricts the use of the field to only the early mornings and the evenings, leaving it unutilized for the better part of the day. The adjacent soccer fields either have to be restricted in use (e.g., games only) because of wear and tear, and one practice field, on a rotating basis, has to be set aside and not used in order to allow it to be rehabilitated, also due to overuse. In addition, there is not enough space

28. A phone conversation on December 12, 2006 with Tom Witt, Township Administrator revealed that Mill-stone Park could run piping from a main line to irrigate the park. However, the park does not have electricity which would be needed for controlling the irrigation including a meter pad, shed for the meter pad.



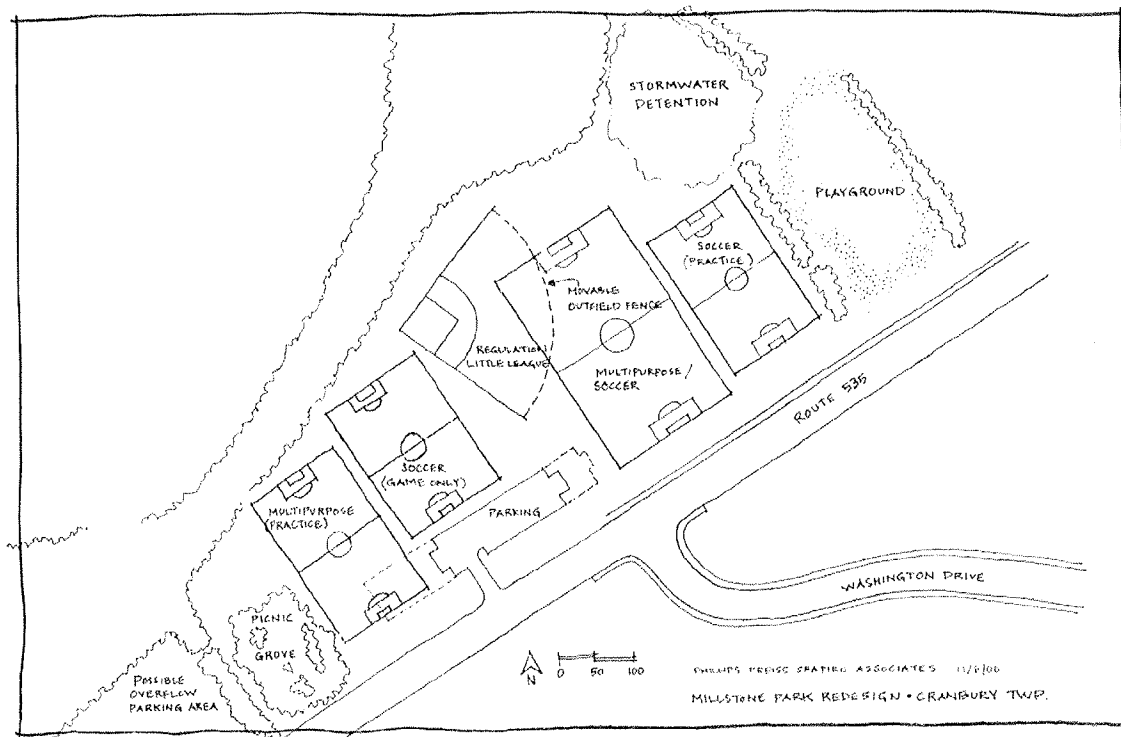
for parking, forcing parents to park along Old Trenton Road, a very busy arterial roadway which carries traffic traveling at high speeds past the Park. A redesign of Cranbury-Millstone Park would not only correct the park's current problems as enumerated above, but actually absorb some of Cranbury's present unmet need for additional fields and additional playing capacity.

As a result, a concept sketch showing how Millstone Park could be redesigned and laid out in a manner which will correct its problems (correcting the T-ball field's orientation, utilizing the wasted, unused open spaces in the park, and adding to the number of parking spaces), while allowing for an additional multi-purpose field to be added, has been drawn up (see Figure 19 on the next page).

Figure 19 shows the proposed redesign of the park, which will have the following recreational and support facilities:²⁹

- **A Little League field**—The current T-ball/Minors field in Millstone was intended to be a Little League Field, but due to its poor orientation, the field was relegated for use by younger children. There is currently only one other Little League field in Cranbury (at Village Park), yet there are 12 CPLL Major American/National teams which play approximately 35 games in Cranbury. The purpose of adding a Little League field by redesigning Millstone Park is to provide a field with correct orientation, which will make for better play, but more importantly, will allow the field to be usable all day long, and to free up Village Park Little League field from intense usage. The Plan also proposes that there be a movable fence on the field, so that the outfield can be used during non-Little League season (August-February) for other sports (primarily soccer, but also field hockey/lacrosse).
- **One small-sided soccer/lacrosse/field hockey game field**—A small-sided game field (with movable goals) would replace the field that is currently at Millstone. This field would serve the young population going through the Cranbury school system now who are presently too small to play their games on the large-sided West Property fields.
- **Two small-sided practice soccer/lacrosse/field hockey fields**—The small-sided practice fields (with movable goals) can be used by four teams at a time for practice; each team using its own half of a field.

29. A phone conversation on December 12, 2006 with Tom Witt, Township Administrator revealed that Millstone Park could run piping from a main line to irrigate the park. However, the park does not have electricity which would be needed for controlling the irrigation including a meter pad, shed for the meter pad.



- **One large-sided multipurpose field**—The large sided multipurpose (soccer/ lacrosse/hockey) field (with movable goals) can be used for practice, pickup, and for adult league play. This field would free up school fields which will be experiencing greater demand in the short term due to the addition of field hockey and boys' lacrosse teams at Cranbury School.
 - **Reconsideration of the parking lot**—Reorienting the parking lot will free up space for the additional field. The Township should also pursue working out a deal with the private Cranbury Pool Club that would be to each's mutual benefit. In exchange for paving the Cranbury Pool's existing gravel lot (which is used only in the summer), the Township would be free to use the parking lot for overflow parking for Millstone Park.
 - **Provide fence/landscaping**—Landscaping and/or fencing should be added around the game fields to separate the Little League field from the woodland edge which was part of the remediation plan for Millstone Creek. (Such area has been remediated, but keeping children out of this area is still recommended.) Such landscaping and fencing should also be added to prevent errant balls from hitting passing cars on Old Trenton Road; and to better separate the field areas from the playground.

To implement this redesign, disruption and a temporary discontinuance of use of the existing fields at Millstone Park is likely. To continue to provide playing fields, a phasing plan, and the provision of temporary playing fields may be necessary. The Subcommittee believes such a plan to be beyond the scope of this report, and recommends that such a plan be drawn up at the time of construction.

Finally, the Subcommittee endorses the idea of the Township traffic consultant undertaking a study of parking and access to Millstone Park to determine ways in which pedestrian and vehicular access and parking—particularly crossing Old Trenton Road—could be made safer and more convenient than at present. Such improvements could be instituted prior to the implementation of the redesign so as to improve the current situation as soon as possible.

Time Frame: Short Term

Facilities: Millstone Park; traffic improvements along Old Trenton Road.

d. Adding a Track to West Property (Intermediate- to Long-Term)

Many Cranbury Middle-School children participate in track and field sports. However, the students currently have no formally-designated track. They run around the West soccer fields for practice and must go to other schools for meets. At the July workshop and the October Seniors meeting, participants voiced a desire for a track or walking path in town, which could be used by all residents, including in particular seniors and those with special needs, because of their need to have an accessible facility, with a safe and secure walking surface, in town.



The Subcommittee discussed the idea of developing a track in town and concluded that currently a track is not a high or immediate priority for the Township. However, adding a track or a track and field facility should be considered in Cranbury's intermediate and long-term recreation plans. The Subcommittee recommends that any future track be located on the West Property where it would be both close to the School and centrally located within the Village, making it more conducive to multi-generational use. The Subcommittee envisions a formal running track (track and field facilities) around the existing West Property soccer fields which could provide:

- The school with track and field facilities;
- A safe walking path for seniors and those with special needs; and
- A space for walking/jogging for adults.

The track would be placed around the outside of one of the West property fields so that the inner-field

would remain multipurpose soccer/lacrosse/field hockey fields.

Time Frame: Intermediate/Long Term

Facilities: West Property

e. Adding new fields on undeveloped Township Open Space (Long Term)

One of the key findings of the Subcommittee is that, for the short term, the added demand for play on Cranbury's outdoor fields could be met through a combination of measures without having to develop any new fields on Township-owned open space. These measures include converting as many fields as possible for multipurpose use by utilizing irrigation and maintenance to sustain heavier usage during peak seasons (spring and fall), and through obtaining more fields and better designed fields by redesigning Millstone Park. Under such circumstances, the Subcommittee is confident that new ball-fields on currently-owned but as-yet-undeveloped open space that might be appropriate for accommodating active recreational facilities (Fischer, Updike and Hagerty) will not be needed in the short term (1-3 years), and perhaps not in the intermediate term. Nevertheless, the Subcommittee felt that to the extent an additional park needed to be developed for this purpose, say in 3 to 6 years' time, it would be imprudent not to consider which of the current tracts of Township-owned open space would be most appropriate for this purpose, so that a similar large undertaking or major revision to this Plan would not be necessary.

As a result, the Subcommittee undertook an analysis of the three Township-owned open spaces³⁰ to determine which one would be most suitable for accommodating new active recreational facilities, should they be needed. (None of the three have restrictions which would limit their use to passive open space/conservation/preservation uses). While the Subcommittee drew up the list of criteria to be considered, their ranking of importance came directly from discussions held at the first community workshop on active recreation, where each group was asked to rank the criteria in order of importance (see Appendix B-1). These criteria were then scored by the Subcommittee, and the suitability of the parcels was then determined. The full analysis, including the mapping of each of the property's environmental constraints, and the community's ranking of their importance, was utilized to determine which of the three sites was most suitable. (The full analysis is detailed in Appendix H.) The sites were ranked in the following order of suitability:

1. Updike
2. Hagerty
3. Fischer.

30. Initially 4 parcels, Fischer, Updike, Hagerty and Froszttega, were considered. Because Froszttega is not owned by the Township and because it is a landlocked parcel (no public access is possible), it was excluded from the analyses.



Essentially Updike emerged as the clear choice because it is a relatively large parcel, level and cleared of vegetation, free of any major environmental constraints, absent any critical environmental resources, and relatively accessible to Cranbury's residents by virtue of its location. Hagerty was ranked second, because of its shortcomings of being too narrow, containing areas with environmental constraints, and being a little more remote from the residential population than Updike. Fischer was considered least suitable, chiefly because the presence of forested wetland areas throughout the parcel, but most significantly with a considerable swath of wetland and stream corridors along its southern border adjacent to the Millstone River. This resulted in only small, fragmentary portions of land being available and developable for fields.

With respect to the Updike parcel, there are some restrictions in the development agreement between Sharbell and the Township as to the nature and use of the portion that was deeded to the Township. However, none of these conditions preclude it from being developed for this purpose. The development agreement has clauses which restrict the location of the facilities, the hours of use and the use of night lights on the property. However, such restrictions do not severely inhibit this property from being used for athletic fields—much in the same way as Millstone Park, for example, is being utilized today. Moreover, the restrictions actually serve a positive purpose: they ensure compatibility of the park with its resident neighbors.

2. Alternative Recreational Facilities (Short and Intermediate Term)

The Subcommittee, with the input obtained from the two community meetings and the seniors meeting, considered that for the present time, alternative recreational facilities within Cranbury, provided mostly in Heritage Park, were adequate to serve Cranbury's needs in the short and intermediate terms. Only minor changes—such as making the walkways completely barrier-free—were suggested. The Subcommittee was more concerned with keeping Heritage Park the focus of alternative recreational facilities, by not developing any active recreational facilities in the park, and by encouraging more active, team-oriented recreational pursuits to be played elsewhere in town.

3. Passive Recreational Facilities

With respect to passive recreational facilities in Cranbury, there were four sets of recommendations, which are discussed in greater detail below. Two related to recommendations for improvements—the first to passive recreation amenities in existing parks, and the second to greenways, walkways and bikepaths in Cranbury. The remaining two relate to policy—the first being the creation of greater awareness of and education about passive open space resources in Cranbury to encourage its use, enjoyment and appreciation, and second is in regard to the acquisition of additional land within Cranbury for open space and recreational purposes.

a. Improvements to Existing Parks and Open Space

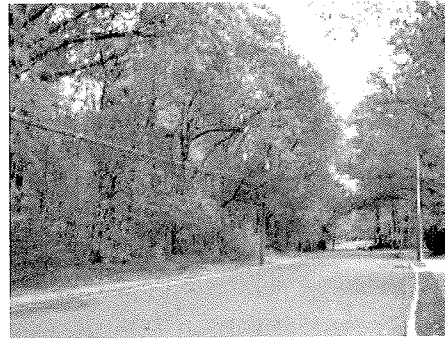
The Subcommittee recommends that improvements be made at the following locations:

i. Cranbury Brook Preserve (Short Term)

The Subcommittee recommends extending the path along Cranbury Brook the length of the woods through the Barclay property, making a loop with the existing path. Benches should be placed along the loop and the path should be wide enough for biking and walking.³¹ The end of the easement should be marked, so as to avoid trespassing. The path should not be paved; however, it will need a viable, finished surface, with correct grading and geometry and width to accommodate bikes, strollers, joggers, walkers, etc. At least a 5-foot to 6-foot wide pathway on straight-aways is recommended, with a wider pathway on curves and steep grades. The Subcommittee recommends that a bikepath/walkway be established along the Cranbury Brook from Plainsboro Road, along the brook to the Sarconi property. The only portion of the pathway which the Township does not either own or have a legal right-of-way for at this point is the Paterson property.

ii. Unami Woods (Short Term)

There is an unmarked easement to Unami Woods which connects it to Pumphouse Road. This should be marked and a pathway clearly defined. The Subcommittee recommends that the existing trails in Unami Woods be cleared and an entrance to them be signed, particularly at Pumphouse Road. A curb-cut at the existing easement on Wynnewood Drive into Unami Woods is needed so as to demarcate and facilitate an entrance into the park at this location. No bikepath should be provided through Unami Woods, but the



31. The surface of this pathway would not be paved, but merely stabilized to allow for off-road biking to occur.

Subcommittee does recommend that a bikeway connection via Pumphouse Road and Wynnewood Drive be provided with signage.

iii. Village Green (Intermediate Term)

A pedestrian-only walkway to provide access to the new Village Green facility from Bunker Hill Road is proposed. Unless an athletic track around the fields on the West property is constructed, which would not only provide a track for the School's athletic programs, but also a firm, safe and secure walking surface for seniors and those with Special needs in Cranbury, the Subcommittee proposes that a wheelchair-accessible path be created around the regulation ballfield at Village Green.



iv. Village Park (Short and Intermediate Term)

There are pathways into Village Park from Maplewood Avenue and Bennett Place. A safe path for seniors from the Elms and other town locations to access the Park via Maplewood Avenue should be provided.³² The Subcommittee proposes that wheelchair-usable paths be created within Village Park as well. Paved pathways to the porta-johns at the park should be provided. Wheelchair access via paths from parking lots within the Park should be provided to access the gazebo and the Pavilion. In order to enhance accessibility to Brainerd Lake, a pathway from the parking lot nearest Brainerd Lake should be extended, as well as the pathway from the Maplewood Avenue entrance. This would allow wheelchair-bound individuals and parents with strollers to be able to reach the lake at the two horseshoe ends, as well as the gazebo. However, the Subcommittee does not recommend that there be a paved path immediately in front of the lake since it would disrupt views of the lake, both from within the Park and from views around the Lake itself.

b. Greenways, Walkways and Bikepaths

i. Greenways (Short Term)

A Stream Conservation Corridor Zone Ordinance prepared by the Environmental Commission was recently forwarded to the Township Committee for consideration which would better protect the stream corridors throughout the Township. The adoption of this ordinance would provide a number of benefits, including maintaining water quality in Cranbury's streams and preserve the stream corri-

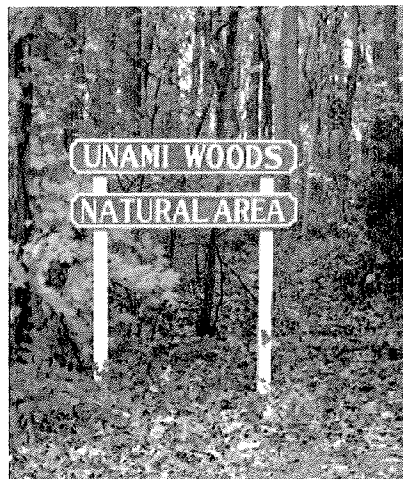
32.

dors' natural environment by preserving and protecting the existing topography and natural vegetation along the Cranbury Brook, the Millstone River, the Cedar Brook and their tributaries. The proposed ordinance would restrict development within 150 feet of the bank of a stream. The Subcommittee recommends careful consideration of the proposed ordinance which would permit unpaved walkways, with appropriate natural surfaces, within designated stream corridors. It would also be useful for the Township to identify all of the easements which the Township currently possesses, to inform citizens of where they exist for the common use and enjoyment of the community. The ordinance should be adopted in the short term.

In the long term, realization of the Greenway Plan would involve either acquisition of land or easements, or obtaining, via deed, public access along the entire length of the Greenway corridor. The proposed Greenway along the Cranbury Brook has the greatest potential in this regard, although the pathway may need to be established on the south side of the Brook opposite the Paterson parcel, where future access is unlikely.

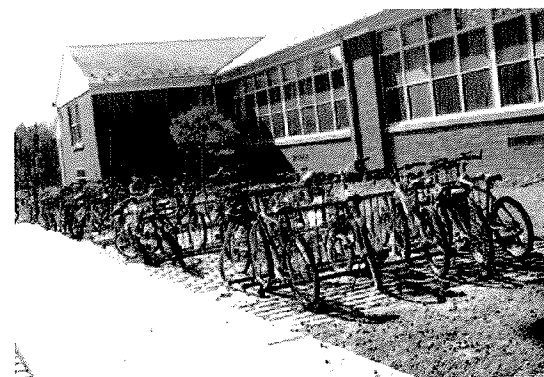
ii. Walkways (Short and Intermediate Term)

The addition of paved walkways for safe and secure pedestrian access to Cranbury's parks and open spaces, particularly for seniors and those with special needs, have already been discussed at length. The Subcommittee, however, felt strongly that the walkways which are developed through Cranbury's passive parks and preserves, and the greenways in particular, not be paved, or surfaced with any type of impervious material. Natural paths should be cut through the vegetation in an environmentally-friendly manner, i.e., by avoiding areas of environmental constraints, preserving valuable vegetation and habitat, and in a manner which does not disrupt scenic views of the natural landscape. Sensitive signage at the entrance to the trails and marking along the trails should be employed where necessary.



iii. Bikepaths

Consideration should be given to also allowing bikers to utilize some of the paved pathways within Cranbury's parks and open spaces that already exist for pedestrians. However, not all pedestrian paths are suitable for biking; some are required to be restricted because the presence of bike activity could be a threat to pedestrian safety (especially seniors) and also because a slower pace of activity,



conducive to more passive forms of recreation, may be desired. Bikepaths which provide bike access to Cranbury's parks and open spaces are probably of greater importance. In some cases, where appropriate, bikepaths could be extended through or around the park; in others, such as in the case of the passive parks and greenways, cyclists would be encouraged to park at the entrance to a park in a designated bike parking space and then be encouraged to access the park and use its facilities on foot. The Subcommittee did not feel that specific recommendations or plans for bikepaths within Cranbury be developed as part of this Plan, because of issues related to traffic safety and circulation which should more appropriately be dealt with by the Township's Traffic Safety Subcommittee, and within the Traffic Circulation Plan Element of the Master Plan.



c. Education and Awareness (Short Term)

The Subcommittee felt that a greater awareness of the open space resources needed to be encouraged in Cranbury through three primary means. The first would be to sign and more clearly demarcate Cranbury's passive parks and open spaces, particularly at the entrances to the trails and walkways, and along the trails themselves. (The Cranbury Boy Scouts have undertaken several successful endeavors in Cranbury Brook Preserve in this regard.) The second is to better publicize these resources. A directory and map, to be made available at Town Hall and on the Cranbury website, should be developed. This directory could indicate where such parks are located, the types of activities and facilities each has to offer, and contact information should a group wish to book or schedule group outings.

Lastly, the Township should take advantage of the educational opportunities afforded by these resources. This would be enhanced by better signage and markings, by the development of the directory and map, and should be encouraged through Cranbury School and the Recreation Commission programs.

d. Acquisition (Short, Intermediate and Long Term)

The acquisition of land for the purpose of preserving open space and farmland has played an important role in defining Cranbury's identity. In the past, when the Township has had the opportunity to purchase land for open space preservation purposes at a reasonable cost, it has done so.

The Subcommittee was therefore confronted by the following issue: in a community such as Cranbury, with a small population and an abundance of parks and open space—particularly large tracts of preserved open space and farmland—how does the opportunity to acquire additional privately-owned parcels for the purpose of preservation fit in with other priorities within the Township—not only recre-

ational opportunities, but in meeting other pressing townwide needs?

In a December 2001 memorandum to the Township Committee, Harvey Moskowitz, the former Township Planner, outlined criteria (not necessarily in order of importance) that might be applied to determine which open space parcels, if acquired, would have greater value to the Township than others. The criteria were as follows:

- (a) Parcels to be acquired for open space should have their major beneficial impact on the Township. What this means is that a parcel “surrounded” by the Township has more value than one on the edges.
- (b) Parcels should accomplish more than one objective. A parcel that allows farmland preservation, preserves a viewshed and provides more stream corridors or greenways is more valuable than a parcel that just provides only one of these benefits.
- (c) Open space should qualify for outside funding. It is always better to purchase land with part of the money from other sources, if possible.
- (d) Acquisition should be cost effective. More land for the dollar makes sense. In other words, the more expensive land may not be worth the expenditure.
- (e) The acquisition should make planning sense. If a parcel is more or less surrounded by development, close to services, and is served by public water and sewer, it probably should be developed.
- (f) The open space acquisition should be viewed in terms of 10 to 20 years in the future. If the parcel may be needed for a new school or other municipal facility some time in the future, it should not be irrevocably set aside for permanent open space.
- (g) Acquisition should accomplish the Township’s key objectives set forth in the Master Plan. For Cranbury, this means farmland preservation and preservation of the Historical Village.

The Subcommittee has reviewed and considered the above policy related to open space acquisition, and endorses it. The Subcommittee also supports the community’s efforts, where appropriate, to purchase land in fee-simple or easements, to provide connections via greenways, or walking trails between parks and open spaces.

After careful consideration, therefore, the Subcommittee recommends that in the future, the Township should always evaluate opportunities for acquiring land for active and passive recreation utilizing the guidelines above, so as to determine whether acquisition is appropriate.

4. Indoor Recreational Facilities

a. Improving Senior Center (Short Term)

The Senior Community Center is currently located in the old recital room in Town Hall. \$20,000 of a Middlesex County grant has been earmarked for furnishing and improving this space. Additional sources of funding and donations are being pursued.

Time Frame: Short Term

Facilities: Town Hall Senior Center

b. Dedicated indoor recreation space (Intermediate to Long-Term)

To the extent that the Township vacates the space in the Cranbury School now used as the Township's library and relocates it in a "standalone" facility across the parking lot on the Village Green property, the Subcommittee would support evaluating the needs for senior recreation at that time so as to address the unmet needs by adding space for recreational purposes.

