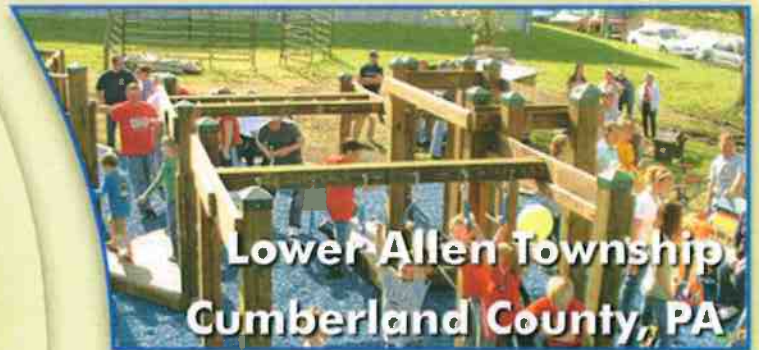




Field of Dreams

**Community Participation
& Visioning Process for
The Restoration of the Fun Fort**



**Lower Allen Township
Cumberland County, PA**



October 27, 2010

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DRAFT

This study was prepared by:

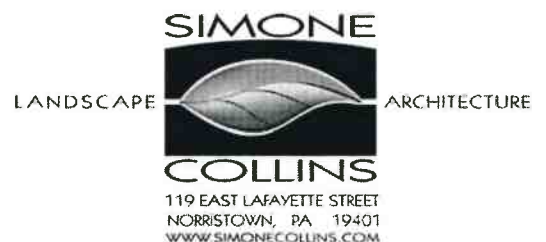


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Introduction

Background / History

The Field of Dreams Playground, most commonly known at the Fun Fort, was constructed in 1994. The design was completed by Leathers and Associates, a firm that specializes in the design and the construction by the community of playgrounds. Their process emphasizes community involvement in both the design and construction of the playground. The entire Fun Fort project was built with volunteers and funded by donations from the community.

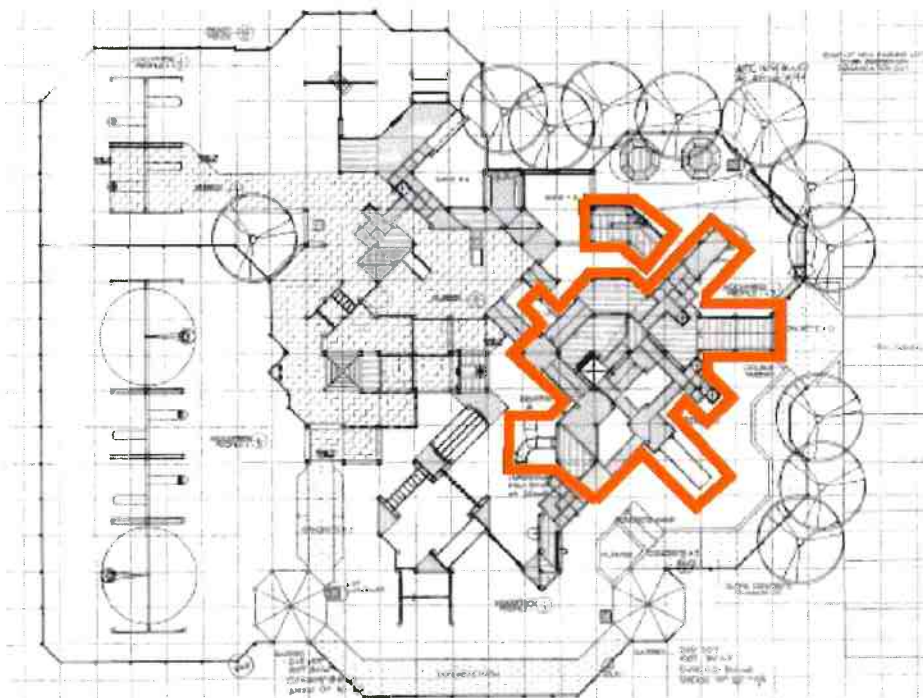


Field of Dreams (a.k.a. Fun-Fort) Sign



*View of Fun Fort after the June 2010 fire.
Portions of the Fun-Fort were not damaged.*

In June, 2010 approximately one-half of the Fun Fort structure was destroyed by a fire of suspicious origin. Lower Allen Township's Board of Commissioners wishes to replace the playground facility. In August of 2010 Simone Collins Landscape Architecture was selected by the Board of Commissioners to conduct a community participation and visioning process to develop general recommendations for the type of playground and play equipment to be considered.



Fun-Fort Plan, the red outline indicates the play components destroyed by the June 2010 fire.

2005 Community Park Master Plan

In 2005 Simone Collins Landscape Architecture with ARRO Group prepared the Lower Allen Community Park Master Plan. The master plan analyzed existing conditions and facilities, and provided recommendations for the Community Park. The master plan included a recommendation to relocate the Fun Fort to a central location when the current facility is to be replaced. It was expected in 2005 that the Fun Fort would need to be replaced in 2014 since the wood structure does have a finite lifespan.

The proposed relocation of the playground involved the repositioning of several facilities including the baseball field (for proper solar orientation) and realignment of the parking lot driveway and parking lot for safety and utility.

The master plan shows the Fun Fort centrally located and adjacent to restrooms facilities, pavilions, a picnic grove, an outdoor amphitheater, and the realigned parking lot.



Partial plan of the 2005 Lower Allen Community Park Master Plan showing the proposed relocation of the Fun-Fort

Visioning Process

Public Participation / Meetings

Public participation is a key ingredient in the success of any community project. Public meetings are designed to inform the public of the project status; to receive input as to the desired facilities; and address questions, comments, or concerns relative to the playground development. Simone Collins Landscape Architecture (consultants) conducted two community meetings to solicit ideas and suggestions for how and where to rebuild the Fun Fort.

Meetings were held on Wednesday evening, September 22 and Saturday morning, September 25, 2010. There were 20 attendees at the September 22 meeting and 4 persons attended the September 25 meeting. An attendance list is contained in the appendix of this report. The consultant gave a brief presentation about the nature of play and the most common types of play equipment and playgrounds. A copy of that presentation is in the appendix of this report.

Play and Playgrounds

The presentation noted that 'Play' is essential to the healthy physical and mental development of a child. Play helps kids exercise creativity and develop imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive and emotional strength. Children learn how to interact, face fears, cultivate confidence and enrich their competencies and resiliency – all through play.

It is a well accepted principal in childhood education that children learn best through free or self-directed play and discovery. Children's free play is a complex concept that eludes precise definition, but children's play typically is pleasurable, self-motivated, imaginative, non-goal directed, spontaneous, active, and free of adult-imposed rules.

Playgrounds should be designed to provide opportunities to cultivate the above concepts of children's learning and development. Many playgrounds designed today focus only safety and on physical exercise and developing the child's gross motor skills. However, quality play involves the whole child: gross motor, fine motor, senses, emotion, intellect, individual growth and social interaction. This report outlines a range of playgrounds and equipment types, and the kind of activities that promote

children's play through learning and discovery.

Types of Playgrounds

All types of playgrounds, regardless of the materials utilized, can, if properly programmed and designed, provide for the essential activities and spaces that children need to interact, face fears, cultivate confidence and enrich their competencies and resiliency. A few of these essential aspects of a well designed playground provide for the following types of activities and experiences:

- 1) Safety** - Provide a sense of enclosure, comfort and safety;
- 2) Physical Activity** - Provide physical challenges;
- 3) Social Skills** - Provide opportunities for interaction with other children;
- 4) Different Age Groups and Abilities** - Provide age-appropriate equipment for either a single age group or for a wide range of ages;
- 5) Free (or Self Directed) Play** - Provide opportunities for free play. This includes creating opportunities for children to use their imaginations, creativity, and sense of wonder and discovery. Free Play:

- Provides opportunities to interact with their environment (or playground setting). Suransky wrote in *The Erosion of Childhood* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982) that children need open space, challenge and opportunities to control and manipulate the environment. Suransky calls this "history making power" - the power for the child to imprint themselves upon the landscape, endow the landscape with significance and experience their own actions as transforming the environment.
- Provide a dynamic environment. In the book *Designing Outdoor Environment's for Children: Landscaping, Schoolyards, Gardens, and Playgrounds* the authors outline studies that show that neural connections in the brain increase and become more complex when people are surrounded in dynamic environments. This includes direct physical contact with the outdoor environment, free of human controls.

6) Universal Accessibility – Provide play opportunities for all types of users regardless of physical ability. All playgrounds should be safe and universally accessible.

Playground “types” were divided into several categories for purposes of discussion and to assess the pros and cons of materials and generalized design approaches. Below is a list and brief description of the different types of playgrounds presented by the consultants and a summary of the discussions that occurred during the public meetings:

- Wooden Playgrounds
- Traditional Playgrounds
- Nature Based Playgrounds
- Theme Playgrounds
- Combination Playgrounds



Wooden playground

Wooden Playgrounds

The widespread manufacture of playgrounds made from wood made their first appearance in the 1960's. The adventure playground movement originated in Great Britain and these were playgrounds made of spare parts, wood and basically “junk”. While the adventure playground movement never made major inroads in the United States, the use of wood in playground equipment did. Many playground manufacturers created wood playgrounds and this type of equipment became very popular and replaced the up-till-then austere metal swings and jungle gyms seen in the quintessential New York City Playground of the post WW II era. These playgrounds normally consisted of the what was known as the “four S's” – the swing, the sandbox, the seesaw, and the slide.

The wooden playground was designed by Leathers and Associates. Their process emphasizes community involvement in both the design and construction of the playground.



Boat play structure

Chapter 2: Visioning Process

Each playground is designed differently based on the site, the children's input, local history, and special needs within the community. Leathers and Associates worked with the Lower Allen community in 1994 on the design and construction of the Fun Fort.

Some of the general characteristics of wooden playgrounds include:

Pros:

- Playgrounds are generally visually attractive.
- The wood material is generally more natural looking than prefabricated play structures.
- Wood does not get hot in the summer or cold in the winter (like metal) causing discomfort to children.
- Some wooden playground structures (like Leathers products) are very creative and are designed to stimulate children's imaginations.

Cons:

- The wood material used in playground structures has long-term maintenance requirements. Wood typically is not as durable as most other play equipment materials.
- Safety - Wood is a flammable material and is susceptible to fire
- Wood can cause splinters for children playing on wood play equipment .
- There is a potential higher maintenance costs than pre-manufactured (metal and / or high density plastics) play equipment.



Custom design can be included in wooden playground



Child plays musical instrument



Castle design



Traditional playground



Most manufactured play equipment and safety surfacing meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission standards



Most prefabricated playgrounds are designed to meet ADA guidelines

Traditional Playgrounds

Most people are familiar with “traditional playgrounds”. Years ago, these structures were all made of metal. More recently, these structures are made of high density plastics and powder-coated metals, usually brightly painted. Most municipal parks and school yard playgrounds are designed using these prefabricated manufactured structures. These types of playground equipment include sand-boxes, swings, seesaws, slides, climbers, and other apparatus that emphasis using children’s gross motor skills. Play structures come in a wide variety of styles and play component combinations, are ADA accessible, and can be designed for various age groups. More recent innovations in this type of structure are miniature climbing walls, exercise-oriented play equipment, cable climbing structures and the like.

Of all the playground types discussed the pre-manufactured playgrounds are generally the most durable, incur the lowest maintenance costs, and are typically manufacturer insured.

Researchers at the University of Western Australia have launched a study on the declining quality playgrounds and their effect on children. The report notes that municipalities and schools go overboard in creating safe and sterile environments using pre-fabricated play equipment, and that children should be given greater scope to play. Playgrounds should be designed for fun. Today most playground equipment is becoming much safer because of children’s safety and liability concerns.

Chapter 2: Visioning Process

National standards encourage the installation of safety fall surfaces and provides for ADA accessibility. However, limiting outdoor playgrounds to gross motor activities and manufactured equipment decreases the potential of outdoor play areas to be rich learning environments for children.

Some of the general characteristics of traditional-type playgrounds include:

Pros:

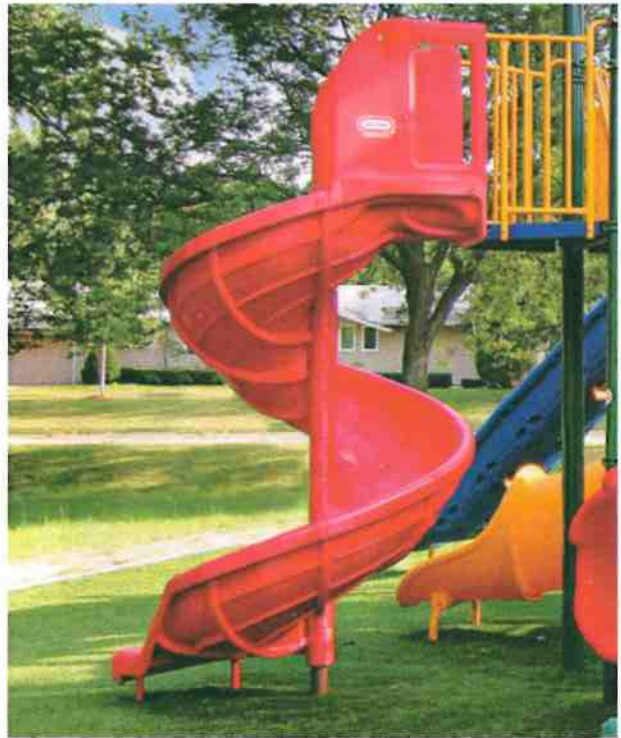
- Pre-manufactured playgrounds are generally very durable and have a longer life-span and require less maintenance compared other types of playground apparatus.
- Most pre-manufactured play structures meet Consumer Product Safety Commission standards and are insured by the manufacturer.
- Play structures come in various styles and play component combinations, are ADA accessible, and can be designed for various age groups.

Cons:

- Traditional playgrounds are designed for children's physical exercise and may lack in creativity and providing opportunities for children to use their imagination.
- Pre-manufactured play equipment is not "natural looking" and because it is used in most municipal playgrounds and schoolyards it is not unique.



Swing Set



Slides



Many different types of play components are available that focus on physical exercise



Play structures come in various styles and play component combinations

Cons (continued):

- Metal play equipment may get hot in the summer and cold in the winter causing discomfort to children



Cable climbing structures



Miniature climbing wall

Nature-Based Playgrounds

The term nature-based playground is used to loosely describe a type of playground that focuses on creating natural or semi-natural settings that utilize a wide range of materials and design including landforms (berms, mounds, small hills) plant materials, boulders and natural stone, water, and other materials.

This type of playground is designed to enable the type of play most important to young children: social play (pretending) and constructive play (building). Natural playgrounds encourage children to use their imaginations while simultaneously experiencing the smells, textures and wonders of the natural world. Nature based playgrounds promote open ended experimentation through the use of settings that create some of the opportunities previously mentioned. Some of these features seen on other nature-based playgrounds have included tunnels, tree houses, and provide opportunities for kids to play with natural elements such as sand, water, rock, wood and living plants.

Some of the promoted benefits of nature based facilities are to increase the much diminished exposure that children today have to the natural world. Children often lack the free, self-directed playtime needed to invent activities and games. Research indicates that this ability, along with access to natural settings, is critical to children's development in every major way: intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually and physically. Benefits of increased free time and access to natural



In this nature based playground plantings, a sand area, concrete "stumps", and tree logs are incorporated to create a natural setting and to provide children's play equipment.



A fallen tree can be used for children to climb, hid, and explore.



Children enjoy dynamic environments and the ability to manipulate their environment. This playground provides movable objects to allow children to explore and create.



The "sandbox" in a natural setting.



A shallow pool of water with boulders provides many creative play opportunities.



Children socializing and picking flowers.

areas include improved concentration and impulse control, emotional coping and stress reduction, stimulation of creativity, reduced symptoms with Attention-Hyperactivity Deficit Disorder (ADHD), and improved motor coordination. Studies at the University of Illinois' Human-Environment Research Laboratory on children with ADHD have shown that green outdoor spaces not only foster creative play and improves interactions with adults they also relieve the symptoms of the disorder.

Nature based playgrounds can provide for the following activities and use some of these materials:

- 1. Exploration and Imagination** - Children play most creatively in settings they can manipulate. Sand and water, for example, serve as raw materials for creativity and sensory exploration. Playgrounds that provide a transformable environment allow for many types of activities, empowering children to influence the space around them. A wide array of movable objects allows each play session to become a new experience. Using loose parts, children can create their own narratives and games; build something and tear it down; or simply play to enjoy shapes and textures.

- 2. Provide a Variety for Different Experiences** - Play should be inclusive and offer all children a range of sensory experiences: touch, sight, smell, and hearing. Playgrounds should provide for diversity and change keeping the experience fresh and new each visit.

3. Use natural materials -. Nature based playgrounds use natural and recycled materials, boulders of different shapes and textures, the use of sand, gravel, and the creation of natural habitats for wildlife. In addition to being less expensive, these materials save energy since they do not need to be manufactured.

4. Create Different Types of Spaces - Provide different types of spaces for children to sit in, on, under, lean against, and provide places for shelter and shade. Offer different levels and nooks and crannies, and places that offer both privacy and views. Creating elevations changes using the site's topography and land-form, provide opportunities for children to climb and explore.

5. Allow Children to take "risks". Risk taking is an exciting part of play and part of human growth. "Risk-taking" in the playground is a way for children to develop confidence and self-esteem in a controlled environment. The real "risks" in any well designed playground are relatively benign. Modern safety surfaces cushion children from falls which are historically the major cause for injury in playgrounds.

Some of the pros and cons of nature based playgrounds include:

Pros:

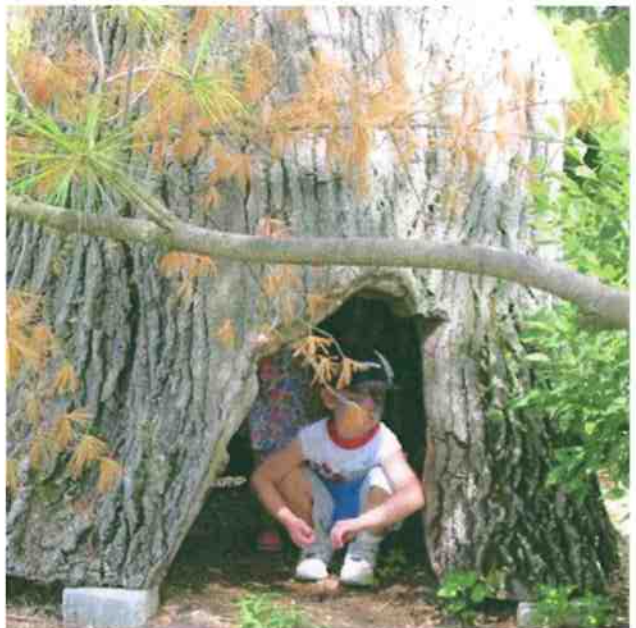
- Nature based playgrounds can include activities that are the most creative option for children because the options are unlimited (since the kids are a big part of the creativity)
- Playgrounds are very natural and can be



Playground uses natural materials.



Boulders can be used for sitting and climbing.



Provide different types of spaces for children to sit in, on, under, and lean against.



Risk taking is an exciting part of play.



Children climbing boulders.



Children playing in water.

adapted to fit the site more easily.

- A plethora of educational opportunities can be included in the playground design.
- Nature based playgrounds provide a dynamic changing environment that is interesting to children
- Nature-based playgrounds provide opportunities to use recycled or “found” materials such as boulders and logs.

Cons:

- Maintenance for some aspects of these facilities can be higher than a typical pre-manufactured playground.
- Some insurance carriers may perceive that some nature based playgrounds have increased liability risks. However this can be addressed by working with the insurance carrier. All playground designs need to meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission standards.
- Since nature-based playgrounds intended to be dynamic and provide many opportunities for explorative play it will be necessary to have community and Township commitment for on-going management of the playground.

Theme Playgrounds

Theme playgrounds are playgrounds that are designed around a specific theme or characteristic. These types of playground can be part of a larger playground that includes other play apparatus, or the entire playground can focus on a theme. There are many successful built examples of these types of playgrounds. A example of themed playgrounds is the Camden Children's Garden in Camden, New Jersey. The playground offers many learning and play opportunities including, Ben Franklin's Secret Workshop, a Dinosaur Garden, Maze, Tree House, Picnic Garden, Cityscapes Garden, Storybook Gardens, and the Fitness Garden.

Examples of these playgrounds can include the following:

- **Ecology and Habitat Gardens** (including: butterfly gardens, plantings to teach the 'changes of seasons', aquatic habitat / water garden, bird habitat, and geology are some examples of these types of playground gardens)
- **Vegetable Gardens** can be including in playgrounds to teach children about food sources – where food comes from.



Storybook Garden at the Camden Children's Garden, Camden, New Jersey



Children's Butterfly Garden



A vegetable garden can be incorporated in playgrounds.



Children play in labyrinth

- **Labyrinths / Mazes** – these types of playground are an adventure and provide for various types of play activities.



Alice in Wonderland sculpture within New York City's Central Park.

- **Literature** – playgrounds can be designed to include references to stories from children's literature books, fairy tales, and mythology.



A revolutionary war replica cabin located in Valley Forge National Historic Park.

- **History** can be included in playground to teach children about historic events or local history.

- **Astronomy and the Solar System**



Different colored paving delineates the solar system playground theme.

- **Dinosaurs, insects, trains, spaceships, and much more!**



A triceratops provides opportunities for children to learn about dinosaurs and a place to climb and play.

Combination Playgrounds

As the name implies, a combination playground combines the ideas from several types of playgrounds to create a facility that is suited to the site and enables children to play creatively. For example, a combination playground could provide wood (or artificial wood) play structures, metal play equipment, plastic equipment, plants, landforms and other materials.



Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park, NY. A combination of playground equipment is utilized including traditional slides and cable climbing structures, as well as materials used in nature-based playgrounds, such as sand, plants and boulders.



This playground provides pre-manufactured play equipment and incorporates plants and boulders to provide a more natural playground environment.

Community Ideas & Suggestions from September 22nd and 25th Meetings

At both public meetings attendees generated a wide range of ideas, suggestions and concerns. These ideas were divided into *Goals* (goals of the project, broad ideas), *Facts* (existing conditions) and *Concepts* (all the various ideas for attaining the goals). A combined list of these ideas from the two meetings is shown below.

Purpose and Goals

- A main project goal for this community facilitation process is to provide a direction for new playground.
- The purpose of the meetings and questionnaire is to develop a consensus of what the community wants
- Public participation is an essential component to the success of the playground design and installation.

Facts

- Varying age groups use the Fun-Fort playground.
- The new playground must meet ADA accessibility guidelines.
- Wood play structure requires more maintenance than other play structures.
- The new play structure must durable.
- Most park users travel at least 5 to 10 miles to reach park.
- The Fun Fort is a regional destination playground. Many park users travel from outside Lower Allen Township to the Fun-Fort because it is unique.
- Pre-fabricated playgrounds can be boring for a child.
- Wood play structures (such as the Fun-Fort type) allow children to use their creativity and is more interesting than traditional playgrounds.
- Parents do not fit in small spaces of Fun-Fort therefore making it difficult to watch children while they play.
- The remaining life-span of the existing wood play structure is approximately five years (2015).

Concepts

- It is important the playground provide opportunities for social interaction.
- Provide opportunities for children to exercise, run around, and play.
- The Fun-Fort should be rebuilt and restored.
- Nature-based playground will require more maintenance than the other types of playgrounds.
- Provide separate play equipment and play areas for varying age groups, including the idea of separating older kids play areas from the toddler play areas.
- Use safe materials and that are not susceptible to fire
- Some meeting attendees thought that the park should have a theme or focus. Themes discussed were 'Nature' and 'Field of Dreams'. While other meeting participants thought that the new playground should not have a theme - kids should be provided opportunities to create their own themes by using their imagination.
- Do not change the Fun Fort name.
- The new playground design should provide opportunities for kids' imagination and creativity.
- Funding opportunities should be explored to raise money for the new playground. Additionally, the new design should be designed so that it secures funding sources (funding opportunities / grants for health, exercise, education, recycled materials, etc).
- Attendees like the natural tone and warmth of wood material.
- Better security measures should be provided including the use of security cameras and motion sensor lights.
- Provide seating for adults within playground so that they can keep a close watch on children.
- Include a spray park or water feature within playground. Children enjoy playing with water and it is a good way to cool off in the hot summer months.
- Replace funding names (funding fence) that was destroyed by the fire.
- Provide a low fence enclosure so that small children can not wander away from the playground.

- The new playground should be low maintenance, but low maintenance should not govern the design.
- Attendees preferred a 'natural look' including: color scheme, and materials such as wood (or wood-like), boulders, and plants.
- Playground needs to be different than other parks in the area. What made the Fun-Fort special is that it was the only playground that was different.
- The playground design should provide for extended play time for children. Children get bored playing at traditional because these playgrounds are everywhere and all the play equipment is the same. Offer new challenges that are interesting for children.
- Use recycled materials.
- Provide shade areas and seating for adults.
- Provide shade within playground for the children.
- Provide a drinking fountain.
- Real wood should not be used. Plastic wood is a good substitute.
- Provide a spray park and interactive water feature.
- Opportunities to expand the boundaries of playground should be explored. There is no reason that the new playground should be confined to existing playground boundary.
- Build project in phases as funds are available.
- There should be no prefabricated equipment; children should experience nature.
- Build a sandbox that has hidden fossils and treasures.
- Incorporate bird blinds so that children can watch birds and habitat.
- Use plants in the new playground design that attract butterflies.
- Use insurance money as a match for new funding and grants.
- A master plan should be developed for the entire Field of Dreams (Fun-Fort) playground.
- Replace existing Fun-Fort and add new playground ideas discussed at the meeting.

- The playground should not be extravagant.
- It is important to keep the sight lines open and create fewer hiding places for children's safety.
- Expand the wood play structure and incorporate plantings, water, sand, and boulders – use a nature theme.

A questionnaire as distributed at the two meetings and filled out by some attendees. The completed questionnaires are shown in the appendix of this report.

Some of the comments from surveys include the following:

- Trees and plantings in the playground are a good idea.
- Include a water park, more climbing equipment, and swings of all types.
- Use materials that will last longer and are resistant to fire
- Add attractions for older children.
- The original 'Field of Dreams' concept must be continued; children of all ages have their own ideas of what is fun.
- Add water feature so that the kids can cool off.
- Create separate areas for different age groups.
- Add attractions for older children
- Add closer restrooms, drinking fountains, and shaded areas at playground for parents.
- Add a stream with stones, make it bigger, and add trees.
- Keep wood-based color scheme—blank canvas for kids creativity.
- The imagination-based nature of the wooden playground was its strongest appeal. It kept the playground interesting where the plastic prefabricated stuff got boring after 4 or 5 visits
- I would stop trying to fix what wasn't broken. The park was fantastic.
- Add tactile features for sight impaired kids.
- Add more trees around the picnic area
- The remaining Fun-Fort should come down and be replaced by something brand new. Bigger play area / incorporate younger 2-5 year old play area with a 5-12 year old area. Add natural elements boulders, etc.
- More tunnels, walkways, platforms, longer slides.
- Increase the size, use materials other than wood (splinters!!).

- I'd like to see more recycled materials (ie tires/rubber).
- If you add lights have them run on solar power.
- Make the Fun-Fort accessible to the trail.
- Add climbing walls and visual & auditory stimulation.

Questionnaire results indicate that the most important aspect to consider in designing a new playground, in order of importance are creativity, maintenance and durability of play equipment, exercise / gross motor skills, social interaction, ability to change / evolve. Educational experiences were considered the least important feature in playground design.

At the September 22 meeting, attendees were given two "dots" and they were asked to "vote" for the Wood, Traditional, Nature Based or a Combination type playground. The results were as follows:

Wood (plastic wood):	17 dots
Traditional:	1 dot
Nature Based:	5 dots
Combination:	14 dots

Discussion of Major Ideas

Priorities or "guiding principles" at the September 22nd meeting were developed and in approximate order of importance, they are as follows:

- 1) Children's experience at the playground and their ability to use their imaginations is most important.
- 2) Aesthetics and the visual character of the playground are important.
- 3) Construction and maintenance costs are important determinants in the design and overall project.
- 4) A master plan for the entire playground should be developed.
- 5) It is important that the community is involved in the planning and construction process.
- 6) The playground must be designed for universal access.

The next steps for the playground were discussed at the two public meetings and the following steps were agreed to be:

1. Develop master plan for entire playground.
2. Begin fundraising activities (community, and Township).
3. Develop and prioritize construction phases.

Recommendations

Based on the input received at the two community meetings and the discussion by attendees, the consultants have developed the followings recommendations:

1. Prepare a master plan for the replacement of the entire Fun Fort. Since the useful life span of the remaining Fun Fort is only about 5 years, plan for the replacement of the entire structure now..
2. Design the master plan so that the Fun Fort can be constructed in phases. The Township must use the insurance money from the fire settlement by June 2012. At least the initial section of the playground must be built by then.
3. Use the insurance settlement monies as a match to either state or other funding. Do not allow this money to be used without a match.
4. Design a “combination playground” that utilizes a variety of materials and provides a wide range of activities and play experiences.
5. Design for incorporation of educational and interpretive information in the playground.
6. Design for low maintenance.
7. Consider a different location for the playground and/or expanding the current footprint of the existing playground during the master plan design.
8. Plan for utilizing a mixture of material types in the playground design. There are many reasons to consider several types of materials for the playground structures. These reasons include:
 - a. Different types of play equipment / experiences will be better suited to one type of materials than another. For example, slides are best made from plastics or metal. Another examples is that while a swing frame structure can be made of wood timbers, (as are the current Fun Fort swings) a metal frame, selected for compatibility with other playground materials, may be a more cost-efficient and durable choice.
 - b. Found materials such as boulders, logs, used pavers, etc. are very cost effective materials and provide for great play experiences.

- c. Land forms (soil) is an inexpensive but effective way to create interest and added dimensions to a playground.
 - d. Plants are low cost and can create a dynamic, changing aspect to the playground.
9. Initiate a range of fund-raising activities as soon as possible to ensure that the playground can be constructed. The renovated playground can be funded through grant programs whereby the Township can leverage municipal funds (or use fire insurance monies) to achieve the maximum amount of improvements for the renovated playground. The following are descriptions of the programs and/or resources from which funding may be sought for the development of proposed playground facilities:

Legislative Funding

State officials can often include items into legislation for worthy projects in their districts. A conversation between Township officials and legislators is the way to begin this process.

PA Department of Recreation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnership Program.

The DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) provides funding for communities and nonprofit organizations to acquire, plan and implement open space, conservation and recreation resources, including playgrounds. DCNR has grant application periods annually, with applications typically due in mid-April. State funds can be used for discrete projects or as a match to other funds. DCNR requires a 50-50 match (cash or in kind services) to its grant awards for development projects. Lower Allen Township is familiar with this program and has previously DCNR funds. More information on this program can be found at the DCNR website:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/> .

DCED Community Revitalization Funds

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Community Revitalization Fund is a state program that supports local initiatives that improve the stability of communities and enhance local

economies. This agency has an open application period throughout the year, but applications should be submitted as early as possible in the fiscal year after June 30. The grant program covers a wide range of eligible uses including acquisition of land, buildings, and right-of-ways; trail, civic, and recreation projects; programs and developments that build capacity of the local community and relevant local organizations to better serve the needs of the community, and other reasonable and necessary expenses related to community-based activities.

Active support of the district's state senator and / or state representative is critical in a successful grant application. While these funds are presently limited, they still should be sought. More information on this program can be found at the DCED website:

<http://www.newpa.com/find-and-apply-for-funding/funding-andprogram-finder/index.aspx>.

Land Partnerships Program, Cumberland County - This program funds Cumberland County land preservation, parks / trails, and land use planning type projects. Currently there are no funds available, however, additional funds for this program might become available in the future.

Cumberland County TreeVitalize Grant Program is a partnership with Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Penn State Extension Urban Forestry and the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners to provide matching grants to local communities for the restoration of tree cover along streets, in parks and in other public spaces throughout Cumberland County.

Private foundations

There are various corporations and foundations, which support public works such as park and playground improvements. The competition for these funds has become brisk, but the opportunities should be re-searched.

Friends-of-the-Fun-Fort

The establishment of a non-profit (501 C3) can help raise grass roots funding for the playground and be a conduit for tax deductible donations and foundation funding

9. Since the insurance carrier requires that the renovated playground be installed by June 2012 the following schedule is recommended.

December 2010 - April 2011	Develop Master Plan for entire playground
January 2011-Feb. 2012	Fund raising, grant applications and activities
April 2011	Submit DCNR/DCED/ County applications
December 2011	DCNR and other funds awarded
December – March 2012	Prepare Construction Documents
March - April 2012	Bidding for Construction
May 2012	Award Construction Bid

APPENDIX

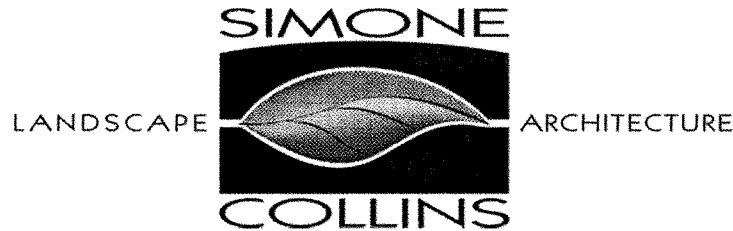
- 9/22/10 -Meeting Sign in Sheet
- 9/25/10 -Meeting Sign in Sheet
- 9/22/10 - Record Cards
- 9/25/10 - Record Cards
- Questionnaires
- The Patriot News, 'Rallying for Fun', by Monica von Dobeneck, 9/25/10
- Public Meeting PowerPoint Presentation

September 22, 2010
6 - 8 pm

[illegible]

119 EAST LAFAYETTE STREET NORRISTOWN, PA 19401
PHONE: 610.239.7601 FAX: 610.239.7606
WWW.SIMONECOLLINS.COM

[illegible]



9/23/10

Field Of Dreams Restoration Project – Community Participation

Lower Allen Township, PA
SC#10074.10

CARDS RECORD – Public Meeting #1, held 9/22/10, 6 PM at Lower Allen Township Municipal Services Center, Gorgas Hall

Goals

- Direction for New Playground
- Develop consensus
- Public Participation

Facts

- Age groups
- ADA accessibility
- Wood play structure requires more maintenance than other play structures
- New play structure must be durable
- Most park users travel 5 to 10 minutes to reach park
- Fun Fort is a regional destination playground
- People travel to Fun Fort because it is unique
- Pre-fabricated playgrounds can be boring for a child
- Wood Structure allows children to use their creativity / more interesting than other playgrounds
- Parents do not fit in small spaces of Fun Fort / Difficult to watch children

Concepts

- Provide opportunities for social interaction
- Provide creativity for children
- Provide opportunities for children to exercise
- Restore Fun Fort
- Rebuild playground
- Nature-based playground will require more maintenance
- Provide separate areas for different age groups
- Separate older kid play areas from toddler play areas
- Use various materials for new playground
- Theme for Park
- Keep Fun Fort theme
- New playground design should provide opportunities for kids' imagination and creativity
- No park theme - kids create their own themes using their imagination
- Funding opportunities
- Like natural tone and warmth of wood material
- Provide security cameras and lighting
- Provide seating for adults within playground
- Spray Park or water feature

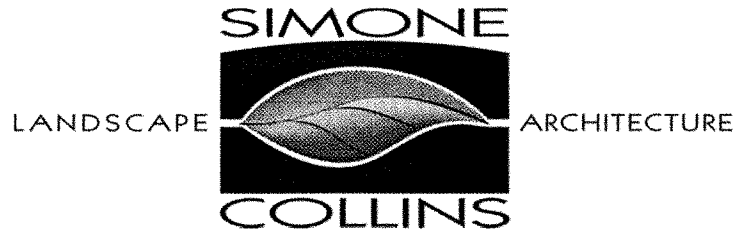
- Replace funding names (funding fence) that were destroyed in fire
- Low fence enclosure
- Low maintenance (not high maintenance)
- Natural look (color scheme, wood, boulders, plants)
- Safe materials – not susceptible to fire
- Design playground to secure funding sources (exercise, education, other?)
- Allow for kids imagination
- Playground needs to be different than other parks in the area
- Park design should extend play time for kids / Make it interesting
- Use recycled materials
- Provide Shade areas for adults
- Provide shade within playground
- Drinking fountain
- Spray park / interactive water feature
- Expand boundaries of playground (should not be confined to existing area)
- Build in Phases
- No prefabricated equipment / kids should experience nature

Priorities

- Playground should be design to foster kids imagination / creativity
- Aesthetics
- Cost
- Maintenance
- Children's comfort (material)
- Master Plan for entire playground
- Community Involvement
- June 26, 2012 playground deadline – for insurance
- Universal Design (design for all users: physical handicap, blind, etc.)

Next Steps:

- Master Plan
- Fundraising (community, grants, corporations, other?)
- Construction (Phases?)



9/30/10

Field Of Dreams Restoration Project – Community Participation

Lower Allen Township, PA

SC#10074.10

CARDS RECORD – Public Meeting #2, held 9/25/10, 10 AM at Lower Allen Township Municipal Services Center, Gorgas Hall

Goals

- Direction for New Playground
- Develop consensus
- Public Participation

Facts

- All play structures require ADA accessibility
- Wood play structures are more susceptible to fire
- Maintenance and durability of play equipment
- Life span of existing structure is approximately 5 years

Concepts

- Provide opportunities for social interaction
- Provide creativity for children
- Provide opportunities for social interaction
- Could use bird blinds
- Playground needs to be low maintenance
- Create a sandbox that has hidden fossils in sand.
- Restore Fun Fort – don't change anything
- Add plants that attract butterflies
- Replace funding donor names that were lost in fire and the new playground should provide areas for new donor names.
- PA Recreation Act.
- The new playground should not be extravagant
- Expand on wood structures but add plantings, water, and boulders – use a Nature Theme
- Include a water feature at rebuilt playground
- It is important to keep sight lines open and create less hiding places for children's safety and for playground security.
- Add motion sensor lights and security cameras.
- Use recycled materials in new playground design
- Use insurance money as a match for new funding and grants
- Need a master plan for the entire Field of Dreams playground
- Replace Fun Fort and add new playground ideas

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): _____

2. Phone / email (optional): _____

3. Where do you live? (Check one)

☒ in Lower Allen Township

☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)

☐ Less than ½ mile

☐ ½ mile to 1 mile

☒ 1 to 2 miles

☐ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

 1 1-4 age(s) - *grand child; visits often*

 5-7 age(s)

 7-12 age(s)

 13-18 age(s)

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

 6 maintenance and durability of play equipment

 3 exercise / gross motor skills

 2 social interaction

 4 educational experiences

 1 creativity

 5 ability to change / evolve

8. 7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Somehow make it less destructable, using materials that may last longer.

7. 8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

I might add some attractions for older children -

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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1. Name (optional): Les Hoffman

2. Phone / email (optional): 766-3877

3. Where do you live? (Check one)
☐ in Lower Allen Township
☒ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
☐ Less than 1/2 mile
☒ 1/2 mile to 1 mile
☐ 1 to 2 miles
☐ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

_____ 1-4 age(s)

_____ 5-7 age(s)

_____ 7-12 age(s)

_____ 13-18 age(s)

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

3 maintenance and durability of play equipment

1 exercise / gross motor skills

5 social interaction

2 educational experiences

4 creativity

6 ability to change / evolve

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): RED YOUNG

2. Phone / email (optional): 717-8293255 (C) 717-161-4050

3. Where do you live? (Check one)

☒ in Lower Allen Township

☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)

☐ Less than 1/2 mile

☐ 1/2 mile to 1 mile

☒ 1 to 2 miles

☐ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

1 1-4 age(s)

1 5-7 age(s)

5 7-12 age(s)

1 13-18 age(s)

2 grand children

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

1 maintenance and durability of play equipment

2 exercise / gross motor skills

3 social interaction

4 educational experiences

5 creativity

6 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

The original field of dreams' concept must
be continued.
'Children' of all ages have their own ideas of
what is fun.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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1. Name (optional): ROBERT L. CLINE

2. Phone / email (optional): 761-4176

3. Where do you live? (Check one)
☒ in Lower Allen Township
☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
☐ Less than ½ mile
☐ ½ mile to 1 mile
☐ 1 to 2 miles
☒ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

_____ 1-4 age(s)

_____ 5-7 age(s)

_____ 7-12 age(s)

_____ 13-18 age(s)

*NONE
4 GRAND KIDS*

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

1 maintenance and durability of play equipment

2 exercise / gross motor skills

3 social interaction

5 educational experiences

4 creativity

6 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

REST ROOMS + SHADED AREAS
AT PLAY GROUND FOR PARENTS

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

COMPOSITE WOODS

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): Nicole Wagman

2. Phone / email (optional): TATHRIN@gmail.com

3. Where do you live? (Check one)

☒ in Lower Allen Township

☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)

☐ Less than ½ mile

☐ ½ mile to 1 mile

☐ 1 to 2 miles

☒ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

_____ 1-4 age(s)

_____ 5-7 age(s)

_____ 7-12 age(s)

_____ 13-18 age(s)

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

3 maintenance and durability of play equipment

2 exercise / gross motor skills

6 social interaction

4 educational experiences

1 creativity

5 ability to change / evolve

* Good plan: to conceive "master plan" with leathers, then focus on replacing burned section first for insurance reasons and slowly do the rest piece meal.

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Maybe a stream with stones? Otherwise the only improvement would be to make it bigger. ☺ And trees are always good. It certainly would be a waste to demolish what remains, arbitrarily. (Definitely keep the natural, wood-based color scheme; it leaves the structure as a blank canvas in a kid's mind, where too much color definition hampers their ability to paint in their imagination.)

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Perhaps more of the trex rather than plain wood; it's smoother and stays cooler in hot weather and has a natural look yet it, like wood, is far superior to the painful temperature variations of metal and plastic, the latter of which also tends to stick to sweaty skin.

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

The imagination based nature of the wooden playground was its strongest appeal. It kept the playground interesting where the plastic prefab stuff got boring after four or five visits. The slides and swings were more than just the raw elements, they were part of a castle or boat or whatever you wanted to pretend they were. The wooden playground stimulates more mental creativity. Furthermore, the nature-based playgrounds we discussed seem lovely but utterly, impossibly impractical. Additionally, the Field of Dreams is located in the huge Lower Allen Park so there's already raw nature all around. As a kid, I tended to run back and forth.

Also there's been lots of talk about eliminating the kid-sized spaces and putting in parental seating within the guts of the playground. I know we're in the age of hover-parenting, but I think that's a bad idea. Allow the children the pretense of freedom. It's less fun when you know you're playing under immediate supervision. The gazebos within the playground allow parents to be close enough for safety,

Thank you for your participation! but it means the kids won't be constantly in parental eyelines, which allows them to play more freely while still being close enough to the parents in case they're needed. The point is to provide a fun place for children to play.

Also trex is recycled.

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1. Name (optional): Erin Eckert

2. Phone / email (optional): _____

3. Where do you live? (Check one)

☐ in Lower Allen Township

☒ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)

☐ Less than 1/2 mile

☐ 1/2 mile to 1 mile

☐ 1 to 2 miles

☒ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

1 8 sometimes

1-4 age(s)

_____ 5-7 age(s)

_____ 7-12 age(s)

_____ 13-18 age(s)

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

1 maintenance and durability of play equipment

4 exercise / gross motor skills

2 social interaction

5 educational experiences

3 creativity

6 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

I would stop trying to fix

What wasn't broken.

The upark was fantastic.

The park was fantastic.
I do think age specific sections could
be good, though.

Is good, though.

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

I really enjoyed the Fun Ford the way

It was. I don't think that the necessity exists to completely redesign the park.

exists to completely redesign the park.

I think new aspects could be fun, but that the basic design was fairly good.

Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

The basic design was fairly good

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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1. Name (optional): Kathy Kyle

2. Phone / email (optional): KmKyle@excite.com

3. Where do you live? (Check one)
☒ in Lower Allen Township
☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
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6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

 2 maintenance and durability of play equipment

 2 exercise / gross motor skills

 1 social interaction

 5 educational experiences

 1 creativity

 5 ability to change / evolve

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1. Name (optional): Beth Masland

2. Phone / email (optional): 763-8818

3. Where do you live? (Check one)

☒ in Lower Allen Township

☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)

☐ Less than 1/2 mile

☐ 1/2 mile to 1 mile

☐ 1 to 2 miles

☒ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

 1-4 age(s)

 5-7 age(s)

 7-12 age(s)

 13-18 age(s)

0 mine were 4-6 when it was built

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

4 maintenance and durability of play equipment

3 exercise / gross motor skills

1 social interaction

5 educational experiences

2 creativity

6 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Hot area good idea.

More trees & picnic areas around it.

Misting "booth" / "cave" - should be separate

Boulders idea nice.

Tactile for blind kids

"sight impaired"

P.C.O.

on one side - keep

away from sand &

fantasy areas

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Security light

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Keep it wood looking. Browns/Greens

Get more children here for Saturday's meeting.

Thank you for your participation!

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1. Name (optional): ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Jim Kaiser (member of the township rec & park board)
2. Phone / email (optional): 774-2081 jbk@kaiserpet.com Verizon.net
3. Where do you live? (Check one)
☒ in Lower Allen Township
☐ outside Lower Allen Township
4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
☐ Less than 1/2 mile
☐ 1/2 mile to 1 mile
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5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)
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1 7-12 age(s)
 13-18 age(s)
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5 maintenance and durability of play equipment
2 exercise / gross motor skills
3 social interaction
6 educational experiences
1 creativity
4 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Not
really add
anything but,

I think that the Renaming Fun Fort should
ALL COME DOWN AND BE REPLACED BY SOMETHING
BRAND NEW. -

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Bigger - play area / incorporate younger 2-5 yr old
play area with 5-12 year old with a more natural element
boulders / animals -

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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1. Name (optional): _____

2. Phone / email (optional): _____

3. Where do you live? (Check one)

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_____ 5-7 age(s)

2 7-12 age(s)

_____ 13-18 age(s)

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

4 maintenance and durability of play equipment

2 exercise / gross motor skills

6 social interaction

5 educational experiences

3 creativity

1 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

MORE TUNNELS, WALKWAYS, PLATFORMS

LONGER SLIDES

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

INCREASE THE SIZE

USE MATERIAL OTHER THAN WOOD (SPLINTERS!!)

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

The existing Field of Dreams Playground (aka Fun Fort) was recently partially destroyed by a fire. Lower Allen Township would like to replace this playground facility. The Township is currently conducting a community participation process to develop recommendations for a new park including; types of play equipment to be provided and if the playground should remain in its present location, or be moved to another location in the park, as recommended by the 2005 master plan for the park.

You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): Angela Kreiser
2. Phone / email (optional): angela.kreiser@verizon.net
3. Where do you live? (Check one)
 - ☒ in Lower Allen Township
 - ☐ outside Lower Allen Township
4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
 - ☐ Less than ½ mile
 - ☐ ½ mile to 1 mile
 - ☐ 1 to 2 miles
 - ☒ 2+ miles
5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)
 - 1-4 age(s)
 - 5-7 age(s)
 - 1 7-12 age(s)
 - 1 13-18 age(s)
6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)
 - 4 maintenance and durability of play equipment
 - 6 exercise / gross motor skills
 - 2 social interaction
 - 5 educational experiences
 - 1 creativity
 - 3 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Sprayers for hot days

Visual & auditory stimulation

Climbing walls/structures

Nearby skateboard park nearby for the older kids.

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Accessible by trail. Right now, it's close to the parking lot, which is a nice convenience, but I worry about kids darting out.

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

I'd like to see more recycled materials (ie tire/rubber)

I like the boulders when

My kids liked the "smaller" parts of the playground - the "telephone" tubes, finding the colored shapes, the "musical" metal, etc.

If you put in lights, have them run on solar power.

Ha! Wouldn't it be nice to channel (absorb) the children's energy and feed it back to the grid? There are "discotheques" in Europe that have wind floors, and the dancing of the patrons pays for the electricity for the business. I have big dreams!

Perhaps instead of using the word "cost," we can focus on "value."

I think kids know the difference between real wood and the fake stuff.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): Aubrey Kreiser
2. Phone / email (optional): (717) 973-9828 aubreykreiser8776@verizon.net
3. Where do you live? (Check one)
 - ☒ in Lower Allen Township
 - ☐ outside Lower Allen Township
4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
 - ☐ Less than 1/2 mile
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 - ☐ 1 to 2 miles
 - ☒ 2+ miles
5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)
 - 1-4 age(s)
 - 5-7 age(s)
 - 1 7-12 age(s)
 - 1 13-18 age(s)
6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)
 - 6 maintenance and durability of play equipment
 - 3 exercise / gross motor skills
 - 5 social interaction
 - 2 educational experiences
 - 1 creativity
 - 4 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

I think I would add a water park attachment for hot days. I would also add things that kids could change. I might add career centers that would enhance kids' future. I would add ramps for wheel chair accessibility, so that no one gets left out.

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

I would make the playground out of things that are resistant to fire, rain, wind, heat, lightning, storms, trees, etc.

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

I don't know if we will ever rebuild the fun but first it
 dreams. With the way the country is today, there may be
 little fundraising efforts. There are new laws. I mean, come
 on! Times have changed a lot since the Fun But First it
 Dreams was built at least a decade ago. Suppose you
 were walking into a gas station 10 years ago. You want to
 buy a bottle of soda. It would cost \$1.00. Now, you do
 the same thing 10 years later. Now it costs about \$1.25.
 Technology has evolved over a period of years. The 3
 just like a ball became a game. First, there has to be
 an idea. In this case, the kids have an idea for a
 brand new playground. So they tell their parents and
 the idea gets approved for a town council. At this point, the
 idea is now a ball. Now there is council.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

The existing Field of Dreams Playground (aka Fun Fort) was recently partially destroyed by a fire. Lower Allen Township would like to replace this playground facility. The Township is currently conducting a community participation process to develop recommendations for a new park including; types of play equipment to be provided and if the playground should remain in its present location, or be moved to another location in the park, as recommended by the 2005 master plan for the park.

You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): JACKIE JUMPER
2. Phone / email (optional): 697-8376 rjjumper@comcast.net
3. Where do you live? (Check one)
☒ in Lower Allen Township
☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
☒ Less than 1/2 mile my land borders the park
☐ 1/2 mile to 1 mile
☐ 1 to 2 miles
☐ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

0 - no children in house just grandchildren
 1-4 age(s)
 5-7 age(s)
 7-12 age(s)
 13-18 age(s)
 and great grandchildren who visit and friends with kids who visit - as well as my walks in park

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

6 maintenance and durability of play equipment
1 exercise / gross motor skills
4 social interaction
2 educational experiences
3 creativity
5 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

do an area age appropriate for toddler group - so older kids are not always overpowering areas of smaller ones

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

- have bathrooms, water fountains closer to play areas -
- more adult / caretakers of kids / areas for shade + rest

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

I feel that the uniqueness of Lower Allen Park as the big back yard of the community. It has a mix of nature, some areas to play sports (basketball, tennis, baseball) but do not add more fields than already there. With all the developments and open areas disappearing and build up of areas, having the park where not only kids can get the feel of having a big back yard to play in but adults can sit to watch a sunrise or sunset in a local country setting.

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): _____

2. Phone / email (optional): _____

3. Where do you live? (Check one)

☒ in Lower Allen Township

☐ outside Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)

☐ Less than ½ mile

☐ ½ mile to 1 mile

☐ 1 to 2 miles

☒ 2+ miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

_____ 1-4 age(s)

_____ 5-7 age(s)

_____ 7-12 age(s)

2 13-18 age(s)

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

1 maintenance and durability of play equipment

3 exercise / gross motor skills

3 social interaction

3 educational experiences

3 creativity

6 ability to change / evolve

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): Jayne Johnson
2. Phone / email (optional): hortjayne@gmail.com
3. Where do you live? (Check one)
 - ☐ in Lower Allen Township
 - ☒ outside Lower Allen Township
4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
 - ☐ Less than ½ mile
 - ☐ ½ mile to 1 mile
 - ☐ 1 to 2 miles
 - ☒ 2+ miles
5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)
 - _____ 1-4 age(s)
 - _____ 5-7 age(s)
 - _____ 7-12 age(s)
 - _____ 13-18 age(s) n/a children are all over 18
6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)
 - 1 maintenance and durability of play equipment Fireproof!
 - 4 exercise / gross motor skills
 - 5 social interaction
 - 6 educational experiences
 - 2 creativity
 - 3 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Some water features so the kids could cool off.

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

The sand area was too close to the rest of the equipment. Sand was everywhere!

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Our family helped to build the Fun Fort and all of our "kids" are now in their 20s.

They all want to help rebuild the playground for future generations. Get input from the original users so they can still feel that sense of "ownership."

I really like the recycled materials idea! ☺

Thank you for your participation!

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional): RICK GROVE
2. Phone / email (optional): R.GROVE @ EPIX.NET
3. Where do you live? (Check one)
 - ☒ in Lower Allen Township
 - ☐ outside Lower Allen Township
4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
 - ☐ Less than 1/2 mile
 - ☐ 1/2 mile to 1 mile
 - ☐ 1 to 2 miles
 - ☒ 2+ miles
5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations) NONE
 - 1-4 age(s)
 - 5-7 age(s)
 - 7-12 age(s)
 - 13-18 age(s)
6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground? (number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)
 - 3 maintenance and durability of play equipment
 - 5 exercise / gross motor skills
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Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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You are invited to be part of the community participation process by telling us about yourself and what you would like to see happen with the playground facility. Please take a moment to fill out the questionnaire below and return it before the end of the meeting.

1. Name (optional):
2. Phone / email (optional):
3. Where do you live? (Check one)
 - ☐ in Lower Allen Township
 - ☐ outside Lower Allen Township

John Devine

717-731-0916

JohnP.Devine@gmail.com

I live in Lower Allen Township

4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)

- ☐ Less than 2 mile
- ☐ 2 mile to 5 miles - **← I have to travel about 5 miles.**
- ☐ over 10 miles

5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)

_____ 1-4 age(s)

_____ 5-7 age(s)

_____ 7-12 age(s)

_____ 13-18 age(s)

We have one child...age 20 living at home.

6. What are the most important things to consider in designing a new playground?

(number each in order of importance, 1 = most important, 6 = least important)

2 maintenance and durability of play equipment

1 exercise / gross motor skills

3 social interaction

6 educational experiences

4 creativity

5 ability to change / evolve

7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

A) Shade trees, protection from excessive heat and direct UV sunlight.

B) An adult exercise area, for parents

C) A water/sprinkler fun area, cooling station for very hot days.

D) A fully stocked first aid station to treat cuts/scrapes sprains & bruises.

8. If you could change anything about the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Location - While the Lower Allen Community Park is a great place, If I could change anything about the Fun Fort Playground it would be the location.

It would be more convenient for many more people if it were closer to the majority of the township residents.

I think closer to the Cedar Cliff area would make an ideal location.

9. Please share any comments or suggestions. Add a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

Thank you for your participation!

Please Email, Mail or Return the Completed Survey to:

Mail:

Field of Dreams Restoration Project - Questionnaire

c/o Thomas B. Vernau, Jr., Township Manager

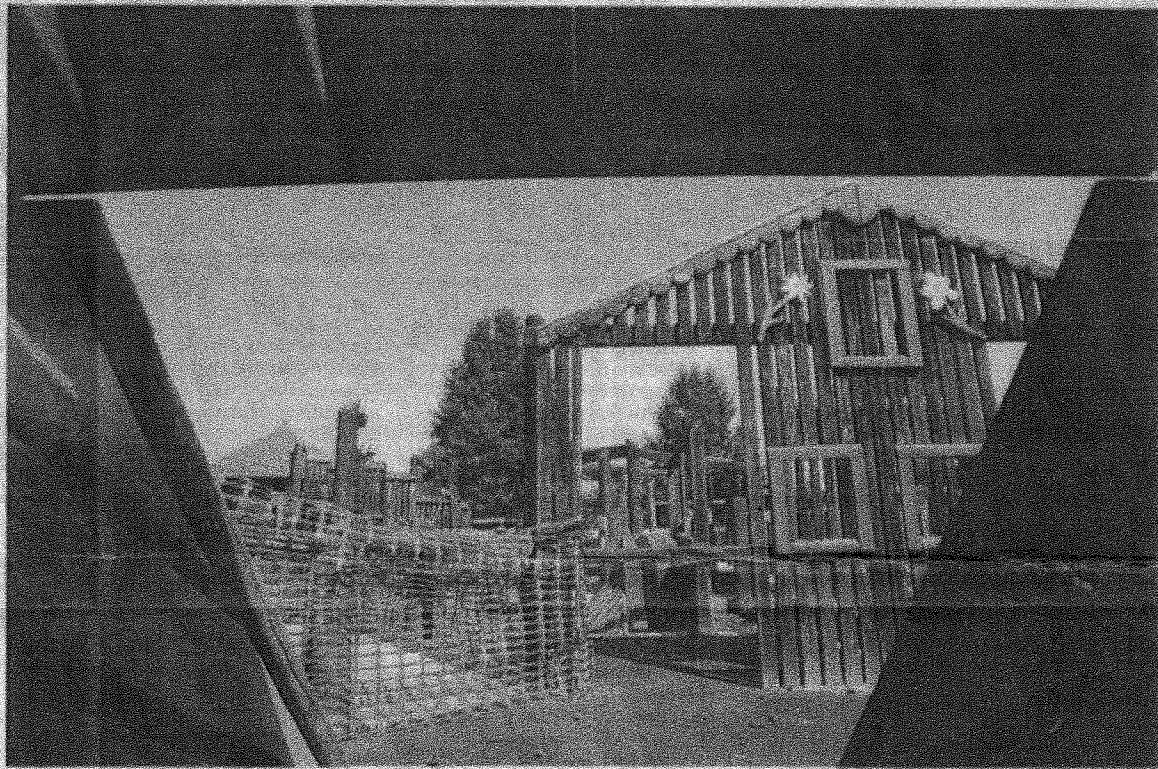
Lower Allen Township

2233 Gettysburg Road

Camp Hill, PA 17011

Email: thomas_vernau@lower-allen.pa.us

LOWER ALLEN TWP. Residents make plans to rebuild the Fun Fort damaged by arson in June.



JENNY KANE, The Patriot-News

Part of Lower Allen Twp.'s Fun Fort was destroyed by arson in June, but half of it remains open to the public.

Rallying for Fun

BY MONICA VON DOBENECK
mdobeneck@patriot-news.com

How to help

WHAT: Second brainstorming session on rebuilding the Fun Fort

WHEN: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. today

WHERE: Lower Allen Twp. Municipal Building, 2233 Gettysburg Road

Kathy Kyle took it personally when someone set the Fun Fort in Lower Allen Twp.'s community park on fire in June. She spent three years helping to raise \$130,000 for the wooden structure, now 17 years old.

"It's like they took a piece of your art and slashed it," she said.

On Wednesday, Kyle joined a group who met with landscape architects at the Lower Allen Twp. Municipal Building to talk about ways to rebuild. Among those joining her were her daughter, Nicole Wagman, 24, who grew up clambering around the Fun Fort and is determined to see it rise again.

The session was led by Peter Simone, landscape architect with Simone Collins of Berwyn. He will lead another session from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. today.

Several recommendations for the playground's future came out of the first session.

People in attendance said they liked the Fun Fort the way it was, the natural look of wood, the free forms which helped children's imaginations roam. They rejected the idea of colored plastic playgrounds like the ones at the elementary schools.

"All elementary schools have plastic playgrounds," Kyle said. "People travel here because the Fun Fort is unique. It's in the middle of nowhere, so you need a reason to go."

She said the Fun Fort became the focus of the

Please see **FORT** on Page A4

FORT

Continued from Page A3

110-acre Lower Allen Community Park after it was built. Soccer and baseball fields followed, and younger children could play for hours at the Fun Fort while their older siblings competed on teams, she said. It has made the park a destination.

Erin Eckert, 25, traveled from New Bloomfield in Perry County as a child to visit the Fun Fort. Now she'd like to bring her 3-year-old niece to play, and she's ready to wield a hammer or a paintbrush to bring it back to life.

Wood is in

They said they liked the wood look, but residents said a composite with the look and feel of wood would be fine. Composites are less flammable and easier to maintain, Simone said.

According to township manager Tom Vernau, people who have called his office have said "they want it to look a lot like it looked before, but not catch fire."

Recycled materials and elements of nature like boulders could also be incorporated into the structure, Simone said. A small water feature is another possibility. Residents said they want it to be interactive for children with disabilities.

Traditional playgrounds can get boring after a few visits, Wagman said. The Fun Fort "was more imagination based," she said. A section of it could be a ship, a castle or a home. Township Commissioner Richard Schin said one grandson told him the structure was a spaceship, the other said it was a submarine.

"It can change into whatever they were thinking that day," Kyle said.

Total rebuild favored

The residents also agreed they would like to see the whole playground rebuilt, rather than just the section destroyed by fire. The undamaged part of the Fun Fort remains open.

Park superintendent Jim Chianos said the Fun Fort was nearing the end of its



JENNY KANE, The Patriot-News

Residents at Wednesday's meeting agreed they would like to see the whole playground rebuilt, rather than just the section destroyed by fire.

life span and would probably have to be replaced within five years or so anyway.

Part of the money for rebuilding will come from insurance, but fundraisers will be necessary, Vernau said. Any sections paid for through insurance must be completed by June 2012, he said. Simone said a two-year time frame is realistic. After the public sessions, he will start to develop a master plan.

Beth Masland said building the fort brought the community together. It was designed by kids and built by volunteers. She hopes the same thing can happen again, despite the economy.

Several organizations have offered their help, including the high school football team, Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts, she said. All high school students are expected to do community service, and this could be a perfect project, she said.

Fun Fort Workshop - Agenda

Meeting #1 -

Wednesday, Sept 22th, 6 – 8 pm

Introduction and schedule

- Two Community Meetings / Present Findings

Presentation

- Project objectives
- Lower Allen Community Park and Fun Fort
- Location options
- What is play, playgrounds types, and play equipment

Discussion

- Questionnaire
- Community Fund - Raising

Meeting #2 -

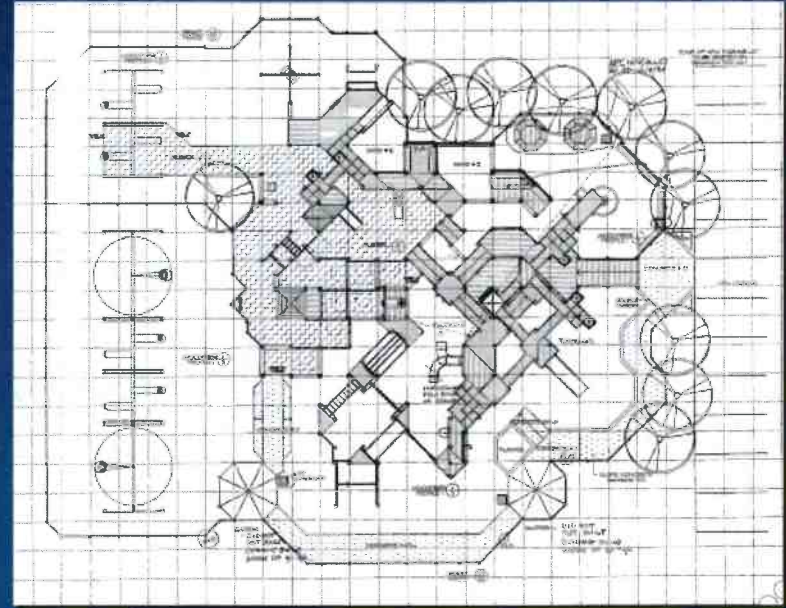
Saturday, Sept 25th, 10 am – 2 pm



Field of Dreams Restoration Workshop Project

Existing playground partially destroyed by fire.

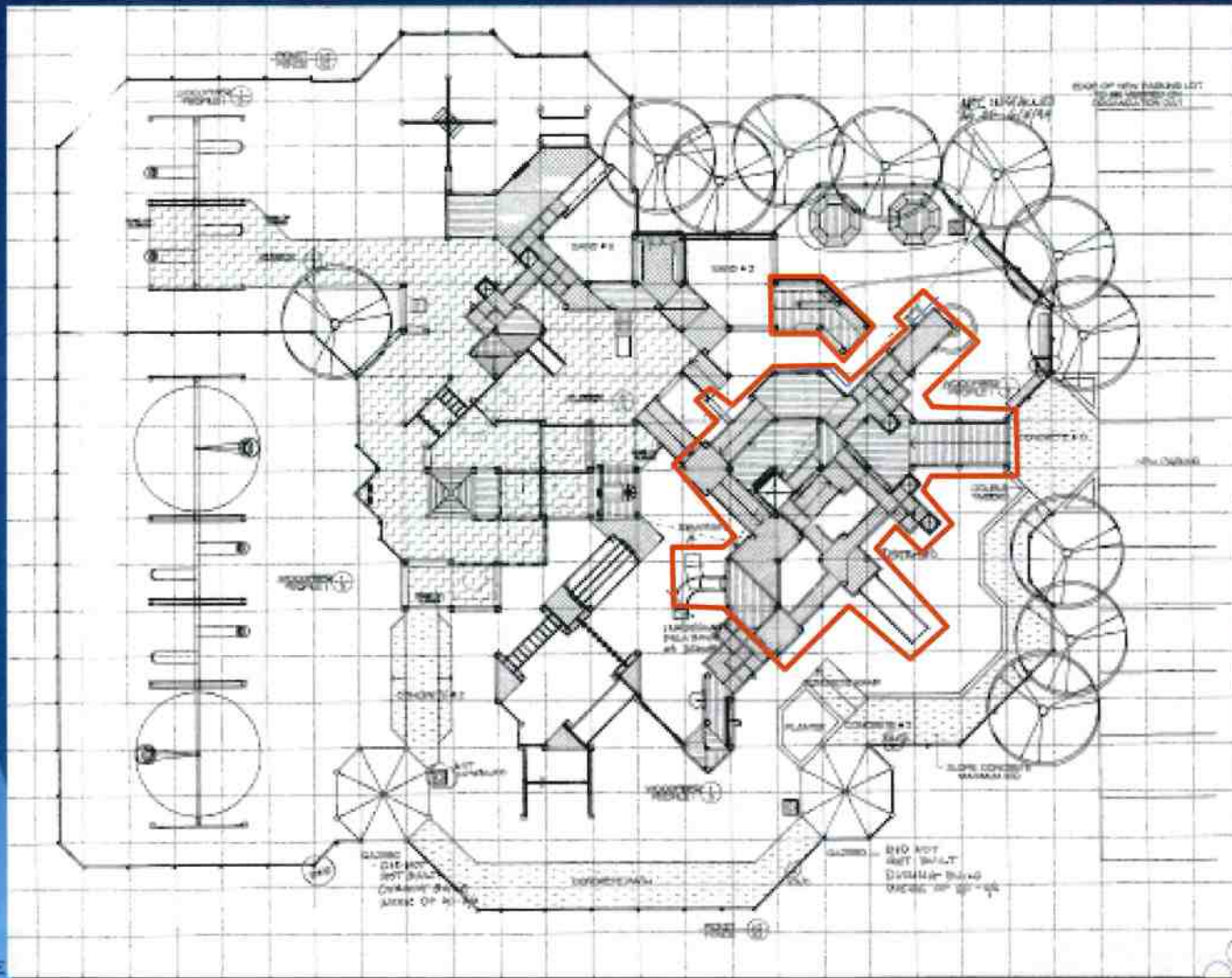
The purpose of the **Field of Dreams Playground Restoration Project** is to set goals and recommendations, through a community participation process, for a new playground facility.



Lower Allen Twp Community Park Master Plan - 2005



Fun Fort



Fun Fort



existing conditions

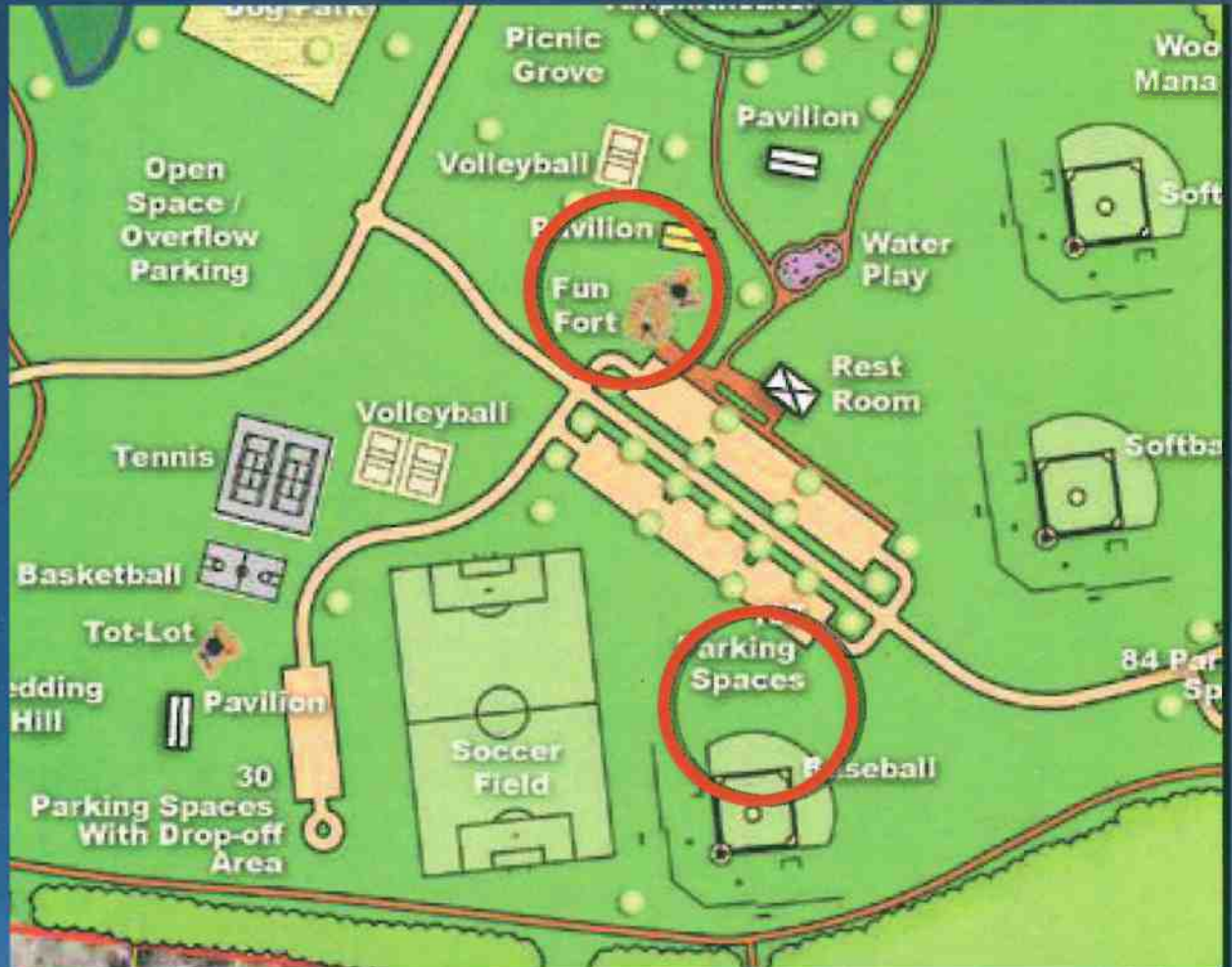
Field of Dreams Playground Restoration Project - Lower Allen Township - September 2010

2005 Master Plan recommendation is to relocate Fun Fort to a central location when the current facility needs to be replaced



Location options

- ☐ Rebuild the portion of the destroyed facility in the same location and utilize portions of the play structure that remains.
- ☐ Remove the remaining structure and build a new structure in the same location.
- ☐ Remove the remaining structure and build a new structure in a different location in the park, as recommended in the 2005 master plan.



What is play?

Play is essential to the healthy physical and mental development of a child. Play helps kids exercise creativity and develop imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive and emotional strength.

Children learn how to interact, face fears, cultivate confidence and enrich their competencies and resiliency – all through play.



Wooden playgrounds (Leathers & Associates)



Wooden playgrounds (Leathers & Associates)



Wooden playgrounds

pros:

- ✓ Creative design features and visually attractive
- ✓ more natural looking than prefabricated play structures
- ✓ Wood does not get hot in the summer or freeze in the winter (like metal) causing discomfort to children

cons:

- ✓ Long-term maintenance – wood is not as durable as pre-manufactured play equipment
- ✓ Safety – susceptible to fire
- ✓ May cause splinters
- ✓ Potential higher maintenance costs than pre-manufactured play equipment

Traditional playgrounds

Traditional or pre-manufactured play ground structures come in many styles and play component combinations, are ADA accessible, and can be designed for various age groups



Traditional playgrounds

swings



climbing



Traditional playgrounds

slides



Traditional playgrounds

accessibility



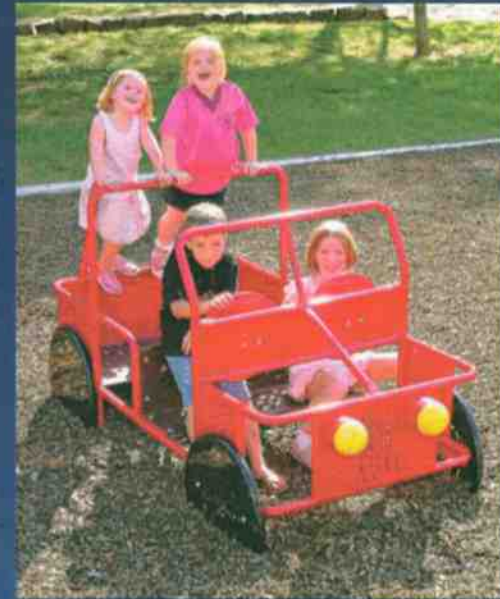
Traditional playgrounds

Exercise



Traditional playgrounds

many accessory play component options



Traditional playgrounds

pros:

- ✓ Long-term maintenance – very durable
- ✓ Safety – Manufacturers insured
- ✓ Many to choose from
- ✓ Generally lowest maintenance costs

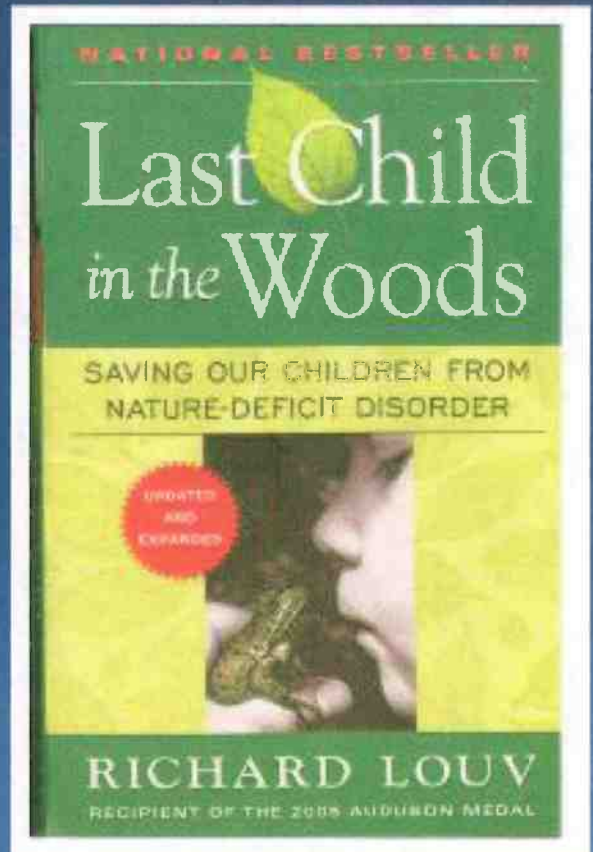
cons:

- ✓ Creativity may be lacking on some models
- ✓ Not natural looking
- ✓ Metal parks may get hot in the summer and cold in the winter causing discomfort to children

Nature based playgrounds

Nature based playgrounds focus on creating settings to enable social play (pretending) and constructive play (building).

These playgrounds promote open ended experimentation and include tunnels, tree houses, and provide opportunities for kids to play with natural elements such as sand, water, rock wood and living plants.



Nature based playgrounds

Water



Nature based playgrounds

Plants, including trees, bushes, flowers and long grasses



Nature based playgrounds

Plants, including trees, bushes, flowers and long grasses



Field of Dreams Playground Restoration Project - Lower Allen Township - September 2010

Nature based playgrounds

Exploration - Animals and other living things



Searching for insects



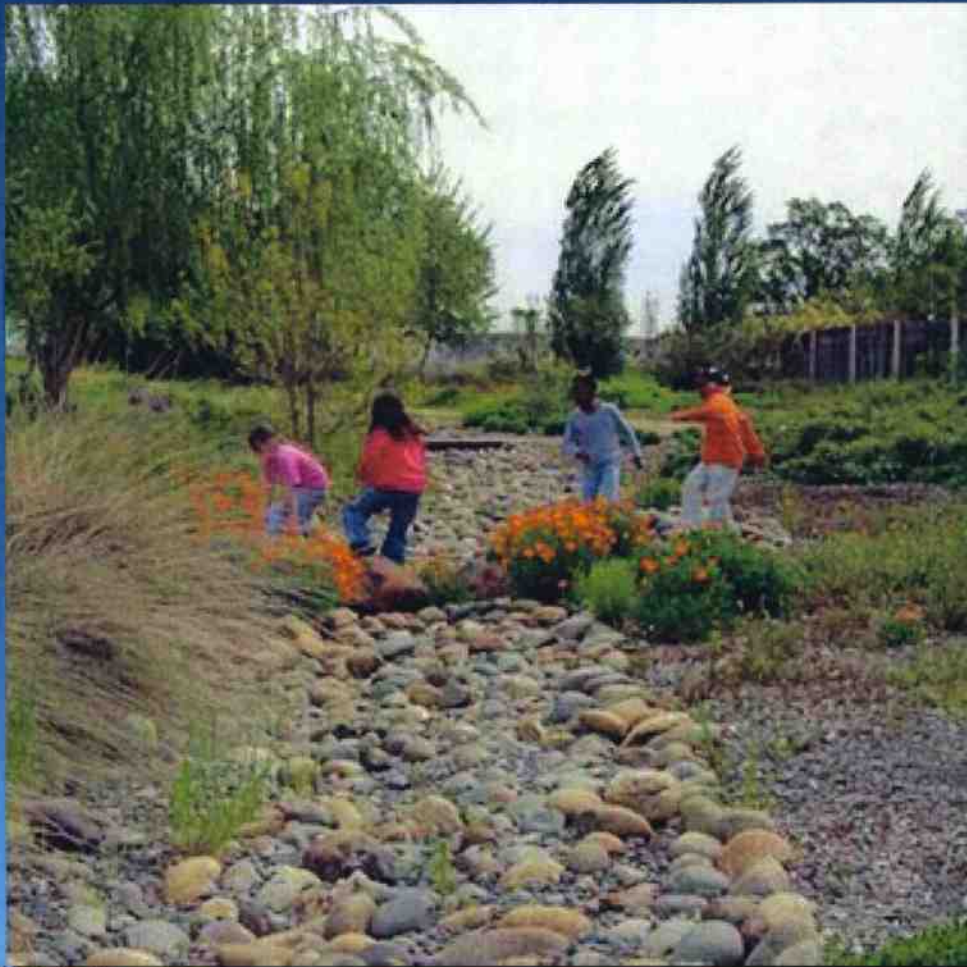
Tending to animals



Catching butterflies

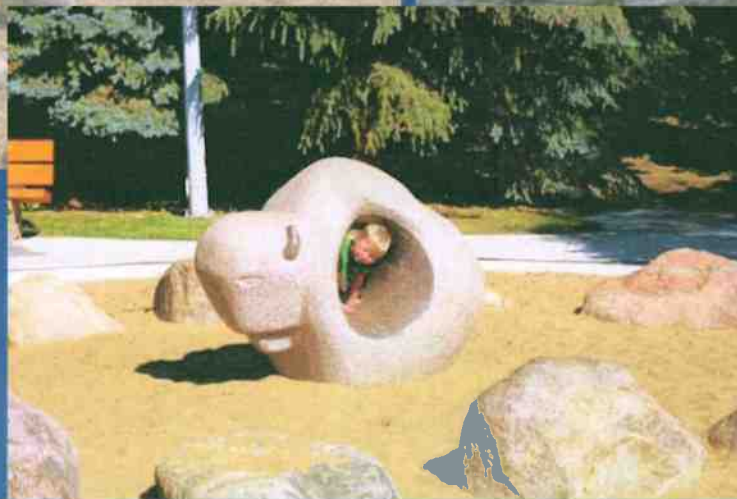
Nature based playgrounds

Children play most creatively in settings they can manipulate -
Sand, Dirt, Gravel, Sticks and Stones



Nature based playgrounds

Children play most creatively in settings they can manipulate -
Use "Sand Boxes" in a non traditional way



Nature based playgrounds

Elevation changes / landform, climbing and adventure



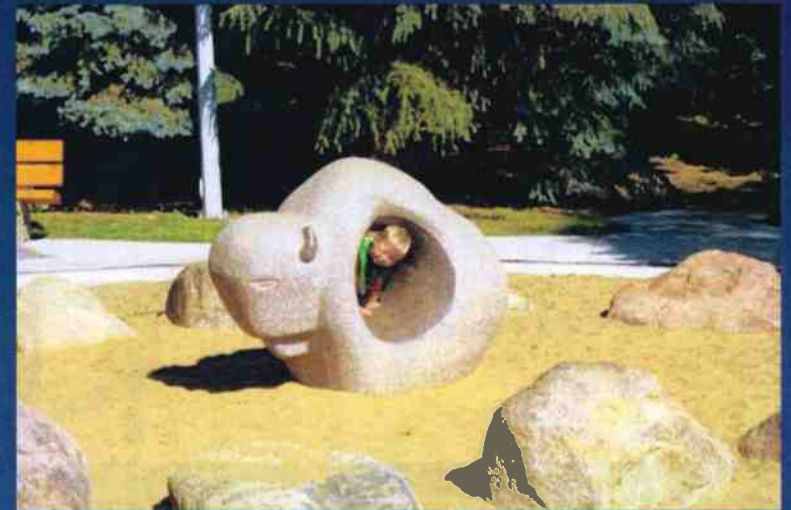
Nature based playgrounds

Elevation changes / landform, climbing and adventure



Nature based playgrounds

Color, diversity and change – avoid boredom, keep the experience fresh and new each visit



Nature based playgrounds

Places to sit in, on, lean against, and provide shelter and shade



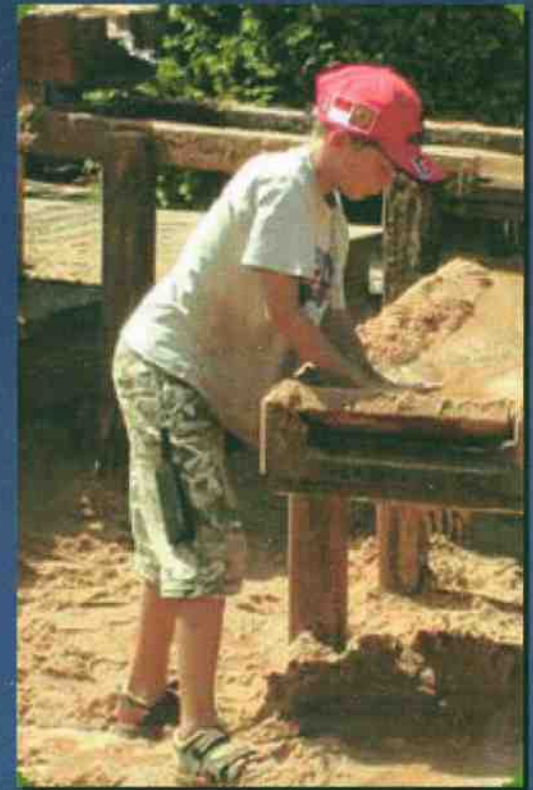
Nature based playgrounds

Nooks and crannies, places that offer privacy and views



Nature based playgrounds

Structures, equipment and materials that can be changed. Children can create their own narratives and games by using movable objects; build something and tear it down; or simply play to enjoy shapes and textures.



Playground themes

Education – learn about nature, science, habitats and more!



butterfly garden



bird blind



Playground themes

Vegetable Garden

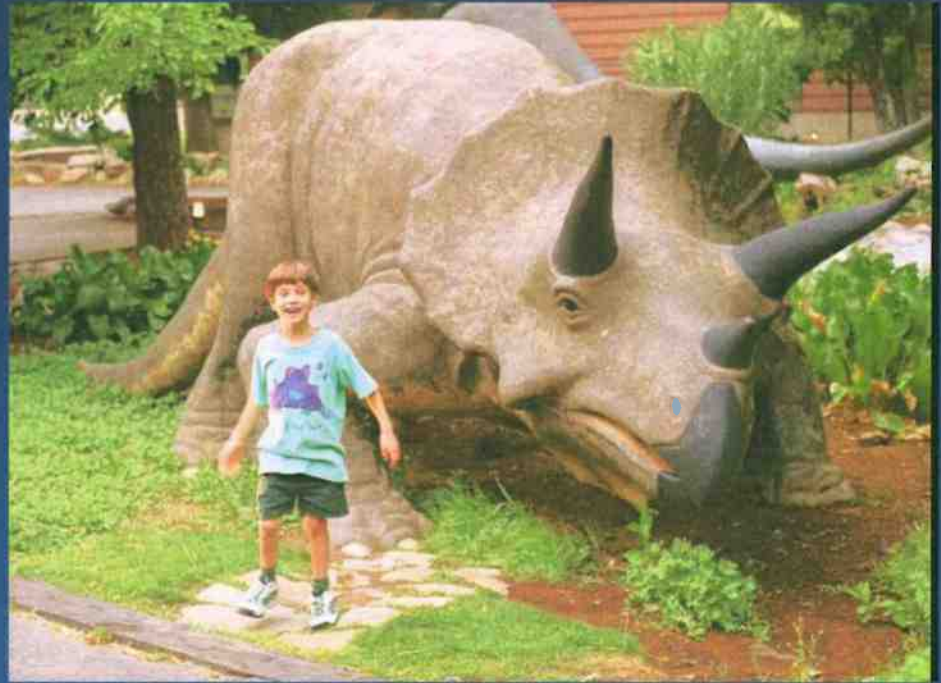


Playground themes

Labyrinths / Mazes



Playground themes



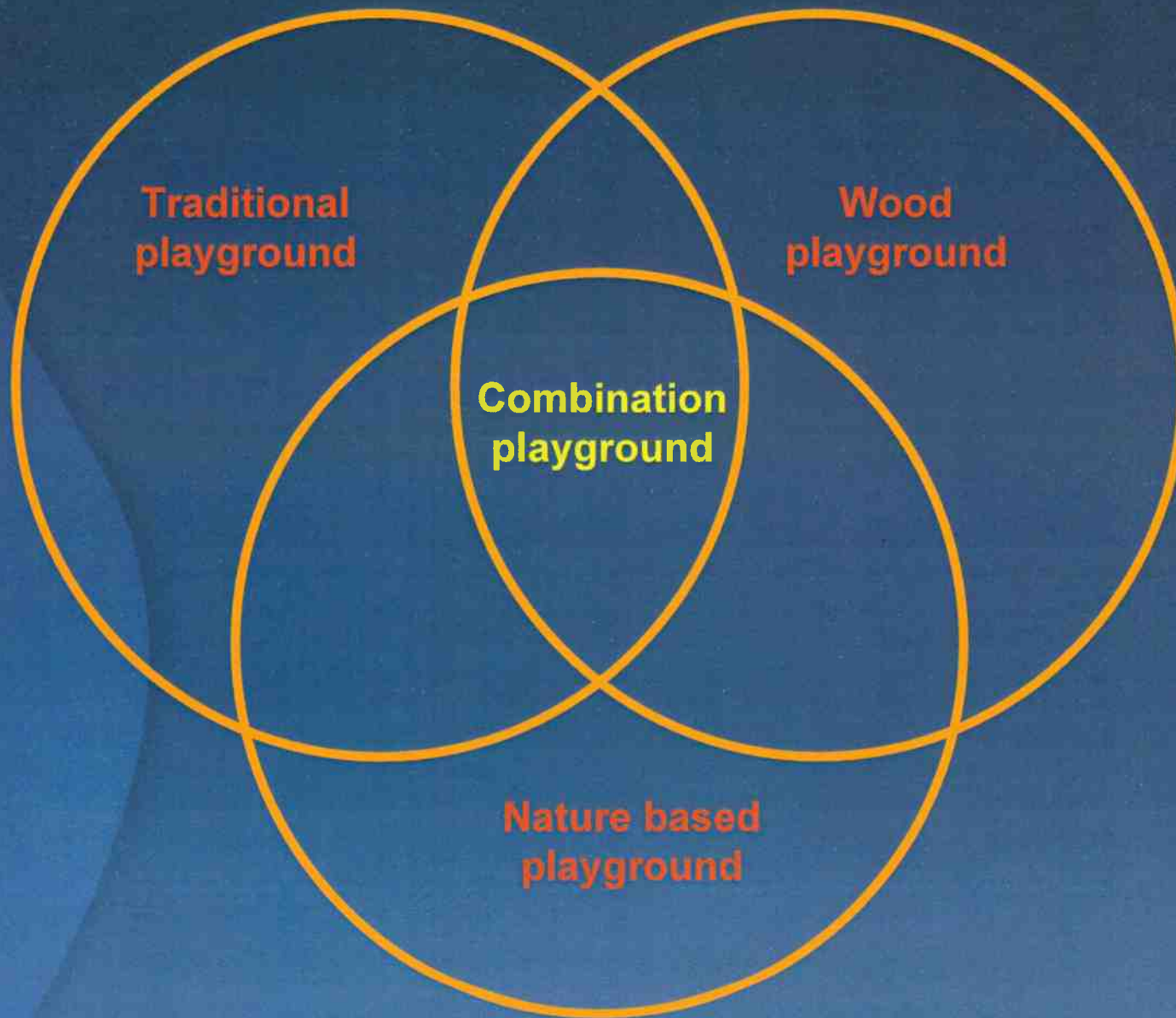
Nature - based playgrounds

pros:

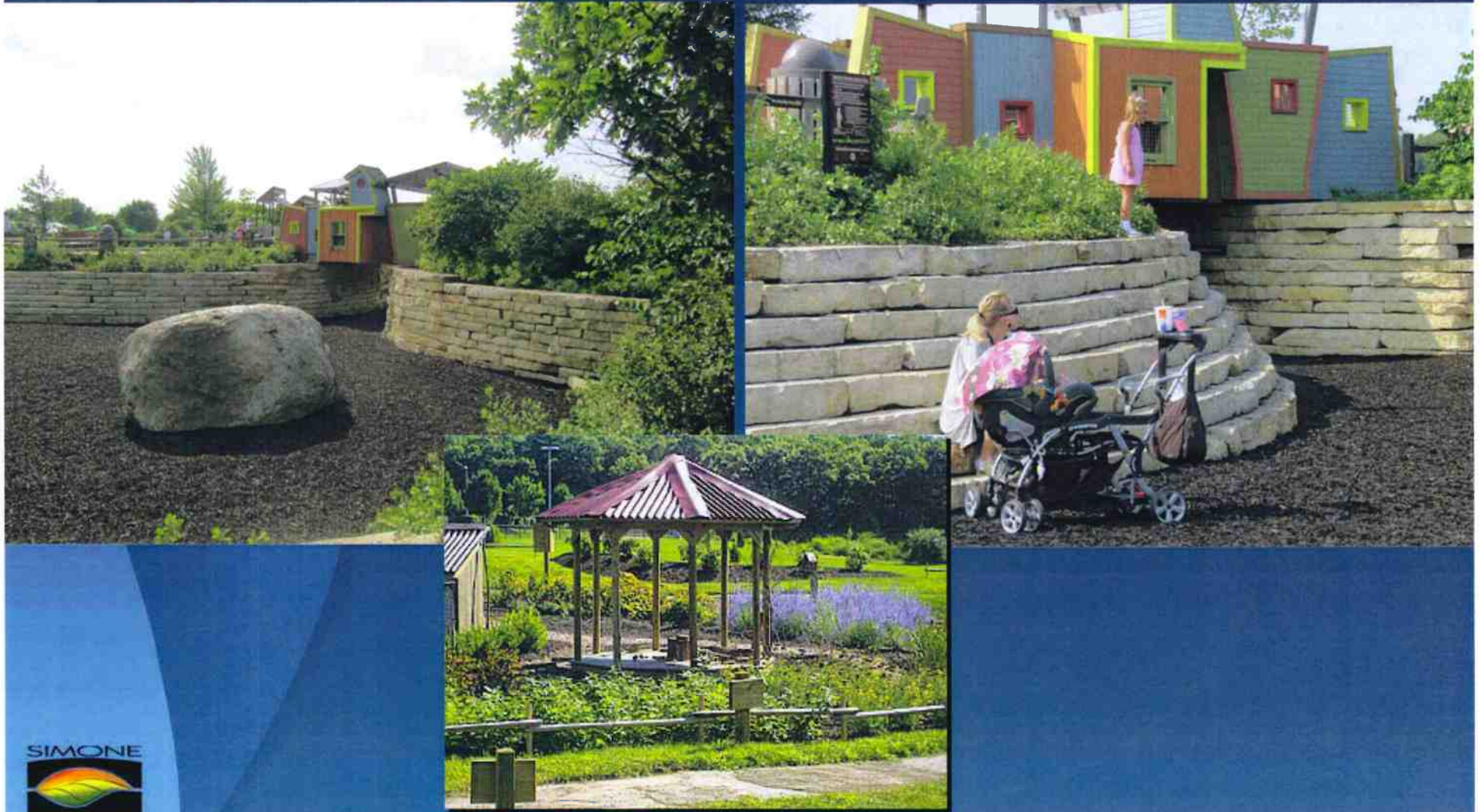
- ✓ The most creative option (since the kids are a big part of the creativity)
- ✓ Very natural – can fit the site
- ✓ Teaching / Educational opportunities
- ✓ Dynamic / Changing / Always interesting
- ✓ Unlimited options
- ✓ Can use “found” materials (boulders, logs, etc.)
- ✓ Programming possible

cons:

- ✓ High maintenance for some aspects
- ✓ Some insurance carriers may have liability concerns
- ✓ Community and Township commitment necessary for on-going management



❑ Combination playground



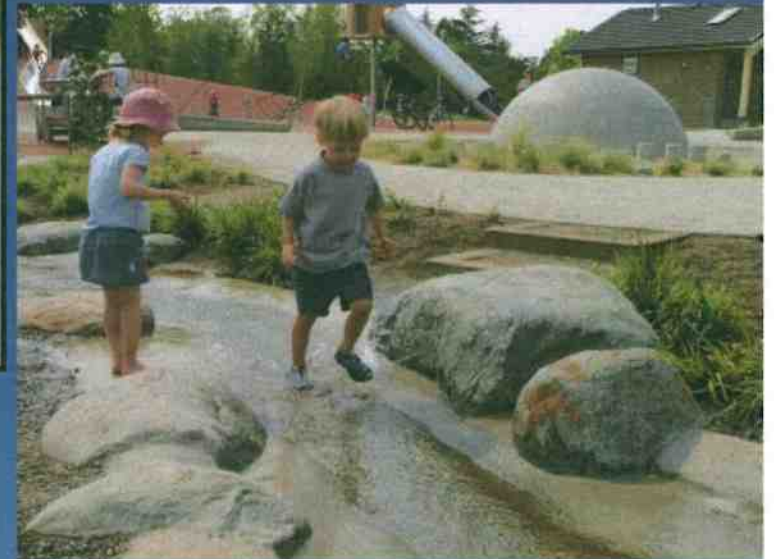
❑ Combination playground



❑ Combination playground



❑ Combination playground



☐ What kind of playground do you want?



☐ What kind of experiences do you want your children to have?



- ❑ **Age appropriate play choices**
- ❑ **Durability considerations**
- ❑ **Fund raising considerations**



☐ **Shelter and shade**



☐ **Availability of restrooms / water fountains /benches**



☐ **Community built or contractor built?**



Discussion

Please fill out questionnaire before you leave

Playground Type Preferences

Wood

Traditional

Nature Based

Combination

