Field of Dreams

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

Lower Allen Township, Cumberland County, PA
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& Visioning Process for
The Restoration of the Fun Fort

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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.

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.
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 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.
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.
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 sandboxes, 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.
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.
Cons (continued):
- Metal play equipment may get hot in the summer and cold in the winter causing discomfort to children

Play structures come in various styles and play component combinations

Cable climbing structures

Minature 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
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 landform, 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.
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. An 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.
• **Labyrinths / Mazes** – these types of playground are an adventure and provide for various types of play activities.

*Children play in labyrinth*

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

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

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

*A revolutionary war replica cabin located in Valley Forge National Historic Park.*
Chapter 2: Visioning Process

- Astronomy and the Solar System

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

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.

Different colored paving delineates the solar system playground theme.

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

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.
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 be 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).
Chapter 2: Visioning Process

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 is 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.
Chapter 2: Visioning Process

- 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 replace 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!!).
Chapter 2: Visioning Process

- 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.


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 though 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/](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:

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 researched.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2010 - April 2011</td>
<td>Develop Master Plan for entire playground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2011-Feb. 2012</td>
<td>Fund raising, grant applications and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Submit DCNR/DCED/County applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td>DCNR and other funds awarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December - March 2012</td>
<td>Prepare Construction Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March - April 2012</td>
<td>Bidding for Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2012</td>
<td>Award Construction Bid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<th>NAME</th>
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<th>PHONE</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greg Mahon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackie Jumper</td>
<td>1691 Main St Lisbon</td>
<td>697-8376</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tjumper@comcast.net">tjumper@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>Monica van Dicen</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mcvanden@patriot-news.com">mcvanden@patriot-news.com</a></td>
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<td>761-4176</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:jaynejohnn@gmail.com">jaynejohnn@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Lisa Emmerson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dawn Rohr</td>
<td>10 Cornell Dr</td>
<td>571-9308</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Carolyn.kohri@db.md">Carolyn.kohri@db.md</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Joe Henry</td>
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<td>Jim Kaiser</td>
<td></td>
<td>717-774-2021</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jodkaiser@verizon.net">jodkaiser@verizon.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Angela Kreiser</td>
<td>8 Anheuser Drive</td>
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<td>Aubrey Kreiser</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:aubrey.kreiser@verizon.net">aubrey.kreiser@verizon.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicole Wagman</td>
<td>149 Allendale Way</td>
<td>717-761-3575</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tathfin@gmail.com">tathfin@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rick Stain</td>
<td>9 Schrafft Dr.</td>
<td>761-471</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Cruy</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Susan Parry</td>
<td>17 Walnut St.</td>
<td>717-761-1659</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sparry17@verizon.net">sparry17@verizon.net</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# MEETING SIGN IN SHEET

**Project:** Field of Dreams Restoration Project, Community Participation  
**Location:** Lower Allen Township, Municipal Services Center, Gorgas Hall  
**Topic:** Replacement for the Field of Dreams Playground  
**Project:** 10074.10  
**Date:** September 22, 2010  
**Time:** 6-8 PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>PHONE</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jon Davis</td>
<td>3 East Woodrow</td>
<td>697-0251</td>
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<td>Jackie Jumper</td>
<td>1641 Main St. Lisburn</td>
<td>697-8376</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Keith</td>
<td>4337 Acorn Rd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Hoffman</td>
<td>1237 E. Lehigh Rd.</td>
<td>766-3877</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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 is 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

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): __________________________________________

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) - grandparents 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)

   _____ maintenance and durability of play equipment
   _____ exercise / gross motor skills
   _____ social interaction
   _____ educational experiences
   _____ creativity
   _____ ability to change / evolve
8. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Sure, make it less destructible, using materials that may last longer.

---

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): [Signature]

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 ½ mile
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   □ 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)
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   ______ social interaction
   ______ educational experiences
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1. Name (optional): 

2. Phone / email (optional): 

3. Where do you live? (Check one)
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4. How far do you have to travel to visit the Field of Dreams playground? (Check one)
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   - [ ] 2+ miles

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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)

   - [ ] maintenance and durability of play equipment
   - [x] exercise / gross motor skills
   - [ ] social interaction
   - [ ] educational experiences
   - [x] creativity
   - [ ] 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): 761-4170

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
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5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)
   - [ ] 1-4 age(s)  
   - [x] 5-7 age(s)  
   - [ ] 7-12 age(s)  
   - [ ] 13-18 age(s)

   - [ ] NONE
   - [ ] 9 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)
   - [ ] maintenance and durability of play equipment
   - [ ] exercise / gross motor skills
   - [ ] social interaction
   - [ ] educational experiences
   - [ ] creativity
   - [ ] ability to change / evolve
7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

REST ROOMS  S  SHAPED AREAS
AT PLAYGROUND FOR PARENTS

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

COMPOST 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
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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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   ____ 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 features, then focus on replacing burned section first for insurance reasons and slowly do the rest peice 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. Or 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, impossible impractical. Additionally, the Field of Dreams is located in the huge Tower 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 gifts 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, 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've needed. The point is to provide a fun place for children to play.
Field of Dreams Restoration Project - User Questionnaire

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1. Name (optional): Emo Eckert

2. Phone / email (optional):

3. Where do you live? (Check one)
   - [ ] in Lower Allen Township
   - [x] 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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5. Please indicate the number of children living in your household according to age. (Mark number(s) in appropriate locations)
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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)
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   - [ ] social interaction
   - [ ] educational experiences
   - [ ] creativity
   - [ ] 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 upside was fantastic.
I do think age specific sections could be good, though.

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

I really enjoyed the Fun Fort the way it was. I don't think the necessity exists to completely redesign the park. I think new aspects could be fun, but that 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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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):  
   Kathy Kyle

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

3. Where do you live? (Check one)  
   X  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  
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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. Name (optional): 
   [Name: Beth Masland]

2. Phone / email (optional): 
   [phone: 763-8888]

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
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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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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?

Not area, good idea.
More trees & private areas around it.
Misting booth "race" should be separate.
Boulder's idea new on one side keep
Tactile for blind kids away from sand &
"sight impaired" tactile areas

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

Security lights

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

Keep it new looking, greens/browns
Get more children here for Saturday meetings

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): Jim Kaiser
2. Phone / email (optional): 774-3081 jbxkaiser@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 ⅛ mile
   □ ⅛ 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)
   
   ☑ maintenance and durability of play equipment
   
   ☑ exercise / gross motor skills
   
   ☑ social interaction
   
   ☑ educational experiences
   
   ☑ creativity
   
   ☑ ability to change / evolve
7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

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 2-5yr old play area with 5-12yr old with more natural element builders / climb

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): ____________________________

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)
   _____ 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 (SPLINTERES!!!)

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): 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)
   □ 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
   □ 5 exercise / gross motor skills
   □ 2 social interaction
   □ 4 educational experiences
   □ 3 creativity
   □ 6 ability to change / evolve
7. If you could add anything to the Fun Fort playground, what would it be?

Springs 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 consequence, 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 tires/rubber)
I like the bouncy castle
My kids loved the "smaller" parts of the playground - the "telephone"
I really like finding the cabinet shapes, the "musical" metal, etc.
If you put in lights, have them run on solar power.
I think it would be nice to channel (absorb) the children's energy and send it back to the grid. There are "disco lights" in Europe that have wind power, and the dancing of the patrons pays for the electricity.
For the business, I have big dreams!

Perhaps instead of saying 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): __________________________________________

2. Phone / email (optional): (717) 973-4528  auberginy@comcast.net  67-76-04

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)

   _____ 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 wheelchair 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, heavy 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 reach the Fun Fort again. In the way the economy is today, there may be little funding efforts. There are times when it seems like Fun Fort should come back at least a decade ago. Suppose you were walking and a growing tree sprout you want to pause a little if not. It would make good sense to do the same thing a year later. How about, in three years, technology has evolved over a period of time. This is just like a bell becomes a bell. There has to be a gym. In this case, the kids have an idea that they would go around. So they take the idea and the ideas is full of hope. Now those is complete automation.

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): **Jackie Jumper**

2. Phone / email (optional): **697-8376**  **rjjumper@comcast.net**

3. Where do you live? (Check one)
   - [x] 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)
   - [x] Less than ¼ mile
   - [ ] ¼ 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)
   - [ ] 0-20 children in house
   - [ ] 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)

   - [ ] 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 with fountains close to play areas
- more adult/parent areas of kid/areas for shade and 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 Towne Park as the only black park of the community it has a bit of nature, some areas to play sports (basketball, tennis, etc.) but do not have more fields than already there. With all the development and open areas disappearing and leveled off, Towne Park where not only kids can get the feel of having a big back yard to play in but adults can get to watch kids play in the 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)
   - ______ maintenance and durability of play equipment
   - ______ exercise / gross motor skills
   - ______ social interaction
   - ______ educational experiences
   - ______ creativity
   - ______ ability to change / evolve
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): Jayne Johnson

2. Phone / email (optional): jayne@jnode1@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)

   ______ maintenance and durability of play equipment
   ______ exercise / gross motor skills
   ______ social interaction
   ______ educational experiences
   ______ creativity
   ______ 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 can cool off.

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

The sandbox 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!
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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): RICH GRAY

2. Phone / email (optional): RGRAYOEPX.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) NO ONE

   ☑ 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)

   ☑ maintenance and durability of play equipment
   ☑ exercise / gross motor skills
   ☑ social interaction
   ☑ educational experiences
   ☑ creativity
   ☑ ability to change / evolve
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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)
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 aide 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.

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 MURICA VON DUBENECK
mvdubeneck@patriot-news.com

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 Wagner, 24, who grew up clambersing 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 no-where, so you need a reason to go."

She said the Fun Fort became the focus of the

Please see FORT on Page 3d
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 Chiumo said the Fun Fort was nearing the end of its 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, Verna 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.

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

Beth Maxland 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 Girl 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 22nd, 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.
Fun Fort
Fun Fort

Field of Dreams Playground Restoration Project - Lower Allen Township - September 2010
Lower Allen Township Community Park Master Plan

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 playground 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
Nature based playgrounds

Exploration - Animals and other living things

Searching for insects

Tending to animals

Catching butterflies

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

bird blind

butterfly garden
Playground themes

Vegetable Garden
Playground themes

Labyrinths / Mazes
Playground themes

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