PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee Meeting was held on February 11, 2013, at 12:00 p.m. with Chairman Bonar presiding. Members present were Mr. Anderson, Mr. Dixon and Mrs. Horsey. Mr. Lewis was absent. Councilman Hutchison was also present.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Anderson requested the addition of Item #5A- Public Comments on Recreation Issues.

By unanimous consent, the agenda was approved as amended.

Review of Revised Active Recreation Plan - Clearview Meadow

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, reviewed detailed information regarding a revised Active Recreation Plan for Clearview Meadow. She noted that Clearview Meadow is a Planned Neighborhood Development (PND), consisting of $88.2524^{+/-}$ acres, located north of South Little Creek Road, south of North Little Creek Road, and east of Babb Drive. She stated that a 6.8429 acre Active Recreation Area was initially shown, including a walking path system, play structure, swings, tennis court, picnic tables, and benches. This active recreational component was reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission on July 27, 2004. A Revised Recreation Plan #1 was reviewed by the Parks, Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee on November 9, 2004 and received Planning Commission approval on December 20, 2004. She noted that the Revised Recreation Plan #1 involved the elimination of the tennis court and the addition of a swimming pool and bath house facility with an associated parking lot. The playground equipment was also relocated in this redesign.

Mrs. Townshend advised members that the Concept Plan for Clearview Meadow PND received Planning Commission approval on April 19, 2004 and the Preliminary Subdivision Plan received conditional approval from the Planning Commission on September 20, 2004. The Record Plan for the Subdivision was recorded on September 30, 2005 and the Final Construction Plans were approved January 19, 2006. The development, as approved, consists of the following: 167 single family detached homes, 48 duplexes, and 88 townhouses for a total of 303 dwelling units. The initial phases of construction and home building focused on the southern portion of the subdivision along the streets of Mer Way, Lady Bug Drive, and Nob Hill Road. Access into the subdivision is provided by John Hunn Brown Boulevard and Babb Drive. Currently, there are 26 duplex units, 35 townhouse units, and two (2) single-family detached units complete (63 units complete); two (2) duplex units under construction; and one (1) single-family detached home in permit review. Mrs. Townshend explained that, due to the economy, progress on this development ceased; however, it has recently been purchased by a new developer, Shirliz LLC c/o Knollwood Development Corporation, who has submitted the Revised Active Recreation Plan #2.

Mrs. Townshend indicated that the applicant has proposed several revisions to the Active Recreation Area of the subdivision, which includes 6.5624 acres of land to be reserved as Active Recreation Area, creating a park area centrally located in the subdivision. The revision proposes the elimination of the swimming pool and bathhouse building, relocation of the gazebo, and the addition of a

community building with parking lot; a play area that contains a swing set and a play structure and series of benches and picnic tables remain throughout the site. She stated that the amenities are connected by a walking path system that is five (5) feet in width and constructed of bituminous asphalt and a large lawn area is central to the recreation area.

With regard to the community building, Mrs. Townshend stated that the architecture and floor plan submitted indicate a one (1) story building with a front entry porch. The exterior finish materials appear to be a horizontal siding, a shake style shingle in the gables, and a gable roof. The interior includes an exercise room, a small meeting (card/game) room, and a large meeting room, along with restroom facilities, storage, and a small kitchen. The plan also depicts a 15-space parking lot to be located in front of the building. She reviewed information from the submitted Plan (last updated January 22, 2013) for the Revised Active Recreation Area #2 to be constructed, as follows:

	Required	**Provided on Plan**
Active Recreation Area (Article 5 §10.16)	275 S.F. per dwelling unit or 0.5 acre, greater thereof 305 DU = 83,875 S.F. (1.925 ac) Requires 1.925 acres	Community building, gazebo, lawn area, walking paths, and playground area = Total of 6.5624 acres
Active Recreation Amenities (Article 5 §10.15)	Accessible	Centrally located in the development. Access to all residential lots via the walking paths and sidewalk network. Accessible access to the community building is unclear. Parking lot provides one handicapped accessible parking space.
Active Recreation Amenities (Article 5 §10.15)	Age Oriented to development	Community Building Playground Area Equipment Gazebo Benches & Picnic Tables Walking path
	Parking	Off-street parking provided for each dwelling unit on the individual lots with street frontage sidewalks to recreation areas. A parking lot with 15 spaces is also located on the south side of the Community Building.

	Setbacks: 30 feet from residential lots and 25 feet from right-of-way for street	Community Building and Gazebo locations are in compliance with the setbacks as required.
	Landscaping	The Revised Active Recreation Plan #2 shows trees and landscaping around the site.

Staff submitted the following comments and recommendations regarding the Active Recreation Area to be constructed:

1) The proposed plan meets the area requirements for the Active Recreation Area. The plan is required to provide 1.925 acres of Active Recreation Area and it is proposing 6.5624 acres of Active Recreation Area.

2) Staff recommends approval of the Community Building, Gazebo, the swing set and the playground area, walking path, and site furnishings with comments and conditions provided below.

3) The following items should be included on the Plan to clarify the construction of the recreation area improvements:

   a) Provide lighting around the Active Recreation Areas.
   b) Lawn areas shall be appropriate planted (seeded or sodded) a maintained for active recreation activities.
   c) Clarify the total square footage of the Community Building.
   d) Provide bike racks near the Community Building.
   e) Identify utility service connections to the Community Building.
   f) Identify the phasing for the construction of the Active Recreation Area with relation to the building construction phasing to ensure that the development of the Active Recreation amenities keeps pace with the building construction.

4) The Community Building must include an accessible entrance route for entry into the building. Currently, the front porch is elevated several steps with no ramp system depicted.

5) Ensure barrier free access is provided at all intersections of drive lanes and sidewalks including the entrance to the parking lot for active recreation area.

6) Ensure that tree planting locations do not conflict with utility lines or locations.

7) The community building must comply with the building and fire code requirements.

8) The applicant is reminded of the requirements for construction phasing of the recreation area as associated with the development of the residential units. The 17,325 S.F. of recreation area for the residential units constructed to date (275 S.F. x 63 dwelling units) is being met by several open lawn areas in the vicinity of John Hunn Brown Boulevard.

   (a) Article 5 §10.6 Construction Phasing. The recreation and open space areas shall be completed in a proportion equal to or greater than the proportion of residential dwelling units completed, except that one hundred (100) percent of the recreation and open space areas shall be completed prior to issuing building permits for the final twenty (20) percent of the dwelling units proposed. Building permits shall not be issued for dwelling units unless the requirements of this section are met.

9) There shall be provisions which ensure that the common open space land (including active recreation area) shall continue as such and be properly managed and maintained.

10) In the event, that major changes and revisions to the Plan occur in the finalization of the Revised Recreation Plan and associated Minor Subdivision Plan contact the Department of Planning and Inspections. Examples include reorientation of elements, relocation of site components, etc. These changes may require resubmittal for review by the Development Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, or other agencies and commissions making recommendations in regards to the plan.

11) The applicant/developer shall be aware that prior to any ground disturbing activities on the site the appropriate site inspections and permits are required. The applicant shall be aware that Recreation Plan approval does not represent a Building Permit and associated construction activity permits. A separate application process is required for issuance of a Building Permit from the City of Dover.

12) Construction may have an effect on the adjacent property owners and nearby travel lanes. Any work requiring the closing or rerouting of traffic should be coordinated as to offer the least amount of inconvenience.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend acceptance of the Revised Active Recreation Area Plan #2 for Clearview Meadow, as presented and with the inclusion of staff's comments and recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dixon and unanimously carried.

Overview of Recreation Fees and Proposal for Open Gym Fees for Non-Residents of Dover

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, introduced Mr. Wayne Voshell, Manager of the John W. Pitts Recreation Center. She advised members that

the City of Dover's Recreation Division offers a variety of programs that are supported by fees, including participation fees for recreation programs, fitness classes, and sports leagues; field rental fees for use of multipurpose and softball fields and park pavilions; and rental fees for use of the Pitts Center Gym and multi-purpose room. She explained that fees for program participation are set based on the program and are advertised in the program guide. Members reviewed the Recreation Department Fields, Parks & Pavilion Rental Rates.

Mrs. Townshend advised members that, in evaluating the fee structure to improve cost recovery associated with recreation programming, staff developed a proposal to charge fees to non-residents of Dover for participation in Open Gym. Based on data regarding non-resident participants in Open Gym, staff estimated that the new fee would generate approximately $5,000 annually. This would account for an increase in the Recreation Division's revenue of approximately four (4) percent (4%). Mrs. Townshend stated that since the Recreation Division is a General Fund Department, which is supported by tax revenue, a modest fee for non-residents to participate in Open Gym was an issue of equity. She assured members that the purpose of the proposed fees was for cost recovery and not to make a profit.

Mrs. Townshend stated that demographic information from users (obtained from Open Gym card applications) indicated that non-resident users are from Camden, Clayton, Felton, Magnolia, Milford, and Smyrna and the majority reside in more affluent developments such as Cardinal Hills, Old Mill Acres, St. Jones Commons, etc. She noted that there are some users from General's Green, Capital Park, and Rodney Village, which are considered low-income areas. She assured members that staff was sensitive to the economic issue and did not want to adversely impact a community that needs recreation and may be unable to afford such a fee.

Staff recommended approval of the Open Gym Fees, as proposed.

Mr. Voshell advised members that he had not discovered another similar facility in the State of Delaware that provides an Open Gym Program like the City of Dover's or that offers the number of hours available for the gym. He stated that all such facilities are fee based, including the Boys and Girls Club.

In response to Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Townshend reminded members that the contribution provided by Kent County was granted as a capital investment for the facility. Noting that County residents are able to participate in the City leagues, classes, or any other program held at the Pitts Center for the same fees as City residents, she felt that the County was provided a value for their investment.

Noting that senior citizens would be exempted, Mr. Anderson suggested that individuals who are Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) recipients, who wish to disclose such information, also be provided an exemption.

Mrs. Townshend referred to the City's Super Summer Playground Program that has been offered for several years at a minimal fee of $150 for the six (6) weeks of camp. In reviewing the costs versus the revenue for the program, she stated that the City has been realizing a $12,000 deficit. Of the 40

participants, she stated that 22 were out of City and all participants were from suburban, middle-class families. She noted that the program had been restructured to run the entire time school is closed during the summer. In order to break even, she stated that the fee must be $75-$80 per week; therefore, the fee has been set for $80 per week, with a discounted rate of $75 for siblings. If a participant is registered for more than one (1) week, the fee after the first $80 would be $75. In addition, extended hours will be offered at an additional charge for those parents who rely on day camp programs to provide their child care. Mrs. Townshend stated that the increase in fees will allow the City to cover the costs, explaining her feeling that the City should not be subsidizing child care for middle-class families who do not live in the City.

Responding to Mr. Bonar, Mrs. Townshend stated that staff did not perform a comparison with the YMCA since their programs are based on memberships; however, she stated that the City's Summer Camp was half the cost (with the increase) of the program offered by Delaware Technical and Community College.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend approval of staff's proposal for Open Gym fees for non-residents of Dover, with the stipulation that staff establishes a scholarship for people who are eligible for Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) for use of the Open Gym period *(Attachment #1)*. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dixon and unanimously carried.

Planning for Affordable Housing and Homelessness

Referring to the need for affordable housing and the need to address homelessness, Mr. Anderson relayed appreciation for the beginning of a State charrette on this issue and to members of City Council and the Mayor for their efforts in this regard. However, he suggested that as the City of Dover plans for the future, all citizens should be given consideration. In order to do this, he suggested that there must be an understanding of what occurs on a daily basis in the City.

Mr. Anderson noted that although the Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing had no representative present to address members, he invited others, as follows: Ms. Manivanh Johnson, President of Open Doors Ministry (6284 West Denneys Road); Mr. Mike Rowe, Program Director for the Veterans Outreach Program at People's Place in Milford (1129 Airport Road, Milford); and Ms. Vickie Bryant, Support Services for Veterans' Families at People's Place in Milford.

Ms. Johnson explained the issues involving homelessness and needy families in the City of Dover and surrounding communities and advised members that she spends a great deal of time with the homeless. She advised members that during the past year, Open Doors Ministry distributed over 400 backpacks filled with essentials to the homeless and needy families, as well as approximately 50 sleeping bags during the past winter. She advised members that Open Doors Ministry also provides clothing, bus tickets, food vouchers, utility bill assistance, etc. She requested the City's assistance in relaying these needs to the community.

Concurring with Mr. Bonar, Mr. Rowe stated that although the agency is out of Milford, it covers both Kent and Sussex Counties and noted that there is a shelter on College Road in Dover. He explained that one of the big problems with the homeless is that they do not know where to go for

assistance, although there are resources available. He suggested that the City of Dover hold a networking event attended by the various agencies. This could be accomplished at no cost to the taxpayers, since sponsors would be obtained by his and other similar agencies and could be held at a place such as the Modern Maturity Center. The doors would be opened to the homeless so that they could receive direction for assistance, and this would also allow the agencies to network together in an attempt to better serve the homeless.

Mr. Rowe advised members that People's Place also assists individuals with utility bills, rent, security deposits, etc. It also offers a new program that will assist veterans and their families by offering temporary financial assistance to keep them from losing their rental homes, provide security deposits, or assist with utility bills.

Mr. Rowe explained that many of the homeless are accustomed to living on the streets and, when provided assistance, will return to being homeless by choice. However, he shared success stories where assistance was provided and within a few months, these individuals obtained housing on their own.

Mr. Bonar noted that although there is a directory of the various social services and community action agencies in existence, it does not provide financial criteria, updated telephone numbers, etc. He suggested that there be a concerted effort among State, County, and local governments and utility companies to compile this information to be provided to each governmental agency and service provider. This would provide a means of providing individual direction to those who meet various criteria. Mr. Bonar felt that it would behoove service providers to put together an organization to assist in developing a directory with the information to be made available to all those who wish to render such services.

Concurring with Mr. Bonar, Ms. Bryant indicated that she had been in contact with veterans who were very disgruntled. She stated that, along with assistance, there must be some type of sustainable income so that if a program is able to help, there would not be a need for such help month after month. She explained that there are not adequate funds or resources to help everyone on a daily basis. Ms. Bryant advised members that it is difficult to know where to refer unemployed veterans for assistance.

Mr. Anderson relayed appreciation for the work done by the individuals who addressed members and their organizations. Noting that the State paid $2M for hotels to house homeless families, Mr. Anderson inquired about the demographics of the homeless and whether it is easier or more difficult to find resources to help men, women, or families, etc.

Responding, Ms. Johnson stated that the majority of those she comes in contact with are individuals and that they seem to be the hardest to provide assistance for. Mr. Rowe stated that his agency's demographics fall in line with the national average in Delaware. Although veterans are less than 10% of the nation's population, he noted that 30% of all homeless people are veterans, 45% of whom are Vietnam veterans. Of this 45%, he stated that 10% are women. Since there are many more

service women today than in previous years, he felt that statistics for female homeless veterans would increase in the future.

Mr. Anderson noted that Mr. Herb Konowitz, Interfaith Mission for Housing (who was unable to attend the meeting) had requested that he advise members regarding a problem with individuals who are being discharged from institutions such as hospitals, behavioral centers, and prisons to "nowhere," with no transitional assistance provided.

There was no action taken by the Committee on this matter.

Semi-Annual Review - Statistics Regarding Jobs and Businesses Gained and Lost in the City of Dover Since July 2012

Mr. William Neaton, Economic Development Director, reviewed the semi-annual report of employment statistics on the 14 largest employers in the Dover area and reminded members that this information is updated and presented to members on a semi-annual basis. The report provided statistics regarding jobs and businesses gained and lost in the City of Dover since July 2012.

Prefacing his comments, Mr. Neaton noted that there was a very positive feeling among those who attended the unveiling of the Kent County Profile a few weeks ago. He stated that over $1 billion in construction projects are occurring in Kent County and around the City of Dover. He felt confident that the statistics provided in the report were an indication of this positive movement.

Mr. Bonar advised members that in the next six (6) weeks, approximately 300 jobs would start up within the City limits as a result of the efforts of Mr. Neaton. Responding, Mr. Neaton stated that a meeting was scheduled for next Tuesday (February 19th) with the contractor for this $3-$4M project. The primary purpose of the meeting would be to emphasize the importance of keeping as many jobs local as possible.

Referring to the decrease in permanent employees for the Hotel and Casino at Dover Downs, Mr. Neaton stated that several surrounding states had approved legalized gambling, which was impacting Dover Downs and was reflected in the decrease in these employees. However, he noted that with the expansion of Kool-Aid operations, there would be 29 additional jobs at Kraft Foods. Also, he reminded members that ILC would be expanding, although Dover was not selected for the new location. He explained that ILC was able to purchase a facility in Sussex County for approximately half the cost of locating in Dover.

Mr. Bonar noted that several large commercial buildings remain vacant in the City of Dover. He suggested that the landlords reduce rental fees to attract businesses to Dover. He indicated that if Council action were necessary, such as a reduction in a tax rate, he would support those efforts.

Mr. Anderson stated that several businesses that recently opened in the downtown area remain in business. He suggested that staff develop an informational brochure explaining the services provided. He also suggested that when a business license is obtained, staff request contact information from the new business to forward to the Economic Development Office.

Mr. Neaton advised members that when a new business begins, the Economic Development Office makes sure that there is a viable business plan and the resources to start up. He felt that this has helped in the success of businesses.

Mr. Neaton informed members that he attends the "Kent is Open For Business" meeting held on the first Thursday morning of every month, which he felt was a great resource for any new business. He stated that at one time there were nine (9) individuals attending who were planning to start new businesses; however, recently the number of attendees had declined. The participants at the last meeting decided to make changes in order to attract more participants, such as increasing marketing, providing a guest speaker every month, etc. He assured members that efforts have been made to provide more resources for smaller businesses to become more successful.

Responding to Mr. Bonar, Mr. Neaton stated that although he does not attend the Statewide Chamber of Commerce meetings, he does attend the Delawareans for Environmental and Economic Development (DEED) meetings, Committee of 100 meetings, etc., and that he just met with the new Economic Development Director from the City of Wilmington. Referring to the Committee of 100 Meetings, he stated that Dover will be hosting the next meeting.

Committee action was not required on this matter.

UPDATE - CDBG PROGRAM

Mrs. Tracey Harvey, Planner I, reviewed the Status of FY-12 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Projects - February 2013. She advised members that Habitat for Humanity is presently under contract for a Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) property, with the closing scheduled for Friday, February 15th.

Public Comments on Recreation Issues

Mr. Anderson explained that he had requested public comments on recreation issues to consider youth programs and other ideas for the future of youth and other community programs.

Dr. Kim Warfield, 1403 Windmill Drive, advised members that she is the founder and CEO of the Delaware Minority Outreach. She explained that, as a retired New York City police detective, she had witnessed many young women and men get into criminal activity. She stated that the Outreach serves low-income communities and that the parents in these communities are often in prison, on welfare, etc. The Outreach was created with the anticipation of stopping criminal activity in the low-income communities. She explained the various programs provided, one (1) of which is the Cadet Corps which teaches discipline, how to exercise, how to disarm people with guns in school, how to eat properly, etc.

Dr. Warfield indicated that the Outreach had partnered with other organizations within the City of Dover and participates in their programs, such as the Exploring Program with the Boy Scouts. She noted that the Delaware State Police is very involved in the Exploring Program.

Dr. Warfield explained that youth initially become involved in criminal activity because they have no place to go and need someone to care about them. She stated that the Outreach is in need of more space and noted that the Dover Park Recreation building was vacant and that her organization would like to utilize the facility, since it has a football field, basketball court, etc.

Mr. Bonar reminded members that there were issues with the building and that it was currently being reviewed to determine what renovations might be necessary. Once this information is provided and the cost for the renovations is known, he stated that the City would be in a position to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) so that bids for the facility could be submitted.

By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

David L. Bonar
Chairman

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Attachment
Attachment #1 - Open Gym Fee Proposal

John W. Pitts Center
Open Gym Fee Proposal

Why charge for non-residents for open gym?

- The City charges for recreation programs, including fitness classes, sports instruction and sports leagues. Open gym provides a "free" alternative to the leagues.
- Open gym costs the City money in operating costs.
    - Energy/utility costs for the Pitts Center
    - Staffing costs for the Pitts Center (including custodial services)
- Consistently since the opening of the Pitts Center, more than half of all open gym participants have been non-residents of the City of Dover.
- The City needs to recover its costs.
- The JW Pitts Center, as all City recreation programs and facilities, is a general fund expense. Non-residents do not pay taxes.
- Non-residents have caused residents of the City to leave the facility by being too competitive or argumentative.

Proposed fee schedule:

	Resident	**Non-Resident**[1]
Annual Charge	Free	$50 for individual $100 for family
Quarterly Charge	Free	$15 for individual $30 for family
Per Session Charge (if no annual or quarterly fee paid)	Free	$3 for individual (cash only)
Senior Citizens	Free	Free

[1] Persons who provide documentation of eligibility for the State of Delaware EBT benefits shall be eligible for the fee to be waived.