

# East Goshen Township

## Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

### Study Committee Meeting

Thursday May 15, 2014 7:00 P.M.  
East Goshen Township Building

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## Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Progress Report
3. Draft Plan Review
4. Is the plan on target?
5. Is there anything factually incorrect?
6. Is the tone positive and supportive of the Township's commitment and success in parks, recreation, and open space?
7. Are the recommendations reasonable, practical, achievable and reflective of township goals?
  - a. -Parks
  - b. -Open Space
  - c. -Recreation Programs
  - d. -Management and Financing

### Meeting Preparation

We'd like you to read the draft plan and reflect upon the questions listed above that will guide our discussion on Thursday.

**Background Information for the Draft** - We used the information that the Study Committee provided in our previous meeting on the draft. We worked with the Township's core committee (Rick, Mark, Marty and Janet) to address their concerns regarding the last draft and the need to conform to the Comprehensive Plan that is now underway. Our goal with this draft was to achieve the format, content and length of information, and recommendations desired.

The Plan Update now has just one goal as the Plan Update is an element of the Comprehensive Plan. The goal is *Continue to provide premier parks, recreation facilities and services while protecting the Township's scenic beauty, natural resources and open space*. We summarized the necessary facts and findings in the first chapter to lay the foundation for the action steps that make up chapters two through five. These chapters contain four objectives: parks, open space, programs and management and financing. Each of the four objectives has recommendations with action steps identified by priority and the responsible party. The recommendations and actions have been designed to move the Township towards its overall goal.

All told, the draft is 23 pages, 13 pages in the foundation materials of chapter one and with the actions steps for our four objectives covering 10 pages. You will be receiving the appendices that document the research, assessment, and analysis that serve as the foundation for recommendations and action steps. Right now, we'd just like you to focus on the draft plan itself.

Thank you for all you are doing on the parks, recreation, and open space plan. And please have a wonderful Mother's Day.

Appreciatively,  
Ann

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Executive Summary..... to be completed

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Appendices – to be provided in next transmission.

- Open Space Report
- Parks Report
- Paoli Pike Multi-Purpose Trail Report
- Program Report
- Management and Financing Report
- Online Survey Report
- Map of East Goshen Township’s Parks

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# Building Upon Success

East Goshen Township has developed this **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan Update** to enhance the quality of life in our community through the conservation of our scenic beauty and natural resources, parks, and recreation. The plan will serve as a guide to help community leaders improve and sustain our parks and recreation system to benefit citizens of all ages and interests now and as a legacy for many generations yet to come.

East Goshen Township's parks, recreation, and open space are a major community asset. They are essential features of the township's scenic beauty and rural character. The **Plan Update** provides an action plan to achieve the shared vision to be implemented over the next ten years as resources become available through a mix of township funds, grants, gifts, donations and partnerships and other alternative revenue sources.

## Plan Purpose

The purpose this plan is to:

- Articulate clear strategies to address current and future needs by updating the **1993 East Goshen Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan**;
- Serve as the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space element of the Township's **Comprehensive Plan**;
- Advance the Central Chester County Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan with respect to safe walking and cycling in East Goshen Township (2013); and
- Position East Goshen Township to be competitive for grant funding.

The **Plan Update** serves as a guide and is not a law. East Goshen Township will continue to involve the public and work in collaboration with community partners in the public and private sectors in implementing the plan.

## Major Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Accomplishments Since 1993

Since adopting the **Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan** in 1993, East Goshen Township has:

- Acquired and developed Applebrook Park as a nature-based park through a public/private partnership and developed a stewardship plan for it;
- Worked with the Willistown Conservancy to acquire and create the Ashbridge Preserve;
- Supported Chester County's Planning Commission in the development of the **Central Chester County Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan** including the designation of Paoli Pike as a high priority bicycle path;
- Implemented major conservation endeavors including the collaboration with the Natural Lands Trust in the development of stewardship plans, increase of naturalized areas for resource conservation and habitat protection, invasive species removal, reforestation programs, and stream restoration;
- Established a state-of-the-art Public Works headquarters in the former Genuardi's grocery store building;
- Fostered the skill and expertise development of township maintenance staff via training resulting in the certification of three maintenance workers as Certified Playground Safety Inspectors; and
- Collaborated with a group of citizens in the establishment of the Friends of East Goshen, private non-profit organization with a mission of raising funds for the betterment of East Goshen Township and the community at large.

## Related Plans

In addition to the 1993, Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan, **the East Goshen Township Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan Update** is related to several important plans including the following:

**East Goshen Township Comprehensive Plan (2014)** - East Goshen Township is updating its **2005 Comprehensive Plan**, which includes this **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan Update** as a component. It contains goals, objectives, and strategies for the future development and conservation of the community.

**Landscapes 2 (2009)**– Chester County's Comprehensive Policy Plan, **Landscapes 2** outlines how the Board of County Commissioners and the Chester County Planning Commission plan to address growth management and preservation strategies in collaboration with public, private, and corporate citizens.

**Central Chester County Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan** (2012) – This plan serves as a blueprint for transforming seven municipalities, including East Goshen Township, in the heart of Chester County into communities that support and encourage walking, bicycling, and public transportation.

**Stewardship Report for Applebrook and East Goshen Township Parks** (2010) – The Natural Lands Trust developed this report to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for passive (Applebrook Park) and active (East Goshen Township Park) recreation; and to protect and enhance native plant communities to support resident and migratory wildlife.

## Planning Process

East Goshen Township retained Toole Recreation Planning, the Brandywine Conservancy, and the Natural Lands Trust to develop the **Plan Update** in collaboration with the community. Their team of parks, recreation, environmental, and community planners, landscape architects, and GIS specialists worked with the Township’s management team and a Plan Advisory Committee in formulating the **Plan Update**. The planning process consisted of the assessment of all aspects of parks and recreation; synthesis of conclusions and options; identification of opportunities; development of implementation strategies; and formation of an action plan with a time frame for implementation. The planning process addressed five areas.

- Community characteristics and needs;
- Parks, recreation facilities and open space;
- Trails;
- Programs and services; and
- Administration, Management, and Financing

### **Benefits of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

- Preservation of the scenic beauty of the community
- Protection of the environment and natural resources
- Creation of a sense of community
- Improvement of health and fitness
- Increase in property values
- Deterrence of crime and substance abuse
- Establishment of strong family bonds, the foundation of our society
- Attraction and retention of businesses and residents
- Connection of the mind, body and spirit of people leading active lifestyles

## Validation of the Issues Regarding Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

### Community Profile and Needs

East Goshen Township is highly desirable community in which to live, work, play, operate a business, and retire. It is primarily Caucasian, well educated, and relatively affluent. The ten-square mile township is nearly fully developed. The population of 18,026 is projected by Chester County to increase by 3,104 by 2030 in about 1,240 residential units. The limited amount of land available for development combined with the Township's desire to preserve the remaining open space may ultimately prove these projections to be high.

The most important demographic characteristic related to parks, recreation and open space planning is the trend toward an aging population. The median age of the residents is 47, eight years older than Chester County's median age of 39. Nearly 30 percent of the population is aged 60 and older. In about 34 percent of households, the householder lives alone. An increase in active lifestyle choices and an increase in the longevity of adults coupled with better overall economic prosperity than prior generations had will require an increase in active adult programs.

Children under 19 years of age constitute about 20 percent of the population. Households with children declined from 26 percent of all East Goshen households in 2000 to 20 percent in 2010. Nearly 500 family households have only a single mother with no husband present. While many residents expressed the desire for their children to live in East Goshen once they have grown up, the reality is that affording a house here is a challenge for young adults. Programs for youth and families will continue to be important. Providing preferred community activities such as special events will be important for intergenerational recreation experiences.

### Public Opinion about Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Citizen involvement is the hallmark of this plan. It will continue to play a vital role in the implementation of the recommendations. Elected and appointed officials came together with citizens in a public conversation about how to improve the community through parks, recreation, and open space. The process included a Plan Advisory Committee, an online public opinion questionnaire, focus groups, key person interviews, and public meetings.

Throughout the public participation process, it was evident that the residents have extraordinary community pride and that the parks, recreation, and open space have a lot to do with that. In fact, an oft-repeated message of many residents was that they moved to East Goshen Township because of the parks and recreation opportunities available.

### Community Park, Recreation, and Open Space Needs

Residents expressed a vision for East Goshen that embraces a beautiful green and connected community. The analysis of parks, recreation, and open space yielded findings about community needs and preferences that mirrored the priorities of

the residents as identified in the public participation process including the following:

- Take care of what we have,
- Conserve our natural resources,
- Preserve the Township's scenic beauty,
- Do whatever possible to protect the remaining open space, and
- Provide recreation opportunities year round for people of all ages and a variety of interests: children and youth, active aging adults, and families in fitness, nature, and opportunities for life-long enrichment and learning.

### **Open Space**

East Goshen Township has preserved 1,105.6 acres of open space. Township-owned open space includes 405 acres with 31 parcels in 19 areas. Another 700 acres in 13 areas of open space is privately owned. The number of large or contiguous undeveloped parcels in East Goshen Township is extremely limited.

### **Care and Management of Open Space**

The municipal open spaces range in size from .9 to 38 acres. They contain a variety of resources, ranging from utilitarian storm water basins to riparian forests, which protect the many streams flowing through the Township. The open spaces function differently; some have no public use, while others are host to events such as the annual fishing derby. The broad diversity of nature-based recreation available in the open spaces can be a nice complement to the existing park system's active recreation facilities, which is a major interest of the citizens.

The effective and efficient management of the Township's natural resources is crucial to their conservation as well as to the scenic beauty of the community. The development of an overall open space system master plan is important for its long-term health. Individual master plans for designated sites, and programs for hazardous tree care, dam safety, street tree planting, invasive species control, and formal maintenance plans for ponds, steep slopes, woodlands, streams, wetlands, grass areas, and storm water basins are needed. Since most of the open space contain similar features, it may be possible to develop prototype plans that can apply to the resources of multiple open space properties. Open spaces that offer only utilitarian uses, such as the storm water basins, can be beautified with street trees and other plantings. Where streams and woodlands are preserved, trails may be appropriate for use by hikers, walkers, runners, birders and outdoor enthusiasts. Other open spaces, such as the Marydell fishing pond, which are used more recreationally, could be improved as more functional parks.

Since the majority of open space in the municipality is in private ownership either in Home Owner's Associations or as individually-owned property, much of the responsibility for the conservation of natural resources falls to community groups or specific property owners. Consequently, a public education and partnership program aimed at establishing a township-wide

philosophy “that every land owner is a land steward” could help to advance township-wide conservation that is of great importance to the citizens. Such a program could become a collaboration of charge of the Conservancy Board, Parks and Recreation, Board and the Futurist Committee.

## Preservation of Open Space

The preservation of open space and the community’s scenic beauty is a top priority of the citizens. The Township would like to continue working to preserve open space without purchasing or maintaining it through creative land use planning strategies. Because the number of large undeveloped parcels is limited and East Goshen Township is a very desirable location, it is likely that there is a short window of opportunity to preserve the remaining large parcels. While other opportunities for open space conservation might be available in small parcels, the Township should focus on the preservation of the large parcels where the most significant impact and benefit would occur. The Natural Lands Trust has expressed interest in this initiative. Working with a land conservation trust would enable the Township to tap expertise in exploring further open space conservation within the parameters of preservation without ownership or maintenance.

## Parks

The assessment of East Goshen Township’s parks and recreation system addressed five factors: the amount of parkland, its configuration, location, recreation facility types and the quality of the parks and facilities.

**Amount of Park Land** - East Goshen Township has 22 parks and 19 open spaces that are used as parks totaling 478.6 acres. The two main parks in the Township are East Goshen Township Park and Applebrook Park. With East Goshen Township as a part owner and its location in the Township, the Ashbridge Reserve serves as a de facto township nature based park. Two parks, Milltown Park and Mill Creek Softball Field provide recreational opportunities within these neighborhoods. The other 17 park sites are unplanned undeveloped yet still provide residents with scenic views and opportunities to experience nature, walking, dog-walking, and de-stressing through relaxation outdoors.

The **1993 Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan** recommended a parkland standard of 10.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents in accordance with the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) guidelines in place then. Since then, NRPA has revised the guidelines to Consequently, NRPA has changed these standards to recommend instead that each community develop its own level of service for the amount and type of parkland that is necessary to meet community needs. A community needs assessment was conducted as part of the process in developing the Plan Update. The findings of the needs assessment indicated that taking care of existing facilities, preserving open space, creating trails and improving existing parks were the highest priorities of the citizens. In addition to the consideration of community recreation needs in the development of public parkland standards, the municipality’s historical ratio of parkland to the population can be used to set the formula for parkland. This will ensure that future residents will enjoy the same level of service as existing residents over time. East Goshen provides 26.6 acres of parkland and



open space per 1,000 residents. This standard should prevail in the future as the Township's standard for the amount of parkland and open space.

Two considerations for additional parkland include the need for an additional community park. Currently East Goshen Township Park with its 55.3 acres is the only true active community park in the Township. The area of East Strasburg Road and south has a large population but is without any parkland. Apartment complexes make up much of the housing in this area further establishing the need for a close-to-home park for citizens that do not have yards. The establishment of a community park in the southern portion of the Township could satisfy future needs for a community park and serve an underserved portion of the citizenry.

#### Community Park Definition

Community parks by definition are 25 to 100 acres and serve several adjoining neighborhoods or several square miles of residential development, as well as preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. They should allow for group activities and offer other recreation opportunities not feasible or desirable at the neighborhood level. They should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities.

**Configuration of Parkland** - The Township classifies the parks primarily based upon use according to the terms "active and passive recreation" as established in the **1993 Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan**. East Goshen Township wishes to retain two broad classifications of parks: active and passive, which are defined in the Figure 1. This is consistent with a major finding of this parks and recreation plan that citizens want to experience both active and passive recreation in township parks and open spaces. Parks dedicated to each use are important such as active recreation in East Goshen Township Park and passive recreation in Applebrook Park. Providing active and passive recreation together in neighborhood parks and open spaces is desirable where suitable and planned using a public participation process.

#### Figure 1. What Is Active and Passive Recreation?

**Active Recreation** activities are those engaged in for the purpose of relaxation, health and wellbeing or enjoyment with the primary activity requiring physical exertion, and the primary focus on human activity.

**Passive Recreation** includes outdoor activities that create opportunities for independence, closeness to nature, and a high degree of interaction with the natural environment and which require no organization, rules of play, facilities, or the installation of equipment, other than those which may be necessary to protect the natural environment.

**Location of Parks** – Parks and recreation facilities are fairly well distributed in East Goshen Township. The exception is the area south of East Strasburg Road to the Barley Road border of the Township as described above. The Township has major roads that are barriers to safe and convenient non-motorized access to the parks. For example, crossing Paoli Pike between East Goshen Township Park and Applebrook Park is hazardous due to traffic conditions which fall outside of PennDOT guidelines for interventions such as a traffic light, pedestrian crossing signs or other solutions. As a suburban township, it is a predominantly “driving community”.

**Types of Recreation Facilities** – The Township offers a wide variety of recreation facilities including game courts, ballfields, pavilions and gazebos, playgrounds, walking paths, special events spaces, an amphitheater, natural areas, and support facilities including restrooms and parking lots. Facilities not available include dedicated indoor recreation space, a skatepark, bicycle paths connecting community destinations, and a system-wide park signage system.

**Quality of Parks and Recreation Facilities** – Park visitors and citizens providing input to the planning process indicated that while East Goshen Township Park is wonderful, it is beginning to show its age, wear, and tear. The assessment found that both East Goshen Township and Applebrook Parks are beloved community treasures; they still have the potential to become facilities that set the standard for excellence in public recreation through effective planning, creative design, and public involvement. East Goshen Township Park and Applebrook Park are updated and upgraded on an as needed basis without any plans in place. Master plans should be prepared to provide a long-term vision for the two parks. Master plans would result in designs to act as a guide for final construction designs and documents. They would also assess the existing and potential future needs based on population data, age of the existing facilities, updated regulations, trends, and other information. Master plans would also incorporate public input. Township wide public input would be very valuable to provide recommendations for the parks in general, while smaller groups would be sought out for input regarding each focal area of the parks, such as a playground or “tween hub”. Master planning would also include an ecological inventory of natural features on the sites, and in the context of larger ecological systems such as watersheds and woodlands. Master planning would address park system wide issues such as coordination and consistency of signage as well as site-specific issues including landscaping and management of storm water.

## Trails

Safe places to walk and bicycle are important to township residents as determined in the public involvement process for this plan and the Central **Chester County Bicycle & Pedestrian Circulation Plan adopted in 2013**. This plan should serve as East Goshen Township’s pedestrian and bicycle mobility plan. The County plan made a series of recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle mobility in East Goshen Township that includes about 55 miles of bike lanes, shared roadway, multi-use trails, restricted use trails, bicycle boulevard, signed bike routes and sidewalks. A top priority in the

County plan is the Paoli Pike Multi-Use Trail in East Goshen Township. It includes the proposed installation of a 1.75 mile +/- multi-use trail to parallel Paoli Pike in both East Goshen and West Goshen Townships. This trail will connect East Goshen Township Park with adjacent municipalities and destinations such as the YMCA and the High School.

The Bow Tree trail volunteer group formed while the Plan Update was underway. These volunteers want to help construct a hiking trail connecting the Ashbridge Preserve trail and the East Goshen Park trails. The area of the new trail would be on both sides of Ridley Creek.

## **Recreation Programs**

East Goshen Township provides recreation opportunities in three ways:

- Provision of parks, open space and recreation facilities for citizens to use at their own discretion for outdoor recreation activities of their choice such as fitness, walking, running, enjoying nature, social gatherings, family play on the playground, wildlife watching, photography, and a host of other pursuits.
- Facilitation of programs offered by others through the provision of facilities, maintenance, coordination and scheduling. This would include sports leagues, scouting groups and community organizations.
- Direct provision of organized scheduled programs and activities. In 2013, the Township offered about 20 recreation programs falling into three main categories: Programs and Clinics, Special Events, and Trips. The hallmark programs were the Youth Recreation Camp in the summer and the special events including the Egg Hunt, Community Day and the Pumpkin Festival.

Recreation programs are provided primarily as a community service. Primarily, recreation is free in East Goshen Township except for the organized programs that have a fee for participation. The major special events are supported by the Friends of East Goshen Township, a charitable foundation. Programs do offer the potential to generate revenue to help offset operating costs.

To meet community recreation needs in the future a program management plan should be developed for the Department that focuses on people and target markets instead of specific programs and products (scheduled activities). With a people orientation, the Department can build the program around different market segments and then design promotions to reach those markets. The Department would then become responsible for people instead of products enabling the staff to listen to clients effectively, understand their needs and changing situations, and adjust the programs accordingly. Potential customer-management areas can include: pre-schoolers, children, teens, young adults, families, Boomers, older adults etc. Or groups by interest such as cyclists, nature enthusiasts, art lovers, and so on. This reflects a

switch from managing teen programs to managing programs for teens. Although this transition might seem slight, it is actually profound and deeply changes the whole approach to serving the community through recreation.

## **Management and Financing**

### **Management**

East Goshen Township operates in an environment with a can-do attitude. The management and staff strive through excellent public service through:

- Teamwork to get the job done, whatever it takes.
- Embracing change for growth and seizing opportunities.
- Imagination and ideas translated into new and improved programs, services and facilities.
- Objectivity in making difficult decisions via a positive approach.
- Excellence in all aspects of public service, operations and fiscal management.

The Board of Supervisors sets policy. Township Administration under the auspices of the Township Manager, implements the policy set forth by the Board of Supervisors carrying out daily functions. The “ABC’s” (Authorities, Boards, and Commissions/Committees) provide opportunities for citizen volunteers to serve the community. Boards with a primary parks, recreation and open space focus include the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Conservancy Board. Other boards deal with related township matters such as planning, the future, and township history and heritage work on parks, recreation and open space opportunities as they emerge.

Two departments are responsible for the management of parks and recreation. The Recreation Department is responsible for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public recreation opportunities and the associated responsibilities of personnel management, financial management, and marketing. The Public Works Department is responsible for park, recreation facilities and open space maintenance. The two departments collaborate on parks, recreation and open space functions, closely working together. The quality of park maintenance is high and citizens recognize that the parks are always safe, clean and ready to use. Park maintenance is performed based upon the

The one function that appears to be not designated is that of park planning. Consequently, planning improvements for the parks is done on an as-needed basis without a long-range plan in place. It is important to designate park planning as an official township function and the responsibility of an township position.

The Township’s mission through the Public Works Department is to sustain a healthy park system to make East Goshen Township a great place to live, work and play. To that end, residents consistently rate parks highly. Park maintenance is performed on traditional practices of scheduling, performing

tasks, and responding to pressing needs. In order to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness over time including through transitions of administrative and staff changes, a formal maintenance management system should be established. Experts on parks maintenance describe such efforts as being the least understood functions of local government. The public views the upkeep of parks as relatively simple and straightforward, but in fact, parks are complicated to maintain. A formalized park maintenance management plan can help to improve park appearance and the condition of natural resources while controlling costs over the long term as follows:

- Compare maintenance efforts to defined maintenance expectations
- Design and construct parks for reduced maintenance costs
- Manage information to systematically analyze maintenance services
- Determine the optimal and cost-effective mix of maintenance activities
- Use performance measures to assess maintenance productivity and quality consistent with the optimal care of parks and natural resources.

## **Financing**

East Goshen Township invests significantly in parks, recreation and open space. The Township's parks and recreation operating budget is \$347,197, about 4.2 percent of the Township's \$9,027,627 operating budget. This is a per capita investment of \$19.26. The per capita investment is lower than the average municipal investment in parks and recreation in Pennsylvania of about \$30 per capita. The ratio of the parks and recreation budget to the township budget is higher than the national average of about 2.14 percent. The Township's participation in innovative management methods such as the regional police force have resulted in cost savings that enable the Township to invest in parks and recreation at a higher level.

Programs are expected to generate \$107,472 in revenues in 2014. This is about 45 percent of the \$286,973 program budget. Maintenance operates with a budget of \$317,249. This is a lower cost than would be expected using benchmarks of \$2,500 per acre for active parks and \$500 per acre for passive park and open space which would equate to about \$385,000 for East Goshen Township's parks, both active and passive.

## **Synthesis of Findings**

The assessment of the parks, recreation, and open space system indicates that East Goshen Township has a system of high quality parks, open space, and associated recreation programs carved into a setting with tremendous scenic beauty and important natural resources, some globally significant. To maintain this high quality system in the future, East Goshen Township will need to:

- Protect the remaining open space.
- Maintain and strengthen its current parks and recreation facilities.

- Respond to emerging trends and changing priorities including adopting a market based (people-focused) approach to programs, events, and partnerships.
- Continue to provide premier customer service and community engagement.
- Strengthen the stewardship of natural and cultural resources including the expansion of educational and outreach programs to increase public awareness of the benefits of effective natural resource management on both publicly and privately owned land.
- Master plan the park system to meet public needs, be sustainable, and shine as the crown jewel of East Goshen Township.
- Adapt to changing demographic characteristics.
- Ensure operational sustainability through a revenue strategy that includes continued public investment and the generation of revenues from non-tax sources.

The Township's philosophy of providing exceptional public service engrained in sound financial management serves as a strong foundation for this **Plan Update**.

## Values and Plan Goal

The following values were identified and developed through the public engagement process.

### Values

As the qualities valued by the community of East Goshen Township, the core values are embodied in the mission, vision, and recommendations for parks, recreation, and open space. All policies and actions should be based on the core values.

**Community Character and Scenic Beauty** – Although it is a suburban community that is nearly fully developed, East Goshen Township's agrarian heritage and scenic character are the essence of this community.

**Stewardship** – Forests, streams, wildlife, clean water, and air must be conserved.

**Quality of Life** – The distinctive way of life here needs to be preserved and protected to ensure that it remains a tranquil community fostering the principles of smart growth.

**Sustainability** – Making the best use of all resources in ways that steward the environment, respect human and financial capacity, and provide a legacy for future generations is vital.

***Health and Fun*** – The health and wellness of citizens of all ages is paramount. Recreation fosters active healthy lifestyles through facilities, programs, and services that benefit individuals and the community.

***Thriving Economy*** - Parks, recreation and open space are an important asset to the Township and its Commerce Committee. Parks and recreation helps to attract and retain businesses, affluent retirees, and knowledge workers.

### **The Goal of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan Update**

As part of the East Goshen Township Comprehensive Plan of 2014, this **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan Update** has one goal:

***Continue to provide premier parks, recreation facilities and services while protecting the Township’s scenic beauty, natural resources and open space.***

### **Organization of the Action Plan**

This **Plan Update** calls upon elected and appointed officials in partnership with community organizations, the citizenry, and private enterprise to continue shaping East Goshen Township’s parks, recreation, and open space over the next ten years. Building upon the Township’s great success in establishing a premier parks and recreation system, the strategy of this Plan Update is to focus on four objectives with specific actions listed to achieve the objectives. The objectives include the following:

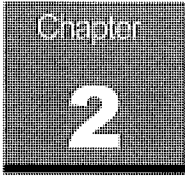
**Objective 1:** Take care of and improving our parks and recreation system.

**Objective 2:** Protect our township’s scenic beauty, open space, and natural resources.

**Objective 3:** Engage citizens in active healthy living and lifelong enrichment through Programs and Services.

**Objective 4:** Continue to provide operational excellence and financial sustainability for the parks, recreation, and open space system through a mix of public and private support.

Each of the following chapters provides a table listing the recommendations, actions, priority, and the responsible party.



# Taking Care of and Improving Our Parks and Recreation System

<b>Objective 1: Care for and improve the East Goshen Township parks and recreation system.</b>				
<b>Recommendation A: Ensure that East Goshen Township has sufficient parkland to meet the needs of citizens now and in the future.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	1.A.1	Revise parkland standard to 26.6 acres per 1,000 residents.	High	Board of Supervisors
	1.A.2	Establish a Mandatory Dedication of Parkland Ordinance.	High	Township Manager
<b>Recommendation B: Establish park planning as an official township function.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	1.B.1	Delegate the responsibility for park planning to the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, reconfigured from the existing Recreation Department.	High	Township Manager
	1.B.2	Plan a township park signage system.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.B.3	Install the signage system over time as capital improvements are undertaken in each park.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Recommendation C: Plan, direct, and evaluate park maintenance.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	1.C.1	Continue to maintain the parks and recreation facilities as safe, clean, ready-to-use and attractive.	High	Public Works Director
	1.C.2	Develop a formal written maintenance management plan.	Medium	Public Works Director
	1.C.3	Consider the use of park maintenance software to enable real time reporting as part of the development of a maintenance management system.	Medium	Public Works Director



<b>Recommendation D: Establish areas in the parks for environmental education, interpretation and park stewardship.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	1.D.1	Work with the Conservancy Board to identify appropriate park areas for environmental education, interpretation and stewardship.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.D.2	Develop a public education program to increase public awareness, appreciation and engagement in managing natural resources and park features.	High	Conservancy Board
<b>Recommendation E: Incorporate public art into the parks.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	1.E.1	Develop a working relationship with a volunteer group interested in art to plan and develop a means to establish public art in the parks.	Low	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Recommendation F: Plan for the systematic improvement of township parks.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<b>East Goshen Township Park</b>				
	1.F.1	Develop a master plan.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.2	As part of the park master plan, incorporate the development of a park hub for family play where the exiting playground is located to include state-of-the-art children’s play features including nature based play, a restroom, seating areas, shade and other amenities.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.3	Incorporate the design of a teen hub in East Goshen Township Park as part of the master planning process.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.4	Correct drainage and erosion issues in East Goshen Township Park.	High	Public Works Director
	1.F.5	Consider retrofitting two of the tennis courts as short courts to encourage youth tennis.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.6	Assess the use of the sand volleyball courts and determine if it should be improved or removed.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.7	Assess the fitness area to determine how it could be enhanced through design according to trends toward outdoor “gyms” as social gathering areas for fitness.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.8	Design hillside seating by the basketball courts as part of the master plan.	High	Parks & Recreation Director

	1.F.9	Plan for the installation of environmental education, interpretive and stewardship areas in the park.	High	Conservancy Board
	1.F.10	Determine how the Farmer's Market space could be improved to enhance the market in terms of safety and functionality.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.11	As part of the master planning process, assess the current circulation and parking systems to ensure that accessible routes and parking are adequately provided.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.12	Assess all facilities and structures to ensure that they meet current industry standards for safety.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.F.13	Perform a stewardship assessment of the natural areas within the park and develop and implement best management practices, such as riparian buffers, which can be utilized in beautification and education.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Applebrook Park</b>				
	1.F.14	Install restrooms. Phase this in from porta-potties to permanent restrooms as resources become available. Use environmentally sustainable facilities.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Mill Creek Ballfield</b>				
	1.F.15	Develop a master plan for Mill Creek Park which will address access, parking and trails.	Low	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Recommendation G: Provide for community connections by planning and establishing safe places to walk and bicycle.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	1.G.1	Develop a master plan and construction documents for the Paoli Pike Multi-Use Trail.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.G.2	Work with the Bow Tree volunteer group in planning, establishing and maintaining a trail from Bow Tree to the trails in East Goshen Township Park.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	1.G.3	Use the Central Chester County Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan as the Township's bicycle and pedestrian plan. Establish an action plan to follow the development of the Paoli Pike Multi-Purpose Trail.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director

# Protecting Our Township's Open Space, Scenic Beauty and Natural Resources

<b>Objective 2: Protect East Goshen Township's open space, scenic beauty and natural resources.</b>				
<b>Recommendation A: Strive to preserve the large undeveloped open spaces in East Goshen Township.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	2.A.1	Work with the Natural Lands Trust to develop and implement a strategy to reach out to willing landowners regarding the preservation of large undeveloped properties.	High	Township Manager
	2.A.2	Determine sources of funding for open space conservation.	High	Township Manager
<b>Recommendation B: Continue to provide for and enhance the stewardship of natural areas and resources.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	2.B.1	Carry out the Natural Land Trust's stewardship plan developed for Applebrook Park	High	Township Manager
	2.B.2	Develop a township wide natural areas and resources stewardship plan.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	2.B.3	Develop prototype stewardship plans for specific aspects of natural areas that could be applied township wide such as ponds, meadows, trees, etc.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	2.B.4	Undertake a survey of the serpentine rock formations in East Goshen Township Park.	Medium	Township Manager
	2.B.5	Develop a restoration, management and interpretive program for the serpentine rock formations.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	2.B.6	Develop and implement an educational program to promote public awareness that "every landowner is a land steward".	High	Conservancy Board

	2.B.7	Develop and implement a Hazard Tree Program, to identify potentially dangerous trees and limit the Township's liability in case of an accident.	High	Director of Public Works
	2.B.8	Develop and implement a Dam Safety Program to monitor the structural integrity of the many dams owned by the township, in order to schedule and budget for necessary maintenance, as well as potentially limiting Township liability in case of an emergency.	High	Director of Public Works
<b>Recommendation C: Establish areas in the parks for environmental education, interpretation and park stewardship.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	2.C.1	Work with the Conservancy Board to identify appropriate park areas for environmental education, interpretation and stewardship.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	2.C.2	Develop a public education program to increase public awareness, appreciation and engagement in managing natural resources and park features.	High	Conservancy Board
<b>Recommendation D: Implement the recommendations of the East Goshen Comprehensive Plan regarding natural resources, preservation of scenic beauty, and open space conservation.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	2.D.1	Coordinate the implementation of recommendations for natural resource conservation identified in the <b>Comprehensive Plan</b> as they apply to parks and publicly owned open space.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	2.E.2	Base all decisions with potential impact on the township's character, scenic beauty and natural resources in the values and goals of this Plan and the Comprehensive Plan.	High	Board of Supervisors

<b>Recommendation C: Establish areas in the parks for environmental education, interpretation and park stewardship.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	2.C.1	Work with the Conservancy Board to identify appropriate park areas for environmental education, interpretation and stewardship.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	2.C.2	Develop a public education program to increase public awareness, appreciation and engagement in managing natural resources and park features.	High	Conservancy Board
<b>Recommendation D: Implement the recommendations of the East Goshen Comprehensive Plan regarding natural resources, preservation of scenic beauty, and open space conservation.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	2.D.1	Coordinate the implementation of recommendations for natural resource conservation identified in the <b>Comprehensive Plan</b> as they apply to parks and publicly owned open space.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	2.E.2	Base all decisions with potential impact on the township's character, scenic beauty and natural resources in the values and goals of this Plan and the <b>Comprehensive Plan</b> .	High	Board of Supervisors

Chapter  
**4**

# Engage citizens in active healthy living and lifelong enrichment through Recreation Opportunities, Programs, and Services.

<b>Objective 4: Strategically step up the planning and implementation of recreation opportunities, programs and services to engage our citizens in active healthy living and lifelong enrichment.</b>				
<b>Recommendation A: Obtain public input for parks, recreation and open space.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	4.A.1	Solicit input from the Parks and Recreation Commission on programs and services. Develop themes for each monthly meeting that would be carried through the years.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.A.2	Undertake focus groups based on timey matters.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.A.3	Use the website to solicit public opinion.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.A.4	Conduct onsite interviews with park visitors and program participants.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.A.5	Develop and implement a program evaluation system.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Recommendation B: Strive to engage citizens in active healthy living through their use of township parks.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	4.B.1	Continue to provide facilities for self-directed recreation such as walking, the most popular recreation activity.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.B.2	Consider the development of clubs, events, and programs to encourage people, especially those living in isolation, to come out to walk and socialize in the parks.	High	Township Manager

<b>Recommendation C: Continue to support and enhance partnerships with other community based recreation providers, environmental organization, schools and colleges, businesses and others.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	4.C.1	Continue facilitate the use of parks by community based organizations such as the sports leagues, scouts, and schools.	High	Township Manager
	4.C.2	Collaborate with the Conservancy Board in the development of public awareness and education programs.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.B.3	Collaborate with the Historical Commission in heritage based recreation programs and events.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Recommendation D: Develop a program management plan.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	4.D.1	Develop a program management plan that is market driven, that is, based upon service to identified customer groups.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.D.2	Focus on active healthy living, connecting people to nature and lifelong enrichment.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.D.3	Provide input to programs and services provided by the Township.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Commission
	4.D.4	Develop and implement an educational program to promote public awareness that "every landowner is a land steward".	High	Conservancy Board
<b>Recommendation E: Introduce convenience to program registration.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	4.E.1	Set up an online-registration system.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	4.E.2	Arrange to accept credit cards as a form of payment for recreation programs.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director

## Continue to provide operational excellence and financial sustainability for the parks, recreation, and open space system through a mix of public and private support

**Objective 4:** Continue to provide operational excellence and financial sustainability for the parks, recreation, and open space system through a mix of public and private support.

**Recommendation A: Reconfigure the Recreation Department as the Parks and Recreation Department.**

Action #	Description	Priority	Responsible Party
5.A.1	Designate park planning as an official function of the Parks and Recreation Department.	High	Board of Supervisors
5.A.2	Coordinate park planning with Public Works to include park maintenance as an element of park planning.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
5.A.3	Revise the job description of the Recreation Director to that of Parks and Recreation Director. Reclassify the position and its salary to reflect a greater level of complexity and responsibility.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director

**Recommendation B: Strive to generate revenue from a mix of public and private sources.**

Action #	Description	Priority	Responsible Party
5.B.1	Develop a revenue policy that includes goals for financial sustainability and policies on fees and charges, gifts and donations.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
5.B.2	Work with the Friends of East Goshen on fundraising for projects & events	High	Parks & Recreation Director



<b>Recommendation D: Develop a brand for the parks, recreation and open space system followed by a promotional program to increase public awareness of the benefits of parks and recreation..</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	5.D.1	Secure the services of an outside professional to assist the township in the development of a branding and targeted promotional program.	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Recommendation E: Monitor parks, recreation and open space responsibilities to assess staff, volunteer and partnership needs.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	5.E.1	Formulate the Director's time to spend 50 percent on partnerships, facilitation, and outreach, 30 percent on programs and 20 percent on managerial responsibilities.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	5.E.2	Develop a formal volunteer program.	Low	Parks & Recreation Director
	5.E.3	Monitor the information produced through the maintenance management system to plan for staffing, fees, and volunteerism.	Low	Public Works Director
	5.E.4	As programs increase and revenues are generated, consider the addition of dedicated program specialist (s).	Low	Parks & Recreation Director
<b>Recommendation F: Consider a bond and grants for the preservation of open space, improvement of township parks and trail development.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	5.F.1	Determine the level of support for a bond or loan for park and trail improvements and open space.	Low	Board of Supervisors
	5.F.2	Provide designated staff assistance in writing grants or secure outside services in order to pursue grants.	Medium	Township Manager
<b>Recommendation G: Continue to ensure adequate financial support for the maintenance and operation of township parks, recreation facilities, and open space.</b>				
	<b>Action #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	5.G.1	Continue to fund parks & recreation at five percent of the twp. budget.	High	Board of Supervisors
	5.G.2	Strive to increase cost recovery for programs	Medium	Parks & Recreation Director
	5.G.3	As part of all park master plans, include an element that addresses maintenance requirements as well as revenue sources and costs.	High	Parks & Recreation Director
	5.G.4	Plan a goal for the budget for park maintenance of \$2,500 – 3,000 per acre for active parkland and \$500 per acre for natural areas and open space owned by the Township.	Low	Board of Supervisors
	5.G.5	Continue to preserve open space via creative land use planning to avert acquisition and maintenance costs.	High	Township Manager

1  
2  
3 **EAST GOSHEN TOWNSHIP**  
4 **OPEN SPACE TASK FORCE COMMITTEE**  
5 **February 20, 2014**  
6 **DRAFT**

7 Present

8  
9 Dan Daley, Chairman and Committee members: Ginnie Newlin, Joe Zulli and Don Zembruski were  
10 present. Also in attendance were Mark Gordon and Anne Toole.

11  
12 Call to Order

13  
14 The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman, Dan Daley. The meeting began with the  
15 Pledge of Allegiance and there was a moment of silence for our military troops.

16  
17 January 28, 2014 Minutes

18  
19 The minutes were approved making the following corrections:

- 20 1) Location of the playground equipment, exercise equipment and t-ball locations.  
21 2) The bathrooms should be maintained better.  
22 3) Any new bleachers should have backs on them to comply with safety standards.

23  
24 Progress Report

25  
26 Ann Toole reported that 35 people attended the Open House. She said that a citizen's volunteer group  
27 was formed and they hope to plan and develop a walking trail from the Bow Tree Development. Mrs.  
28 Toole said that she plans to meet with Jason Lang, who is our new Park & Rec Director. She mentioned  
29 that he has programs he would like to introduce for our recreation program.

30  
31 Mrs. Toole brought a video presentation showing playground and fitness zones which other  
32 municipalities use. She thought that some of the ideas would be useful for our East Goshen Township  
33 Park. She said that dog parks, skate board parks, "tween" hubs and activity areas for older people were  
34 options that other communities were using as recreation centers.

35  
36 Mrs. Toole said that there were four large land parcels in East Goshen Township. She mentioned that  
37 the owners are interested in land preservation. Mrs. Toole told the Commission that they were able to  
38 classify open space as parks. The Commission would like a map showing the open space areas in East  
39 Goshen Township that would inform residents where they are located. Some of the open space would  
40 have to be used as passive use because there is no walking trail or roadway to those areas. She said that  
41 there are two neighborhood parks in East Goshen Township which have a park that is about 30 acres.  
42 The Grand Oak Development is one of those neighborhoods that have 30 acre park and they use it for  
43 neighborhood picnics and a ball field for t-ball players.

1 Paoli Pike Walking Trail

2  
3 Mrs. Toole said that that a walking trail could be started in the area of the YMCA and could be directed  
4 up Paoli Pike past East High School and follow Paoli Pike to the Boot Road and Paoli Pike intersection. At  
5 the intersection the trail would cross the street and follow Paoli Pike past the Township Building and  
6 then would cross Route 352 and past the Goshen Friends property and on to the walking path at East  
7 Goshen Township Park.

8  
9 Next Meeting Date

10  
11 The next meeting date has been set for Thursday, April 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

12  
13  
14 Ann Toole adjourned the meeting at 9:03 pm

15  
16 Respectfully submitted;

17  
18  
19 Joanne Morgan  
20 Receptionist/Secretary