

Girard Township would like to give you some facts and information on the proposed Lake Erie Community Park renovation project. Accompanied is the Master Site Plan which depicts the main ideas for the project. Lake Erie Community Park is a 125 acre park on municipal owned land located on the lake bluff overlooking Lake Erie with nearly one mile of lake shore. The park was deeded to Girard Township in 1939 to be utilized in perpetuity as a community open space.

Lake Erie Community Park is one of the true assets of the West County region of Erie County. From the views of Lake Erie, inland to the Park's connection with the Scenic Byways Seaway Trail, a historically important transportation route and modern catalyst for tourism, Lake Erie Community Park is a regional asset that possesses the potential to become a recreational and educational gem. This gem of a park has the potential not only to serve the needs of the surrounding communities, but the region as a whole.

In the fall of 2004, Girard Township retained HRG-Inc. to prepare a master site plan for the Park with funding provided by the PA DCNR and the DEP Coastal Zone Management Program. To determine what improvements would be included in the plan, an open and comprehensive approach to public input gathering and participation was undertaken. Public input meetings were held for comments and presentations. These public meetings were met with large attendances. There were also regularly scheduled monthly Study Committee meetings during the project. The Study Committee was comprised of 12 members including Lake Erie Community Park Board Members, Elk Creek Recreation and Leisure Board Members, Girard Township officials, State agencies, School District officials and local residents. Community response sheets were also distributed throughout the community for additional input. It was important to the Girard Township Supervisors that the Plan for the park include what the public wanted to see there, not just what the Supervisors thought should be included.

One of the main objectives of the Supervisors was to keep Lake Erie Community Park as much of a natural setting as possible. We have very environmentally sensitive areas that need to be preserved and cared for such as our eroding bluff face, our large grove of old growth trees and Kelly's Run. The Plan shows how we can blend public activity areas while still preserving the natural areas. Some of those featured areas are groomed walking trails with viewing areas of Lake Erie as well as Kelly's Run, a playground, access to the beach, educational kiosks, modern pavilions for events, public restrooms, recreational fields for baseball, soccer etc., a community center and even a 10 acre, 160 site campground area to accommodate transient camping.

It is important to note that this Plan was created by compiling the ideas and desires of the PUBLIC and that the Township does not receive any monies generated by the campground or any other park activities. In order to make any or all of this Plan come together, it takes funding. In order for funding to be granted to the Township through sources such as DEP Coastal Zone Management, DCNR or the Scenic Byways Seaway Trail, the Township cannot even apply until the Park becomes truly a public park again and not a campground. When you hear on the news or read in the paper that the Township is in litigation with the Park Board to gain control of the day to day operations of the Park, please understand it is for the betterment of the community, it's residents and the future of Lake Erie Community Park.

If you have questions, would like copies of this Plan map or would like to read through the entire Master Plan, you may contact Becky at Girard Township at 774-4738 ext. 101.