



Fairfield Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan Public Visioning Session: Workshop #1 November 29, 2021

FACILITATED WORKGROUPS: GENERAL (not prioritized)

What are we doing well? What is the Town of Fairfield doing well by way of providing recreational opportunities (programming and/or facilities) for residents?

Group #1 (Nate)

- Number of neighborhood parks/fields for community use and athletics
- Quality of parks/fields
- Maintenance: parks and beaches are well kept
- Youth programming/after school activities
- Tennis courts
- Golf at Smith Richardson/Par 3 course staff
- Tunxis Hill/pickleball courts
- School play yards
- Sherman Green events
- Beaches/Beach parking
- Hiking trails are well kept

Group #2 (Craig)

- Plenty of open space/public spaces
- Public golf courses
- Good street biking
- Tunxis Hill is great (baseball, soccer, playgrounds/bathrooms)
- Penfield Beach
- Parks and Recreation gym
- Early years youth programming
- Town wide events
- New landscaping contractor doing well
- Parks and Recreation is extremely responsive

Group #3 (Wayne)

- Parks and Recreation website works well
- Access to public spaces
- Maintenance of facilities/courts
- Venues are geographically spread out
- Communication
- Reservations are easily made
- Penfield pavilion/beach
- Converted pickleball courts at Tunxis

Group #4 (Krista)

- Programming (for kids and seniors)
- Events on the Green



- Sidewalks/ADA to the beaches
- Bike lane/beach route
- Bike repair stations

Group #5 (Mike)

- Diverse Programming
 - o Multitude of offerings all ages
 - o Diverse programs for youth
- Maintenance
 - o Par 3 golf course is well maintained
 - o Fairfield Middle School baseball fields maintained
 - o Tennis courts and soccer fields well maintained
 - o Open space for hiking
 - o Smith Richardson facility is great
- New Opportunities
 - o Gould Manor
 - o Smith Richardson Golf Course

Group #6 (Jeff)

- Access to facilities
- Amount of facilities
- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan process to identify needs
- Youth soccer (fields and scheduling)
- Reservation systems
- Beaches
- Support/funding for youth sports
- Tunxis Hill tennis courts converted to pickleball
- Pickleball at Senior Center
- Golf reservations
- Parks and Recreation/DPW willing to meet/listen to local baseball/softball groups (direct connections to contacts to raise issues)

What could we do better? What existing recreation facilities/programs could benefit from improvements? How could they be improved?

Group #1 (Nate)

- **Fields Maintenance (Priority #1)**
 - o Better drainage on natural fields
 - o Fields can't be maintained due to too much activity
 - o Improved maintenance (graded and leveled fields)
- **Enhance Penfield with food offerings (Priority #1)**
 - o Food trucks
 - o Restaurant on the beach
- **Amenities at Sites (Priority #1)**
 - o Bathroom facilities at fields
 - o Lights at parks/fields



- Scoreboards
- Christmas Tree (worse lighted tree in New England)
- Coaching 101 training for soccer, basketball and other sports (annually)
- Bike paths and connectivity (sidewalks) between sites
- More pickleball courts/Fix Tunxis Hill courts/Lighting

Group #2 (Craig)

- Facilities (Priority #1)

- Need more pickleball courts
- Ballfield space (shared use with schools limits availability)
- Port-a-pots/Bathrooms needed year round

- Stewardship/Maintenance (Priority #1)

- Outdoor bathroom conditions
- Field conditions
- Turf discussions
- Restroom conditions at Penfield
- Dwight tennis courts need resurfacing

- Reservation System (Priority #2)

- Current system is cumbersome
- Process for facility reservations
- Reservation for pickleball is cumbersome, can't we offer open play

- Long-Term Planning (Priority #2)

- Utilize Waterfall system through Board of Education for equipment and facility planning
- Concessions/Food Trucks
- Programming for middle-ages residents

Group #3 (Wayne)

- Pickleball (Priority #1)

- More pickleball courts
- Lighted courts
- Keep up with courts usage and demand (behind most other towns)

- Sport Specific Dedicated Space (Priority #2)

- Rugby
- Football

- Enhance Natural Landscape of Parks (Priority #3)

- Lake Mohegan Fish Park
- Natural landscape integrated with park/playground

Group #4 (Krista)

- Safety (Priority #1)

- Biking amenities
- Better sidewalks/repairs (especially Sasco Hill)

- Accessibility/ADA (Priority #2)

- Beach access sidewalk

- Turf Fields (Priority #3)

- More turf fields (usage is high/rain closes fields/safety concerns)



- Pickleball Courts (need more)
 - o Tunxis (4)
 - o Shoreline (4)
 - o Gould (2)
- Communication Coordination
 - o Process to reserve space for events
 - o Ways to integrate local businesses into community events
 - o Town to advertise upcoming events (website/Instagram)
- Restrooms
 - o Year-round restrooms should be available in parks

Group #5 (Mike)

- Pickleball (Priority #1)
 - o Need more pickleball courts
 - o Repair/resurface Tunxis pickleball courts
 - o Dedicated pickleball court needed east of Route 95 (beach area)
- Dedicated beach rather than buildings (Priority #2)
- More facilities for special needs residents (Priority #3)
- Turf fields for multiple sports (Priority #3)
- Maintenance (Priority #3)
 - o Town creates green areas but doesn't maintain
- Lake Mohegan walking/bog paths
- Basketball courts (more)
- Restrooms (more)
- Parking (more at soccer and baseball fields)

Group #6 (Jeff)

- Facilities (Priority #1)
 - o Equitable focus on fields/facilities for girls youth sports (amount offered for play)
 - o Forward thinking/design implementation of facilities for girls youth softball
 - o Field conditions
 - o Lights for fields
 - o Future-proofing (weather)
- Pickleball (Priority #2)
 - o Add indoor pickleball and bubble
 - o More indoor/outdoor courts
 - o Line existing tennis courts to include pickleball
 - o Resurface Tunxis Hill/Gould Manor courts
 - o Additional play time at Senior Center
- Security at Lake Mohegan (Priority #3)
- Resident-preference for tee times at golf course (Priority #3)
- Dog Park (unleashed)
- Keep all Parks and Recreation employees informed on parks/amenities/regulations (phone calls often passed from employee to employee)
- Better use of National Guard building at Gould Manor (indoor opportunity)



- Town is spending too much money rebuilding the same facilities providing the same value to the community
- Exide Battery site another opportunity
- Pickleball
 - o Lining of courts done incorrectly (need different color lines)
 - o Need more courts in one place for tournaments
 - o Need drop in opportunities, not just reservations
- Keep dogs leashed and out of parks (enforce rules)
- Security at Mohegan Lake (close the gate)

What is the Town not doing? What are new recreational opportunities (programs/facilities), open spaces and community events that the Town should consider?

Group #1 (Nate)

- Pickleball (Priority #1)
 - o 1 tennis courts = 3 to 4 Pickleball courts (more players)
- Platform Tennis/Paddle Tennis (Priority #1)
 - o South Benson or beach parking lot
- Facilities (Priority #2)
 - o Rollerblades/biking trail
 - o Safe streets for pedestrians/bikers
 - o Ice Rink
- Turf Fields (Priority #2)
- Town Pool
- Lights on pickleball courts

Group #2 (Craig)

- Facility Improvements (Priority #1)
 - o Turf
 - o Lighting for fields
- Indoor/Outdoor Facilities (Priority #1)
 - o Platform tennis courts
 - o Need pickleball courts and a bubble (similar to tennis bubble)
- Amenities for Dogs (Priority #2)
 - o Dog parks
 - o Enclosed dog park
- Community Gardens (Priority #2)
- Land acquisitions
- Ice skating
- Marina facilities
- Programs
 - o Older youth programming/Teen center
- Bike Lanes

Group #3 (Wayne)

- Pickleball (Priority #1)



- Indoor pickleball courts
- Lighted pickleball courts
- Town to realize pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the U.S (for young and old)
- Expand hours of play for pickleball
- **Fields (Priority #2)**
 - Turf fields that can be used in the rain
- **Indoor Pool (Priority #3)**
- Spray Pads
- Permitting Process (oversight of work in Town spaces/Blanket permits and lack of use during playing season)
- Fences at playgrounds

Group #4 (Krista)

- **Dog Park (Priority #1)**
 - Fenced in dog park
- **Field House (Priority #2)**
 - Indoor sports
- **Outdoor Facilities (Priority #3)**
 - Swimming pool
 - Basketball courts
- Volleyball
- General fitness classes (all ages)
- Connect with local fitness businesses

Group #5 (Mike)

- **Pickleball (Priority #1)**
 - Additional courts/courts on the southern part of town
 - Indoor pickleball courts
- **Dedicated Dog Parks (Priority #2)**
 - Burroughs Rd. opportunity (clear out woods near Black Rock Park)
 - Enclosed/gated dog park
- **Synthetic Turf Fields (Priority #2)**
 - Additional fields
- Kayak Storage
 - Additional storage areas for kayaks and paddleboards
- Ice Rink
- Fitness Course

Group #6 (Jeff)

- **Indoor sports complex (Priority #1)**
- **Field lighting (Priority #2)**
- **Need a space-management plan (Priority #3)**
- Swimming pool
- Café on the waterfront
- Boardwalk on the coast with recreation facilities
- Clubhouse at the golf course



- Softball/Baseball Fields
 - o No dedicated facility, multiple fields
 - o Difficult to host events/tournaments
 - o Very high participation, but no place to practice
 - o Fields don't have bullpens
 - o One field has no lights and poor drainage
 - o HS fields are poorly maintained, no fencing, and no place to spectate
 - o Girls field is not illuminated (shared space with driving range)
 - o Drainage and maintenance are patchwork, rain causes a lot of flooding (should plan for increased future storm events (climate resilience)
 - o Equitable split for girls/boys and on-par with other communities
 - o No AEDs at fields and no emergency access
- Golf: no local preference for tee-times (out of towners can get ahead of residents)

PARTICIPANT COMMENT SHEETS: GENERAL (not prioritized)

What are we doing well? What is the Town of Fairfield doing well by way of providing recreational opportunities (programming and/or facilities) for residents?

- Opening up beach to dogs
- Programs (especially kids and special events)
- Parks and Recreational facility is great
- Open Space/Hiking

What could we do better? What existing recreation facilities/programs could benefit from improvements? How could they be improved?

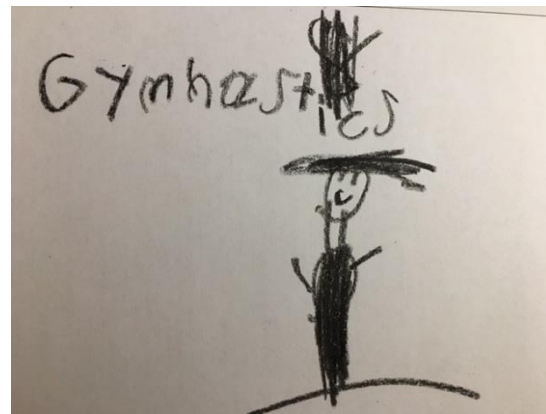
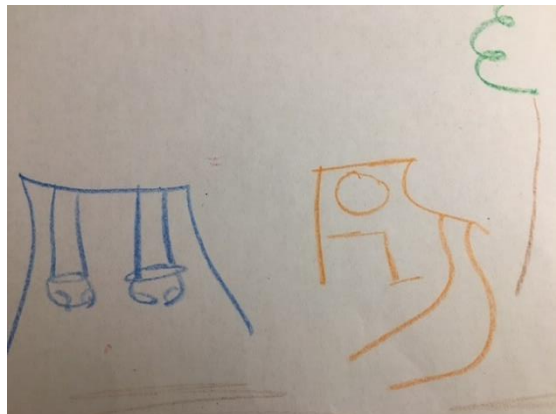
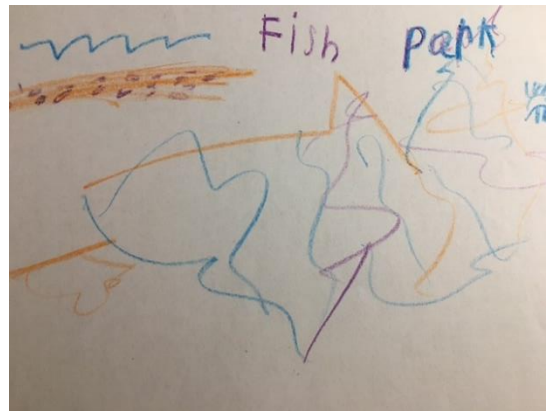
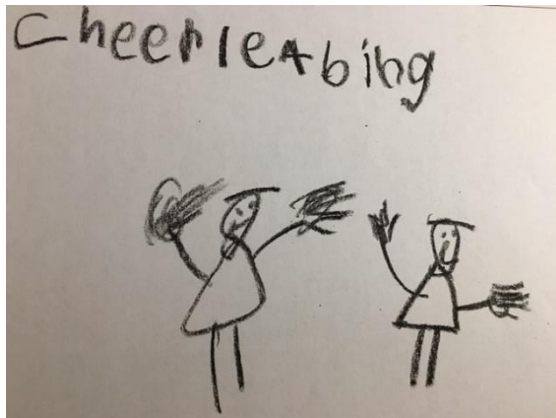
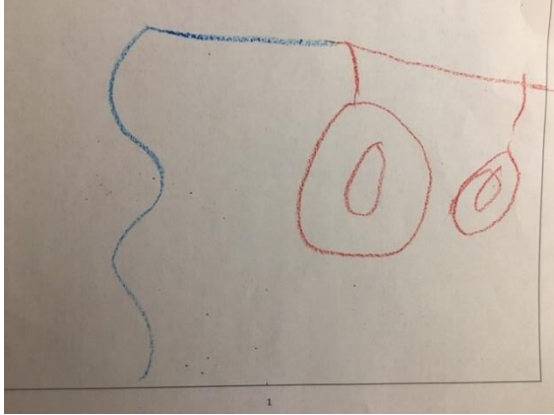
- Parking on Old Dam Road...have spaces face in, not parallel
- Private organizations sometimes 'take over' a field and citizens have no access to it for weeks/months (the padlocked BB field at Mill Hill School galls me)
- Could improve food/restaurant choice at Smith (one pricey restaurant is not sufficient or useful to 'normal' golfers)
- Restrooms at playground (need maintenance and more of them)
- Turf fields
- Public basketball courts indoor/outdoor
- Improve splash pad

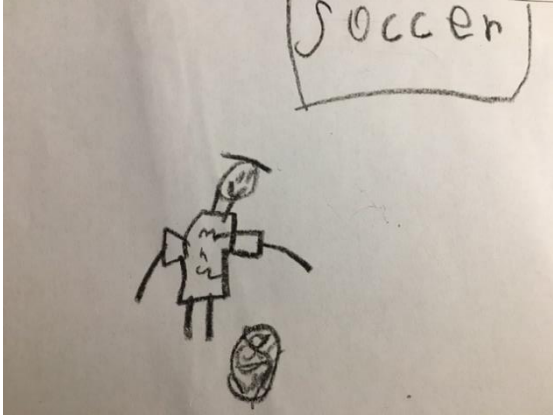
What is the Town not doing? What are new recreational opportunities (programs/facilities), open spaces and community events that the Town should consider?

- Dog field (Westport)
- Pickleball
- Dog park
- Indoor ice rink
- Pickleball courts at Dwight School
- Not making sure adults have the consideration (except for golf/tennis)
- Not assuring that adult slow-pitch softball fields are groomed, clean and safe
- Consider building more pickleball courts for 'drop-ins'
- Not enforcing 'No dogs in Town parks'

FACILITATED WORKGROUPS: YOUTH (not prioritized)

Draw a picture of three open space areas (parks) or recreation facilities (athletic complex/fields) you go to at least once a week.





What are the top five sports and/or recreation programs you, your brother/sister, or family members do on a weekly basis?

- Spray pad
- Embroidery class
- Girl Scouts
- Water Skiing
- Ice skating lessons
- Ballet
- Tumbling
- Lacrosse
- Cooking/Baking classes

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

- Of the 55 participants in attendance, all neighborhoods were fairly represented, with the largest group residing in the Samp Mortar/Black Rock Turnpike neighborhood.

WHERE DO YOU RECREATE?

- Of the 55 participants in attendance, most associated with Tunxis Hill Park for recreation, followed by N. Stratfield Elementary School/Lake Mohegan Recreation Area, and finally Oldfield Senior Center.