



Fairfield Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan Community Engagement/Concept Plans Session: Workshop #2 March 30, 2022

Participants were provided with a presentation on the top priorities identified from the community engagement findings including: Public Workshop #1 (November 2021); Stakeholder Engagement – Interviews/Focus Groups/Round Robins (February 2022); and Online Community Survey/Online Public Input (open late November through February 2022).

Following the presentation, participants were asked to visit the gallery which included the top priorities combined from all three outreach methods, across the three topic areas: Access/Connectivity/Mobility, Facilities, and Programming. The gallery boards are included below with the top three priorities as identified by participants. Participants were also asked to visit the ‘Concepts’ station in the gallery and provide feedback on the six site concepts presented earlier. A summary of participant feedback is included below.

Station #1: Access/Connectivity/Mobility

- **ADA Accessibility/Universal Access**
 - Provisions for beach access (boardwalk, Mats, all-terrain wheelchairs)...7 votes (priority #3)
 - Provisions/Accommodations throughout sites...5 votes
- **Biking/Walking Trails**
 - Biking amenities (paths, racks, bike repair stations...2 votes
 - Sidewalks (more consistent, link to sites)...5 votes
 - Connectivity between sites (on/off-road)...3 votes
 - Consider Town trolley/loop system...9 votes (priority #1)
 - Bike lane along Fairfield Beach Road
 - Boardwalk connecting beaches...8 votes (priority #2)
 - Pedestrian signal lights at intersections...2 votes

General comments:

- Blackrock to Town Center walking/biking and to beach

Station #2: Facilities

- **Amenities**
 - Food trucks/Concessions...2 votes
 - Comfort stations at sites (more/year-round)
 - Lighting at fields (to extend play/use)...3 votes
 - Water taps to accommodate water bottle filling
 - Boat racks (with security)...1 vote
 - Boat rentals...1 vote
 - Field amenities (scoreboards/dug outs)
- **Policies**
 - Field reservation system is cumbersome (cease permit hoarding/penalize non-use of reserved fields/offer global calendar for transparency)...1 vote
 - Utilize Board of Education ‘waterfall’ system for equipment/facility planning...1 vote



- Equitable focus/offerings (girl's youth sports)...5 votes (priority #3 tie)
- Safety/Security (increase)
- Space management plan
- Trash receptacles/recycling/pet waste stations (available year-round)
- Revisit marina redesign plan (safety/ramping/lighting/frog arms)
- Skate park needs oversight/enforcement
- Continue to explore partnerships with Sacred Heart/Fairfield University...3 votes
- Improved coordination with Conservation (beneficial adjacencies/efficiencies...1 vote)
- Develop Cost Benefit Analysis for artificial turf (monetize improvements)
- Develop methodology for 501C3 financial contributions for site improvements
- Standard Operating Procedures for equipment loss/damage for leagues
- Consider sustainability/changing climate for improvements...2 votes
- Consider noise pollution...1 vote
- **Operations and Maintenance**
 - Field conditions (drainage/contractor deficiencies)
 - Artificial turf...5 votes (priority #3 tie)
 - Tennis courts (resurfacing)
 - Enhance natural landscape of parks...1 vote
 - Improved maintenance of existing areas...2 votes
 - Playgrounds need upgrade...1 vote
 - Driving range upgrade
- **What's needed**
 - Public pool...10 votes (priority #1)
 - Fields/Multi-use complex (destination park)...1 vote
 - Dog park...4 votes
 - Ice rink...5 votes (priority #3 tie)
 - Pickleball courts...9 votes (priority #2)
 - Field house/indoor complex
 - Bike path (s)...3 votes
 - Rugby (home field)
 - Indoor/outdoor courts (basketball)
 - Baseball field (s)
 - Walking/Hiking paths...5 votes (priority #3 tie)
 - Football field (s)
 - Additional facilities (with ADA accessibility/Universal access)
 - Platform/Paddle tennis...2 votes
 - Community gardens/farming opportunities...1 vote
 - Restaurant on the waterfront/beach...3 votes

General comments:

- Have some pickleball courts non-reservable
- Consult with Sustainable Fairfield throughout the improvement process
- Change the reservation time for pickleball courts (reservations open at midnight)
- Dark skies compliance for field lights
- Keep trees and plant more for shade/ornamentals



Station #3: Programming

Program Offerings

- Swim lessons...3 votes
- ADA accessible/Adaptive recreation options/alternatives...2 votes
- Adult programming...5 votes (priority #3)
- Enhance water sports (boat rentals/lessons)...6 votes (priority #2 tie)
- Winter-based outdoor activities (snowshoeing/cross country skiing)...6 votes (priority #2 tie)
- Focus programs on high school offerings (serve as feeder programs)...2 votes

One-off Events

- Music events...4 votes
- Holiday events...1 vote
- Program/Activate the beaches...2 votes
- Taste of Fairfield...2 votes
- Party boat/sunset dinner cruises...1 vote
- Events targeted towards adults/empty-nesters...4 votes
- Close streets a couple of times per year, allow restaurants to expand into streets...9 votes (priority #1)

Information

- Increase visibility of parks/facilities on Town's website...2 votes
- Trail maps/markers are needed (incorporate technology)...1 vote

Policies

- Municipal departments/groups look at programming holistically (parks and Rec/Senior Center/Library)
- Boating in town/a marina more accessible to all residents

General comments:

- Owen Fish Park Farmer's Market...mentioned twice
- Pickleball drop-ins (no reservations)...mentioned four times
- Pickleball paddles racked/rotate through
- Allow water toys in the water at the beaches noodles/rafts/beachballs)

Station #4: Site Concepts

Lincoln Park

- Please meet with neighborhood to see what they want
- Neighborhood Park
- Very walkable
- Heavily used by children
- Need for independent play structures/equipment
- Users want play equipment & amenities to allow children to "grow through the park"
- Need for play structures/equipment for older children/ teens
- Teen hang-out area
- Gaga pit
- Monkey bars
- Fix/clean sandbox
- Basketball hoop



- Bocce courts
- Benches, trash rec, and picnic tables, trees

Tunxis Hill

- Pickleball court orientation should be north-south, existing courts should be rotated to preferred orientation
- Erosion issues at bottom of slope adjacent to pickleball courts, undermining occurring of courts, re-grading and/or creation of a drainage swale system needed to protect court area
- Consider adding on-street parking along Melville Ave
- Consider only 6 courts with more room for pavilion gathering space
- Improve parking at Greenfield Street and improve connection to park
- Possibly town pool?
- Trails and more use of the woods
- Add bullpens and batting cages to lower field (HS JV use)

Dover Park

- Pickleball not desirable at this location, this is a neighborhood park

Dwight Elementary

- Add pickleball at lawn area near the tennis courts

South Pine Creek

- Synthetic fields should be built with multiple turf types to accommodate different sports (soccer, football, lacrosse, etc.)
- Public works facility should be removed/relocated to allow additional park area/amenities
- Dog park would be a good addition at S Pine Creek, may need to be larger than indicated
- Don't lose number of batting cages and bullpens (keep) can't relocate
- Softball field improvements as indicated

Highwood

- Pickleball not desirable at this location, this is a neighborhood park
- Keep softball field
- Keep tree canopy and possibly add more trees

Owen Fish

- Concern with re-orientating baseball fields due to potential foul balls to parking area, pond, playground, picnic areas, maybe move deeper into park
- Make sure softball use is accounted for
- Stormwater pond was historically used for ice skating, in recent years, the pond has not been safe enough to utilize
- Trees over the playground area are an asset, trees should be kept for shading benefit, thinning and/or removing trees in poor health is acceptable as long as majority of shading remains
- Consider two tennis courts

Dougiello

- Field lighting desired for this field by users (not by neighborhood)



- Dog park would be a good addition
- Seasonal ice rink would be great amenity
- Possibly no Pickleball as players may not drive out there to use

Jennings Beach

- Add spray park, possibly near pavilion or in park near the playground

General Comments:

- Fields
 - Public would like to see additional locations for fields (soccer, baseball, softball)
- Softball
 - Additional fields needed (softball)
 - Girls softball league participation is increasing
- Pickleball
 - Users request minimum of 4 courts per park/location
- Hockey
 - Year-round ice rink needed
 - Fairfield hockey players currently use surrounding towns facilities for hockey
 - Shelton CT double-decker ice rink facility is an example that could be desirable for Fairfield
- Sustainability
 - Dark sky-compliant lighting should be utilized for parks / fields
 - Consider opportunities for pollinator pathways – recent resolution passed in Fairfield (June 2021)
 - Plant majority (70%+) native species to support wildlife & ecosystems at parks
 - 2021 - achieved silver status in CT
 - Add pollinator plants to parks in general