



Presented February 6, 2017
Town Council Report for January 2016
Parks and Recreation Activity Highlights:

2017's Major Park Planning Efforts with Town-wide Effects (Chronologically listed)

- *Overly-Worman Park Conceptual Design Charrette:* As was discussed with the Town Council during the 2017 budgeting process, the developer of the Vonterra homes project along south Zionsville Road will be donating ~45 acres of bottomland across the Stream from Starkey Park. This donation will take place in several portions as the housing project is phased, likely over a few years. Still it is time now to plan for what this park will eventually look like when it is fully implemented. This will include not only the general activities that will be addressed but also some of the unique features towards which this site may harken. Towards this end the Park Board has held a competitive selection process and identified a consultant team to facilitate a charrette process. This is a process that was successfully used for the conceptual designs on Heritage Trail Park and Elm Street Green. While this detailed process doesn't go so far as to complete full construction documents with every bolt detailed and detailed cost estimates, they do provide conceptual drawings and costs opinions for what the park will look like and are what guides the preparation of construction documents and the building of those park.

This intensive process will conduct onsite surveys culminating in an intensive, 3-day set of sessions with various stakeholders and potential users invited to attend and speak from their various points of view. Also there will be public input meetings and various methods for "general citizenry" to engage themselves in the process. All told, it is a 4-6 month process.

- *Zionsville Park and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan:* Also as discussed with the Town Council during the 2017 budgeting process, it is time to again plan the next 5-8 years of Zionsville's Park and Recreation Future (and hence the associated positive impacts on economic development, the quality of life, and the health of our community and its citizens). This process will pick up and build open the start in the process detailed above. And will also follow a model of stakeholder input and public input meetings. There will also be a robust online survey component and our past efforts have generated respondents in the range of 400-900 responses (a very good response rate in the industry). Look to have this process's 4-5 month timeline begin with somewhat overlapping with the wind down of the Overly-Worman Charrette process and continue on into the early fall.

Note: it is hoped that both these processes will lead to the submission of two very significant grant applications to two separate programs (one specifically only for use by Park Boards to build outdoor recreation features in parks and the other for trails construction purposes. It may be that both would be applied for in 2017. That would put their submission deadlines only one month apart in May and June. Both require significant work to even apply and would mandate certain construction timelines, but if successful... **each** would bring in \$200,000 in grant funding to assist in the development of these significant features.

Park Maintenance Efforts

- *Big-4 Rail Trail (formerly the Zionsville Rail Trail):* Residents have likely been noticing significant projects underway along the Rail Trail. One is that our maintenance staff has been full mobilized and has been removing trees, primarily ash trees, which have been killed or are severely dying from the nonnative emerald ash borer. In the month of January alone, we have dropped 20 ash trees and will continue into February as we work our way north. There will still be trees that are too difficult for our staff to deal with, and after this we will be getting quotes from multiple contractors to remove these more difficult specimens. Additionally, we have an ecological contractor working to suppress other nonnative and harmful plant species along the Rail Trail and at other locations in our system These includes such species as ornamental Callary Pear trees that are escaping our citizens' landscape cultivation and are spreading widely throughout Indiana's native woodlots. This includes such species as Asian Bush Honeysuckle, Oriental Bittersweet, Multiflora Rose, etc.
- *Extensive Damage along Trail SP-1 in Starkey Park:* As reported to the media by the Town's Director of Communications and Community Relations, an extremely large tree growing near the bottom of the rustic stairway in the wooded section of the park fell. Unfortunately it plummeted in the worst direction possible. While no injuries were reported it did crush a picnic table and a nearby 40-foot long footbridge (that had been built in the last few years by and Eagle Scout). The root ball also destroyed the bottom several feet of stairway. This trail portion will be closed, tentatively until the end of the spring while repairs are completed. Insurance estimates are being sought from several contractors. One such set of two quotes places the reconstruction of both facilities (to their pre-existing states and after our staff have cleared the site of debris) at over \$7,500. This does not include the cost of replacing the materials. We had been considering significant upgrades of the park's stairways in the next year or two, and we are looking heavily into that for this stairway now (the other stairs to follow next year?).