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## Appendix C: Public Hearing Comments

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## WCPRC Public Hearing on P/R Plan

Monday, January 12, 2004

### Public Comment:

- Need projects in that side of the County. Perhaps a recreation center. Improved park facilities. What can you do to address this? The Commission should consider another facility in Ypsilanti Township.
- There is a need for dog park. We pay taxes and would like to recreate with out pets. There is a large group of people who would like a large piece of land set aside for this. Benefits to people (owners) as well as dogs. This helps to create better citizens through responsible pet use.
- Children's play area in Parker Mills Park is wrong. They are not used by children as much as one might think. York Twp has avoided putting in play equipment because people have this in their own back yard and Saline City provides this as well.
- Impressed with use of the Recreation Center in the City. But, it is over used and crowed. We need something from County Parks for children. Programs and facilities. Note that thee City of Ypsilanti had to cancel all programs due to budget shortfalls. Need places to learn sports and crafts, and arts to keep kids "off the street."
- Asked people who are in favor of dog parks to stand up. Many of these people are women and women with children. (30 people stood in support of dog park)
- Many needs of pets and my pets keep me healthy by getting me out of the house. I get to meet other people who have dogs and make new friends. Pets help people to live longer.
- Lifestyle of working many hours means that I won't get to use County Park services, but a dog park will get me out to use your facilities. Mentioned over \$4,000 raised.
- Parents who are seniors get a kick out of having a dog park. This is a benefit to retirement communities as an option to join the two together.
- County trails have improved and increased the quality of my life. Advocate of passive trains.

- Opposed to any more golf courses. Demographics don't support spending the cost for new GC.
- Jogs with his dog. When planning an off leash dog park, include jogging trails too.
- If you have a dog and you run it off leash, it will happen. Safety is important and owners won't take them to an unsafe place where they could get hit. This off leash idea is an excellent idea.
- Development can be a plus or minus. Opposed to using tax payer money to build an amenity for his benefit on residential lots.
- My dog is my child. Wants a facility for this. Noted energy in the room in favor of this. People are willing to drive to this location. Dog owners would be willing to help and support the facility – labor, policing, monitoring and financially.
- Human aspect of dog parks. They brings the community together.
- Most people use parks when it's nice out but not during the winter. But, dog people use parks all year long. Thus they get the most use out of parks. Cited example in Ann Arundel County, MD.
- Thanked Commission for dog trails at Rolling Hills Park.
- Dog being off leash is a crime. Today, there are many illegal activities that happen in County Parks – particularly Park Northfield – ranging from drugs to sexual activity. By having a dog park, it would be a crime free because of family oriented nature of uses and by increasing the number of legitimate park visitors.
- Cyclist desiring a fast path for road bikes at Co. Parks.
- Teenagers don't use the play ground. Disc Golf would be good. Soccer good too.
- Maintenance of parks - Herbicide on trails is a bad idea. Noted use of Roundup at County Farm Park. County should look at other alternatives.
- Need to consider recreation for young people, particularly in the urban areas. Whereas this is not something that WCPARC has done before, we should now.
- Appreciation to the Commissioners for use of County Farm Park for Project Grow. This is a good collaborative experience.

- Is a golf course in the 5-Year plan? (no) Is not in favor of investment in new CG because of declining demographics of users.
- Dog owners are an economic benefit for the community –
- There is a desire to link Milan to Saline along the Saline River via a Greenway. Limited resources available today for York Twp. Would like help with this do design. SNRE for a feasibility study with grad students. Would like to form a study group w city of Milan, Saline and York Twp to make the greenway happen. Can County partner on this? Looking for easements not purchase of land. Noted limited development on the River today.

### **Commission Comments**

- Question of Canine Social Club: Would you discriminate based on dog breeds? Perceived aggressive vs perceived passive species.?
- Answer - breed and size is irrelevant. Research (dog trainers) has shown that it is not the breed, it's the owner and background of a few certain dogs. Any breed can be trained to behave at an off-leash facility. We are looking into training for owners in the County.
- (Follow-up question) so, is there a way to guaranteed that individuals will be well trained?
- Answer: no. Risk exists everywhere. Yes, risk may be higher, but national trends do not support this. Yes, dog parks can fail but only when there is not a strong committed citizen group. As far as safety goes – there is a higher risk of kids falling off swing sets and getting hurt than through dangers of dogs at a dog park. Dog park users are responsible owners and it's safer to have a designated place.
- (Follow-up question) ?Would users be willing to sign a waiver absolving WCPARC?
- Answer: Yes. And we will take part in clean up and beautification. We welcome the opportunity to work with the County.
- How to identify what is fun for kids at parks? Target age groups to ID what they want and think is fun. Invite them to the Recreation Summit
- Made note of the Recreation Summit as a time to come discuss meeting the need of the age population.