

Report on the Survey of Upper Provident Township Residents on Improvements to Ray Roche Park

2 November 2023

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Executive Summary:

Overall, a plurality of residents (20/42) had positive responses to the electronic survey distributed to the community about planned improvements to Ray Roche Park. In particular, numerous residents expressed excitement for updated playground equipment with these two terms having demonstrated the highest frequency, collocation, and concordance scores. Residents also provided positive feedback about keeping and updating the basketball courts as they were described to be a significantly used part of the park. However, there was a significant amount of uneasiness expressed in the surveys, with 15/42 neutral and 7/42 negative overall responses to the survey. Foremost concerns included removing the large trees and an insufficient number of swings. There was also apprehension about preserving and keeping the open space, especially considering the design of the pathways.

Figure 1: Word Cloud of Survey Responses



Summary and Analysis for Question 1: "What do you think about the planned improvements to Ray Roche Park?"

When focusing only on question 1, a majority of the respondents were positive in their responses to the planned improvements (25/38). Note, four people did not answer this question on the survey. To see full responses, see Appendix B.

Table 1: Coded Responses to Question 1

Number of positive responses	25
Number of negative responses	12
Number of neutral responses	1
Number of no responses	4

As seen in Figure 1 below and the tables of word frequency counts (Table 2) and collocation (Table 3), the respondents noted how they liked the improvements to the playground equipment but were concerned about the trees and needing more swings.

Figure 2: Word Cloud of Responses to Question 1



Table 2: Term Frequency for Question 1 Responses

Term Frequency	Count
trees	15
playground	14
park	14
like	14
swings	13
equipment	11
kids	10
shade	9
play	9
basketball	9
area	9

Table 3: Collocation of Terms for Question 1 Responses:

Term	Collocate	Count (context)
swings	plan	5
basketball	court	5
swings	swings	4
trees	cut	3
playground	equipment	3
shade	trees	3
basketball	use	3

Summary and Analysis for Question 2, How do you and/or your family currently use Ray Roche Park? Check all that apply”

This question provided four options for survey respondents, which are listed below with the frequency counts of each response:

- Basketball courts: 15
- Playground equipment: 31
- Open space for activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics: 32
- I don't use Ray Roche Park: 4

Summary and Analysis for Question 3: Why you don't use Ray Roche Park?

Only 4/42 responses provided feedback to this prompt, with two responses highlighting how they primarily use other parks, specifically mentioning Rose Tree Park. Another response pointed out that they do not have small children so there is no draw for them to visit the park. The final response felt that the park was poorly maintained, but this respondent was negative for all the prompts and included negative comments about the current administration and high taxes.

Summary and Analysis for Question 4: Other uses for the park

There were 12/42 responses to this question, with three mentions about having places for dogs. Other responses often referred to question 2, emphasizing the use of open space for playing catch, tree climbing, and exploring nature. One unique response highlighted how teenagers use picnic tables for homework.

Figure 3: Word Cloud of Responses to Question 4



Summary and Analysis for Question 5: Future plans for Recreation Board

While numerous responses misunderstood the question and focused on additional comments about the planned improvements, there were some useful suggestions (see Appendix F for a full list of responses). As seen in the word cloud, frequency counts, collocation scores, and hand coding, most respondents focused on the need for park improvements. In addition, the data analysis suggested desire for community activities, with older children and teenagers mentioned several times, as well as space for dogs that is fenced. From these suggestions, there is also an opportunity to engage the community further about township parks.

Figure 4: Word Cloud of Responses to Question 5



Survey methodology:

An electronic survey was made available to the Upper Providence Township community from 5-31 October 2023. The Recreation Board constructed the survey questions, included in Appendix A. One member of the Recreation Board and an independent non-resident of Upper Providence Township analyzed the survey responses using Voyant text analysis and hand-coding.

Appendix A: Survey Questions

1. What do you think about the proposed improvements to Ray Roche Park?
2. How do you and/or your family currently use Ray Roche Park? Check all that apply
 - e. Basketball courts
 - f. Playground equipment
 - g. Open space for activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
 - h. I don't use Ray Roche Park
3. If you don't use Ray Roche Park, kindly offer an explanation why in the space provided below.
4. If you utilize Ray Roche Park for purposes other than those mentioned earlier, please provide details about these additional activities.
5. What do you think the Recreation Board should focus on in the next couple of years? This could include park improvements, activities, or programs.
6. Name:
7. Email address:

Appendix B: Survey Responses for Question 1, "What do you think about the proposed improvements to Ray Roche Park?"

- Fenced area for dog play
- Excited!
- What are the proposed improvements?
- Excited for a refresh!
- Overkill - taking away all the 'run around' space for older kids who want to kick a soccer ball or play tag.
- I worry about shade as all the new parks in the area lack shade.
- Good but could do more
- We are excited! It would be nice if the proposed walking trail went all the way around though.
- Its a great idea and I'm excited!
- About time
- Excited about it! Id like to request a zipline added
- Im not sure what the enhancements are- do not see them detailed anywhere. I would just request that the playground equipment if upgraded not be as dangerous as the equipment at rose tree park with tall towers and openings
- Not interesting
- Improvements can be used but should keep integrity of open space with shade
- I think it will be a great improvement to my grandchildren as long as you leave the trees. There are no shaded playgrounds for the kids to use. Without the trees the playground equipment gets too hot for the kids to go on in the afternoon. Especially in the summer.
- Pretty good!
- Like the proposed layout, but would like to keep at least some of the tall trees including black walnuts
- Awesome
- More swings would be beneficial
- Love this park. Looking forward to improvements. I would like to see more benches for parents to sit watching the playground from the edge of the basketball or parking lot. Maybe backless benches along the basketball court to face either way. Also, I like the trees but I don't like the walnuts that fall on the ground and people turn ankles. You have my vote to remove any walnut trees.
- Overall, we are happy with the upgrades. However, we would like to share some feedback about it. We think there should be more swings added to the plan, as well as allowing smaller basketball nets to remain on the basketball court.

- The swing set is titled "ADA" but the ADA but the rendering does not show an accessible swing with a chair shape.
- Its great. I hope you keep the metal slide though - theres no more of them around.
- I think it would be better if the tot lot for ages 2-5 and the playground for ages 5-12 were closer together for parents to keep an eye on their children of all ages. I would not feel comfortable being on the tot lot with my toddler while my 7 year old plays out of sight at the other playground. At other playgrounds, my toddler ends up playing on the older kids equipment which can be dangerous, especially when crowded.
- I am glad you are giving it attention but please please do not cut down the mature trees!!!! They are the life of that park.
- I like the initial plans I think the playground needs to be modernized. Have a couple of different slides and climbing features similar to sleighton park more swings then originally proposed
- The proposal doesn't have enough swings, would like to see traditional baby/toddler swings in the toddler area! That is a must. please do Not cut down any trees, we need more trees not less, those old tall trees are great. You should repurpose the ducky horse, and the small bouncy see saw in the toddler area. The extensive paved proposed trail throughout the park is a bit too aggressive, too much, just seems like kids would trip and fall over it while running. Please don't cut down anymore trees
- **SUPER EXCITED**
- Overall, looks nice although more swings would = fewer toddler meltdowns! My main concern is that tree cover be maintained. No new planting nor transplant of larger trees could take the place of mature, established trees. The importance of their protection for shade and erosion/flood prevention cannot be stressed enough.
- Overall, I feel the plan will benefit from some further development. I'm glad to see play areas geared to different ages, secured tot lot for extra safety, and new equipment and surfacing to ensure safety and compliance with any changes in code. Unfortunately, I don't feel that the relationships between the new elements were fully considered - many seem to be dropped in around the existing elements. If the existing equipment (on the township building side) is to be removed (and reinstalled elsewhere?), that is the ideal place to relocate the 5-12 age play structures. Keeping the 2-5, 5-12, and the basketball courts in closer proximity aids parents and guardians to supervise children who are in different age groups. Covered or sheltered seating pods (like the new playground at Rose Tree) in between the play zones would provide a place for parents to sit or park strollers. Grouping the play equipment - that is fixed with foundations and can

only be programmed for active play - to the west side of the parcel will open up the east side as a larger lawn area. This open lawn space could be programmed for future community events as the open area would accommodate larger groups, tents of various sizes, temporary stages, various sports (though not regulation size), etc. The path appears a bit arbitrary by simply following the perimeter. There are opportunities for the path to serve multiple purposes. The path could be improved by expanding and creating a loop that is measurable (1/8 or 1/4 mile perhaps) so walkers can track their progress or schools could use it as an informal track. Changes in grade or material could afford kids learning to ride bikes, scooters, or other devices a place to learn and practice navigating challenges away from cars. Seating and other additional amenities (shade trees, flowering plants, bird houses, etc.) along the trail would give it a additional programming and purpose. The pollinator garden is a missed opportunity as an "island" in the lawn. It should be adjacent to, or bisected by, the path to allow easier access for those with disabilities and to provide visual interest for those utilizing the trail. Locating the pollinator garden at a low point would allow it to do double duty as a raingarden. Alternatively, the garden could be provided as several smaller gardens interspersed throughout the park. The various gardens could provide "gateway" elements at park entrances, backdrops to park signage or seating, as well as demonstrate pollinator habitat in shade vs. sun. Educational signage should be incorporated as well.

- I love some things and don't love others. I will submit my full comments to the Township. They can be found here:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LqzlvlGJS5QC3zAacVEAtV1fZ9yPianRFW7FC7l0qR8/edit?usp=sharing>
- The improvements are well-considered. Id like to see more options for teens.
- I think they are necessary.
- The basic plan looks decent - there are ADA spots and ADA swings - could there be any other ADA equipment like the larger ramps / braile on signs / in-ground merry go round? (Any additional ADA / inclusivity grants that could stack with the current grant?) We moved from Gainesville FL which had recently installed an "inclusive" park which seemed really neat - press release is here:
<https://alachuancounty.us/news/article/pages/Renovated-Squirrel-Ridge-Park-Now-Open.aspx> and 7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design are linked here:
<https://www.playcore.com/programs/me2>. Was admittedly hoping for the addition of a water fountain or two (maybe even bathrooms) but didn't see that in the plan (likely cost / upkeep prohibitive). Playground equipment updates look good but if they had a theme kids might remember it a little better / make it a bit of a destination (ie - let's go to the "space" playground). Last thought - but is

there any info about Ray Roche (the person) at the playground? Thanks for the work on updating the playground!

- They look good. Maybe add some draw for elders like connecting the paved loop to the parking area, outdoor fitness equipment, benches. Look into making the pollinator garden a sensory garden as well (you might not need to add much).
- Please leave the existing swings - the current plan does not have enough swings, but adding the swings from the plan to the existing swings would be great! There needs to be shade over the play spaces. So many kids won't play on equipment because it gets too hot, and they don't want to go back to 'that playground with the slide that burns' for example. It's honestly miserable for kids and parents to be at an unshaded playground - you could install sunshades or plant shade trees. Can the paved basketball court be multi-use? For example, pickleball, painted with four square and hopscotch, etc. My kids will never use it as a basketball court, and its use is so limited in the plan. There needs to be more seating - benches, picnic tables, an area by the basketball court. Can you leave the picnic tables by the basketball courts? Our friends' teens do homework there, and they shouldn't be removed! The path doesn't seem well-planned. Can you connect it to the lot, and limit the construction by the large shade trees? Can you avoid cutting through the open grassy area used for games and sports?
- I think it's going to be a huge improvement, but there needs to be more swings!! 2 regular size kid swings is not enough.
- Why spend funds on this park when there's a multi-use park less than a half mile away? (Rose Tree Park)

Appendix C: Responses to Survey Question #2, "How do you and/or your family currently use Ray Roche Park? Please check all that apply."

- Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- I dont use Ray Roche Park.
- Playground Equipment
- Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- I dont use Ray Roche Park.
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment
- Playground Equipment
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics

- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
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- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
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- Basketball Court ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- I dont use Ray Roche Park.
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- Basketball Court ,Playground Equipment ,Open Space for Activities, e.g. walking, pick-up games, picnics
- I dont use Ray Roche Park.

Appendix D: Survey Question #3: If you don't use Ray Roche Park, kindly offer an explanation why in the space provided below.

- I don't have small children and there is nothing there for me
- Dirty, filthy, poorly maintained. The old Council used to take care of it.
- There are other parks with updated equipment that we usually use. I also wasn't sure where to park.
- I use Rose Tree Park

Appendix E: Survey Question #4 "If you utilize Ray Roche Park for purposes other than those mentioned earlier, please provide details about these additional activities."

- Running through it, playing catch
- My son and his friends use the open spaces VERY often for wiffle ball games. They bring their own bases and other supplies to set up a field using the area off to the right of the playground equipment.
- We enjoy the large open grass area often and really want that to stay. The trees are the best part of the park providing shade, natural beauty and a valuable part of our local eco system. I really hope you keep the trees and grassy areas.
- Dog walking
- My youngest daughter has used her hoverboardridden her bike on the paved surfaces a bit but it would be great if it went all the way around
- My kids loves to climb the low hanging tree branches.
- I walk our dog there, play games with kids and friends, and explore nature.
- The neighborhood uses this park to exercise their dogs. Dog waste stations are going to be critical to keep the park clean.
- My son and his friend often go to play basketball or catch.
- We bike to the park from our home so riding around the paved trail at the park will be nice as well.
- There needs to be more seating - benches, picnic tables, an area by the basketball court. Can you leave the picnic tables by the basketball courts? Our friends' teens do homework there, and they shouldn't be removed! Can the paved basketball court be multi-use? For example, pickleball, painted with four square and hopscotch, etc. My kids will never use it as a basketball court, and it's use is so limited in the plan.

Appendix F: Survey Question #5. What do you think the Recreation Board should focus on in the next couple of years? This could include park improvements, activities, or programs.

- Now that this park will be updated I think family activities should be the next focus.
- Park improvements and community activities in the park
- Updated playground equipment, a picnic pavilion, neighborhood activities
- Accessibility for wheelchair users, better sidewalk on sandy bank
- If its possible to establish an area with a mini ball field that would be incredible! Wiffle ball fields are pretty small, I believe 20 feet in width at the home run markers by about 60 feet long from home plate to each home run marker
- Ray Roche needs parking so that those who don't live in walking area can also enjoy it.
- Build a dog park within the park. There are two perfect locations: behind the tree line or the fenced in square on the north side of the park. Both spots already have a majority of the fencing needed.
- Activities & programs especially those for older children please (mine are 8 & 11)
- Park improvements!
- Maintenance and enhancements to township owned open space
- I love the parks!
- Open space with a trail. No buildings.
- Not spending too much money so you raise my taxes again for no benefit
- maintaining equipment/facilities. Access to water or community clean up day for neighborhood to help. Regular age group meet ups to help young families connect. Park doesn't need much - a good spring/fall cleaning every year
- Please make sure there are good fences to delineate space for people versus dogs. As a mom with young children, having fenced areas is of high priority. Also please make sure there is shade for the summer months!
- Keeping the park as green as possible
- Updated equipment will be great.
- Besides the new park, more community events
- Park improvements.
- Replace old picnic benches, keep the trees for shade, put a bathroom in, keep old metal slide...its a unique part of the playground and kids love it. Maybe just move it, but keep it. So much better than the plastic slides, add more playground equip and keep basketball courts.
- Open space & tree preservation and planting
- New Playground ideas for the common areas.
- Park improvements and community activities/programs

- NEW EQUIPMENT, DOG AREA, UPDATED BBALL COURTS
- Creating/maintaining spaces for older kids to gather. There are very few places in our general area for those who have aged out of playgrounds to hang.
- The Recreation Board should focus on developing a comprehensive plan. An inventory of our existing parks and their conditions and a SWOT analysis would help define future funding and planning strategies. Maintenance in particular should be reviewed under the plan. For instance, are there parks that don't need as much open lawn spaces and we could reduce mowing?
- I have submitted a document. In addition, I'd love to see some community programming at the Park including teen/tween programming.
- Park improvements and activities and programs for teens.
- Park improvements, a ramp for strollers and accessibility on the Sandy Bank entrance.
- Inclusive playgrounds, "music in the park" singer / songwriter kind of performances at the parks? A local disc golf course would be neat and bring people into the Township.
- I would like to see park improvements including shaded pavilions, restrooms, and access improved for those with ADA needs.
- Listen to the people who use the parks and live near the parks - so many communities are making 'improvements' that result in people not being able to use the parks well for various reasons. I'd love to see improvements to the parks, but some of the plans don't seem fully thought out. We want more shade, more places to rest (tables, benches), and ALWAYS add more swings - kids, teens, even adults want them. The first thing our group of friends' kids look for at a park are the swings - and there are NEVER enough! I feel like 6 should be the minimum, but 8-12 swings would always be best. Literally adding more swings and benches to each park could be all the Rec board does and people would be happier!
- Updating playground equipment, more organized activities in the park (food trucks, story time etc)
- The township needs a dog park for the residents that rudely allow their dogs to run off leash at Rose Tree Park

Appendix G: Ellen Morfei Comments on Ray Roche Park Use and the October 2023 Final Sketch Plan

I am excited for the planned enhancements at Ray Roche Park. I've lived at 925 Second Ave since 2005. The Park has always been within easy walking and viewing distance of my home and, since 2013, it has abutted my property. I love that the Park is an active community hub and look forward to its expanded use.

I understand that the grant will allow the Township to make the Park ADA compliant. It's important that a small community park be as useful to as many community members and community segments as possible. I believe the park should be designed to be flexible and multipurpose, avoid replicating services available nearby, support local ecology, and maximize return on investment. Below, please find my specific recommendations and concerns.

Teen Use

Currently, Ray Roche Park is heavily used by local teens. The [Final Sketch Plan](#) does not include any areas planned for teens and removes many amenities they currently favor. *It's critical that we maintain teen park use and, if possible, expand it for the well-being of our youth population and the community at large.*

"When youth have access to parks, they are more likely to be active. Being more active not only increases teenager's physical health but their social and mental health as well. Getting outside has become more important than ever for teenagers, and they need a safe park place to do so." ([source](#))

"Many people assume that teens want to be separated from the rest of society, but child-friendly research has not found this to be true: teens want to be integrated into public spaces, and they want to see public spaces designed for everyone (Bourke 2015, Breitbart 2014, Derr and Kovács in press). This is particularly significant in the context of adolescent development. When we isolate teenagers from other age groups and parts of society, we increase teen alienation, indifference, dysfunction, and antagonism in the younger generation (Bronfenbrenner and Condry 1970). And it goes against what teens consistently request, which is a place for all ages." ([source](#))

Ray Roche Park is already serving these purposes. Specifically, teens express wishes for the following park amenities that are currently available at Ray Roche Park or can be enhanced:

"Play Spaces for both Children and Adults – Many teens want to play, but do not feel free to do so in playgrounds designed with structured equipment for specific ages. Parks that mix play types are more effective at enabling teen play... Other types of play

spaces that teens request include fields for pick-up games of soccer or ping-pong tables.

Study Space – ... teens repeatedly request places where they can hang out and complete school work together outside. These spaces could be simple picnic tables that have some shelter from the elements, a grove of trees with tables and benches, or a tree house for teens...

Trees, Flowers, Nature – Teens also consistently say that they enjoy being in nature while spending time with their friends. In this case, nature often serves as a backdrop for other experiences, but is appreciated for its aesthetic and restorative qualities, nonetheless. Teens envisioned a study space in a grove of trees... Like many of the features in this list, teens wanted to see natural features integrated with other functions, such as studying..." ([source](#))

The Final Sketch Plan retains and enhances the basketball court (a teen hot spot), but removes all other amenities favored by teens. The red swings, benches and picnic tables in the grove that abuts the basketball court are all heavily used by teens. These amenities align perfectly with the kinds of amenities noted in the quote above. It costs nothing to retain these amenities. (The highest ROI!) Keeping teens engaged in healthy play, socializing and studying in Ray Roche Park is invaluable. (More thoughts on open play areas later.)

Proposed Paved Walkway

I understand that some of the walkways on the Final Sketch Plan have been added to make the Park amenities ADA accessible and that some community members have requested that walking paths be added to the Park. *I do not support the proposed walking path northeast of the current path that bisects the Park (excluding any segments that make Park amenities accessible)*. The proposed path in the northeast section is approximately 400 feet long – about the length of one block in the surrounding neighborhoods. The surrounding neighborhoods are very well utilized for walking and more sidewalks are planned for streets between the Park and Rosetree Elementary. This proposed Park enhancement replicates amenities that are already available nearby and thus provides no appreciable ROI for the Township's limited grant funds.

The proposed path terminates at the corner of the former 50 Sandybank Road. This would require a new opening in the fencing. The sidewalk there leads towards Second Avenue only and has a slope which does not meet ADA requirements.

There are many mature trees beside the proposed path including a *Champion willow oak (quercus alba), one of the largest of its kind in the state*. The path would stress all of these trees and in the case of the Champion oak, the path would need to be diverted around its massive root system. Cutting any roots would jeopardize these trees.

In addition to providing little added value, the proposed path undermines other Park amenities.

The proposed path bisects areas that are currently used for free play and pick up sports and games (a teen park request noted above) reducing the value of these spaces for flexible play. Large flexible play spaces are in short supply in the nearby neighborhoods which are characterized by small homes with small lots.

Dogs and their people are the primary current users of the grassy perimeter of this area of the park. A grassy walking area is safer for dogs during hot weather when concrete and asphalt might burn paws. The best ROI for this Park constituent is the current grass.

Finally, a paved walkway reduces permeable cover in the Park. Stormwater issues are germane all over our region and especially so in the area surrounding the Park as the small homes and lots of R-5 and R-4 zoning have a higher maximum percent of permeable cover.

New Plants and Ecological Amenities

The Final Sketch Plan includes new plants along the Sandybank perimeter, flanking the rear of the Second Avenue homes, and in a pollinator garden. I strongly encourage the Township to plant only plants native to our area and no plants listed in the PA Invasive Plants list. In addition, if plants are removed from the park, I encourage the removal of existing invasive plants whenever possible. In order to maximize the ROI of plantings, spacing should match the mature size of the plants (trees on the Sandybank side of the drawing are too close together). Consider consulting Second Avenue neighbors about whether they would like additional plant buffers behind their homes. Most of these homes already have solid rear fences. Consider adding to the plant buffer along the back of the Township Building. The current buffer has many gaps and it would be nice to screen the Highway Department storage area.

Where appropriate, please create other wildlife amenities in addition to the pollinator garden. These might include bat boxes and nesting boxes for bluebirds and cavity nesters.

Trees, Shade, and Open Play Spaces

Neighbors have expressed their wish for shade over the planned play areas. There is little, if any, shade over the proposed Tot Lot. When the play area for 5-12 year olds is moved closer to the current bisecting walkway, it too will be mainly unshaded. Please consider planting site-appropriate native shade trees proximate to these play areas.

Many of the existing trees in the Park are in poor condition, which creates a hazard for Park users. In addition, the trees along the lot line of the former 50 Sandybank Road reduce the usefulness of large swathes of the Park. Consider removing some of these trees (in particular the 3-5 trees along the lot line inside the Park boundaries from the

Sandybank side). All trees should be evaluated for tree health, public safety, and Park utility. Trees that remain in the Park should receive hazard and rejuvenation pruning from a certified arborist. New native trees should be planted with an emphasis on site appropriateness. Ideally, these new trees would be as large as the budget allows. (Note: I am sending a separate message to the Township Manager about the Champion Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*) that is in both the Park and my yard.)

As noted, open spaces are important for flexible park use especially for meeting teen needs. Removing selected trees and omitting the planned walkway northeast of the current bisecting walkway prioritize these open spaces. Consider grading these open spaces. They are currently less useful and safe than public play spaces should be.

Swings

The current swings at the Park are well used. The new plan includes only four swings, two of which are designated ADA swings. Please add more and more varied swings to the plan and retain the red swings for teen use. The current toddler swings are popular. Please add swings to the Tot Lot. Consider inclusive play equipment along with ADA swings. Consider ADA swings that might appeal to all children like saucer swings and/or two-person companion swings.

Basketball Court

The Park basketball court is very well used and the Final Sketch Plan expands and improves the court. I support resurfacing the existing court in its current configuration. I do not support adding a hoop along the current walkway and marking a full sized court. A full-sized court would add speed to the games and a hoop along the walkway (and the hill between the court and walkway) would be a hazard for players and other Park users. Gymnasium basketball courts have walls that act as backstops and are generously padded because players are traveling at high speeds as they exit the court's boundaries. In the Final Sketch Plan, players and balls would regularly cross the bisecting path and play area for 5-12 year olds creating a hazard for players and other Park users.

Consider marking the paved basketball court for additional uses. This might include pickleball (very popular for all ages and interested neighbors can purchase an inexpensive portable net, if desired) and games like hopscotch, four square and others. (Examples of creative playground markings can be found [here](#) and [here](#).)

Seating and Tables

Seating and tables in the Park are well used and will need to be increased. Seating is needed at all play areas, the pollinator garden, and the teen area near the basketball courts.

Trash and Recycling Cans and Signage

Please create new trash and recycling stations with larger receptacles and signage that can be seen from across the Park. Please locate a station near the basketball court and teen area.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Ray Roche Park use and the Final Sketch Plan. The Park is a gem and I look forward to the new and improved version! I'd be happy to discuss any of my feedback and would love to participate in any future opportunities for community input on the Park or other aspects of our community.