

**Township of Cranbury
Parks Commission
23A North Main Street
Cranbury, NJ 08512
Tel: 609-395-0900**

Board Members

Thomas Weidner, Chair
Christine Parker, Vice Chair
Julie Hardaker

Sally O'Grady
Joan Smith
Michele Kemper

Lisa Rue
Norma Swale

March 2015

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the Township Committee
Town Hall
23A North Main Street
Cranbury, NJ 08512

Re: Parks Commission
2014 Summary
2015 Goals

Dear Mayor and Committee Members:

The Parks Commission is pleased to submit this report reflecting our 2014 activities and goals to accomplish in 2015.

We were happy to spearhead a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Village Park at the July 5th fireworks. In coordination with the Township Committee and Jerry's DPW crew, the flagpole was repainted and illuminated, then Congressman Rush Holt gave Cranbury a United States flag flown over the capital, the Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society (CH&PS) gave Cranbury a town flag, and the gazebo was painted.

In addition, the Parks Commission researched old issues of the Cranbury Press and the CH&PS's files and wrote a detailed history of Village Park which the Township memorialized at its meeting on June 23, 2014. That history set forth the tremendous volunteer efforts by the Cranbury Lions Club, CH&PS, Cranbury-Plainsboro Little League and numerous individuals to make Village Park the attraction that it is. Mayor Susan Goetz recognized those organizations and individuals and introduced Arthur "Bub" Danser, who was on the Township Committee when Village Park was purchased in 1964, and Peter Zanghi, Sr., who contributed a great deal of time and money for the Little League fields in the

park.

Also in 2014, CH&PS proposed erecting a sign detailing Cranbury's history along the lake and stream, which includes General George Washington's visit to Cranbury on his way to the Battle of Monmouth. We worked closely with CH&PS to determine the wording and pictures on the sign, which should educate our citizens for decades.

We visit the parks/open spaces multiple times each year to make recommendations concerning their status and future needs. We will meet again with Jerry Thorne and go over our recommendations for maintenance items to be performed this year, short-term goals and long-term goals for each of our parks/open spaces. This is the seventh year we have done this. Jerry has expressed his appreciation for our providing an updated priorities list. We hope to meet with Jerry soon to go over the recommendations and to highlight those items that have been on the list for several years and either eliminate them because they can't/shouldn't be done or have them completed this year.

We worked with the Environmental Commission, when they made a rain garden in Village Park last fall. Similarly, we worked with Committeeman Dave Cook on the town's plans to restore the lake bank in Village Park. Both of these projects will be ongoing in 2015.

Our goals for 2015 are to work with CH&PS to place the historical sign in or near Memorial Park describing the history of the lake, stream and George Washington's visit. Also, hopefully we will oversee the erection of two new signs identifying Heritage and Barn parks. We also would like the installation of attractive enclosures around port-a-johns in our parks. We will continue to identify the maintenance, short-term goals and long-term goals to enhance the use and enjoyment of our parks.

We will meet with the Environmental Commission on March 23, 2015 and will continue working with the EC to allow our citizens to enjoy fully the Township's considerable efforts to create parks and preserve open space. To that end we anticipate working together to map out trails in the Cranbury Brook Preserve and clear paths in Unami Woods and the Millstone Preserve to allow our citizens to utilize them more. We also plan to pursue the feasibility of creating a walkway along Cranbury Brook from the middle of town to the Plainsboro border.

We also have discussed with the Recreation Commission our mutual goals and aspirations for our parks, e.g., the proposed ice skating/skateboard rink for Village Park, and the dog-park and small-sided soccer field near the town's regulation baseball field.

We also intend to prioritize the severely deteriorated fencing along Village Park and to beautify that park, and to enhance the entrances and retention basins in all affected parks. We also need to plan to commit greater resources to maintain our passive recreational areas as those areas have significantly increased (Reinhardt, Hagerty, and Fisher properties) over the past three years. We also will look into partnering with local organizations to enhance the beauty of our parks with enhanced landscaping. We will work with our liaison, Dave Cook, and Jerry to accomplish those needs.

We look forward to discussing these matters with you as soon as it is convenient for all of us.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Weidner, Chair

cc:WB