

April 11, 2012

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

Re: Parks Commission  
2011 Summary  
2012 Goals

Dear Mayor and Committee Members:

The Parks Commission is pleased to submit this report reflecting our 2011 activities and goals to accomplish in 2012.

Last year, we again visited each of the parks and enclose our recommendations for maintenance items to be performed this year, short-term goals and long-term goals. We met with Jerry Thorne last year with the 2010 list and he expressed his appreciation for our providing a "To Do" list for his men. We will meet with him again this year with this list.

We also had the pleasure of helping to coordinate the New Jersey Civil War History Association, the Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society, Eagle Scout Andrew Zysk and the Township in the erection of the beautiful Civil War monument and flagstone walkway in Memorial Park. The ceremony honoring those Civil War veterans who gave their "last full measure of devotion" to our country was inspiring. We especially want to thank our liaison, Committeeman Jay Taylor, for the countless hours he spent coordinating and helping with that project.

We are in the process of implementing our Guidelines for Memorials project. We have been asked by our liaison to determine all past memorials in our parks and public spaces for inclusion in our Memorial Book. We purchased this Book last year and intend to have a common template for all honored persons and then allow the family or donor to include two pages about that individual in the Book. If there is additional information that won't fit on two pages, the Historical Society has kindly agreed to place that information in its History Center. We hope that honoring the individuals in this way will encourage others to donate to the Township for the public good.

The Parks Commission met in January with the Environmental Commission and discussed our mutual concerns. We discussed all Township owned parcels that might be used for active or passive recreation and agreed to cooperate in making those areas useful to the public. We specifically discussed in some detail the Cranbury Brook Preserve, Unami Woods, and Reinhardt property and generally agreed on common goals to protect and preserve those lands.

The Parks Commission did not undertake any further efforts to highlight potential walking trails or use of open areas along Cranbury Brook, the Millstone River or Cedar Brook in light of the Township Committee's decision not to act on the Easement Subcommittee's recommendations for marking access paths to Township land throughout the town. The Parks Commission also recommended that an interactive artwork be placed near Brainerd Lake in Village Park, but the Township Committee did not concur with that recommendation. In addition, the Parks Commission participated on the Track Subcommittee.

Our goals for 2012 are to continue identifying the maintenance, short-term goals and long-term goals to enhance the use and enjoyment of our parks.\* We will work with Jerry to implement these goals and expect to report next year on the number of goals that have and have not been implemented. Moreover, we plan to finalize the identification of past gifts to the Township and include those persons in our Memorial Book with appropriate write-ups. We also expect to continue working with the Environmental Commission to allow our citizens to enjoy fully the Township's considerable efforts to create parks and preserve open space. Lastly, we hope to update our website in conjunction with the new Township website.

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

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Weidner, Chair  
Parks Planning Commission

TPW:wwb  
Cc: Township Committee Members  
Jerry Thorne, Public Works Director  
Enclosures

\* As you probably know, the Parks Commission is solely an advisory body to the Township Committee. (Ordinance Section 32-5). However, the Commission "shall" have broad review and recommendation authority over virtually all park-related design, development (including temporary and permanent structures, trees, other vegetation, and paths), planning and maintenance as well as for all township supported park and open space programs. (Section 32-3). The Parks Commission shall also review and make recommendations on the Public Works Department's proposed annual budget relating to parks as well as any donations and bequests that affect the parks. (Section 32-3(G)) Lastly, any individual or group shall first seek Park Commission review and recommendations for any park-related proposals. (Section 32-4).