

## 5. Beryl Gaffney Park, Community-Based Characterization

Building on Nepean's park planning and open space principles, demographic data and projections, Canadian and Nepean-specific leisure trends and patterns, a series of 85-95 slides were assembled, representing various park dimensions as listed below and elaborated in Appendix F.

### Slide Show Dimensions

ORGANIZED.....	SPONTANEOUS ACTIVITIES
NATURAL .....	FORMAL LANDSCAPING
HISTORICAL .....	CONTEMPORARY
CULTURAL/ ARTISTIC .....	TRADITIONAL
WATER-ORIENTED .....	WATER-BASED
PUBLIC GOOD .....	PROFIT CENTRED
SEPARATE AGES .....	INTEGRATED AGES
ENVIRONMENT/ CONSERVATION .....	DEVELOPMENT

The slides were then evaluated by staff, residents, leisure study students and Nepean young people aged 12-14. A total of 123 responses were tabulated - 13 staff, 30 residents, 15 university students, 65 Nepean youth. The public presentation, held on Thursday, November 26, 1998 was advertised locally, and more than 100 Invitations were sent. See Appendix G for a full contact list. In addition, meeting notices were delivered to residents on Maplehill Way and Lockview Road in Nepean.

The results of the slide characterization were used to develop the design for Beryl Gaffney Park. The Draft Design was developed by Steve Sunderland, senior landscape architect. Subsequently, an Open House was held on Thursday, February 25 to review the Preliminary Design. In addition, invitations were extended to about 30 professionals from a variety of agencies, to review the Draft Park Design on Wednesday, March 3. Subsequently, the large Draft Design drawing was circulated to the Barrhaven, Bells Corners and Centrepointhe libraries. Comment sheets were also included and received from Nepean residents.

All comments and feedback on the Draft Park Concept Design are included in Appendix H.

### **5.1. Youth Responses**

Sixty-five students from Cedarview Middle School, grades 6 to 8, responded to the 95 slide dimensions. While the students were not strongly *opposed* to any activity, they definitely supported (50 or more responses) the following:

- ▶ Tobogganing, Pond Skating, Winter Play
- ▶ Basketball, Mini Golf, Pick-up Ball
- ▶ Swimming, Whitewater Canoeing, Swimming Beach, Kayaking, Natural Water Play
- ▶ Natural Environment, Natural Water Area, Protected Habitat, Natural Habitat
- ▶ Children's Play Space, Exploring, Climbing, Creative Play Area
- ▶ Asphalt Walking/ Cycle Paths, Outdoor Walking Trails, Hiking in Natural Area,
- ▶ Outdoor Amphitheatre, Picnicking

### **5.2. Adult Resident Responses**

Of the adults that attended the Slide Consultation, there was a strong representation from both Lockview Rd. and Maplehill Way.

Strong preferences (20 or more responses noted yes to the activity) included:

- ▶ Historical/ Cultural, Older Adult Social, Picnicking
- ▶ Winter Hiking, Nature Hikes, Formal/Walking Park, Asphalt Walking/ Cycle Paths, Cycling Trails, Outdoor Walking Trails, Cross Country Skiing, Recreational Pathways
- ▶ Canoeing,, Fishing
- ▶ Creative Play Area, Exploring
- ▶ Natural Bird Sanctuary, Natural Environment Natural Water Area, Protected Habitat, Hiking in Natural Area,, Winter Play, Natural Habitat, Pond Skating, Natural Areas
- ▶ Formal Garden, Floral Gardens, Botanical Gardens, Wedding Photo Location, Urban Park

The adult respondents also strongly opposed (at least 20 marked no) the following activities:

- ▶ Skateboarding,
- ▶ Organized Soccer, Organized Baseball, Field Hockey, Tennis
- ▶ Commercial Landscaping, Farmer's Market, Outdoor Fine Dining Area, Circus, Marina, Camping, Craft Exhibit/ Sale, Mobile Concession, Small Boat Rentals, Boat Tours, Mini golf
- ▶ Art Gallery, Art Centre

Thirty-one residents were asked to circle their "Word Preferences" for Beryl Gaffney Park and the following were strongly endorsed:

▶ Natural	31
▶ Bird sanctuaries	24
▶ Wilderness	19
▶ Woodland Paths	18
▶ Ecological	16
▶ Family focused	15
▶ Rural	14
▶ Canoeing	13
▶ Meandering	11
▶ Aromatic gardens	11
▶ Historical	9
▶ Wild	9

### **5.3. Staff Responses**

The staff unanimously supported:

- ▶ Canoeing
- ▶ Older Adult Social
- ▶ Paved Parking
- ▶ Nature Hikes, Recreational Pathway, Outdoor Walking Trails, Exploring, Winter Hiking
- ▶ Natural Environment, Natural Water Area, Protected Habitat

The majority of staff (75%), also supported:

- ▶ Historical/ Cultural, Sculpture, Outdoor Amphitheatre, Performing Arts, Picnicking.
- ▶ Tobogganing, Children's Playspace, Pond Skating, Creative Play Area
- ▶ Swim (Natural Site), Swimming beach, Kayaking, Swimming Hole, Fishing, Small Boat Rentals
- ▶ Natural Bird Sanctuary, Constructed Wetland, Natural Habitat, Natural Water Play, Natural Areas
- ▶ Asphalt Walk/Cycle Paths, Nature Trails, Cross Country Skiing

The staff also unanimously opposed skateboarding, organized baseball and tennis. Staff indicated greater support for the profit centre concept, done properly and with care. Staff are probably more concerned about and appreciate the financial aspects, both in terms of park construction and park operations.

#### 5.4. Slide Characterization Summary

There was a strong consensus amongst all respondents in support of the environmental/ ecological dimension, and specifically the following activities:

- ▶ tobogganing/ pond skating/ cross country skiing
- ▶ winter hiking/ nature hikes/ outdoor walking trails / exploring/ asphalt waking/cycle paths/ recreational pathways
- ▶ canoeing/ fishing/ natural water area
- ▶ natural environment/ natural bird sanctuary/ natural habitat areas
- ▶ picnicking and children's play space

Equally useful, but in the reverse way, there was a strong agreement on what should NOT go into this park, specifically:

- ▶ Organized sport activities such as baseball or field hockey
- ▶ Farmer's Market
- ▶ Tennis

Both residents and staff did not support the organized sport areas but the youth were not so adamantly opposed to skateboarding, organized soccer, organized baseball, tennis or field hockey.

There was stronger staff support for some "revenue-generating" centres such as small boat rentals, boat tours, commercial landscaping, or farmer's market but the residents, overall, did not support these initiatives.

To conclude, the strong consensus from the park characterization was used, in part, to guide the park design. While the number of respondents to the slide presentation was not statistically valid as a percentage of the entire Nepean population, it's important to appreciate that the full basis of the design was the integration of the multi lines of inquiry - historical, demographic, participation patterns and trends analysis .

The detailed results of the Slide Characterization can be found in Appendix I.

### 5.5. Feedback on Draft Design

The Open House was held on Thursday, February 25. In addition, faxes were received from residents who had visited the local libraries as the draft design circulated throughout the community. The following comments were received from 12 residents. A sample Community Feedback Form and additional feedback can be found in Appendix H.

- It would be nice to have one place in Nepean for cross country skiing that is not open to walkers. I am not sure from plan if skiing/ walking means shared or skiing in winter and walking in summer. In any case, trail should be a LOOP.
- Very much the kind of public open space work the NCC is involved with
- Docking area for bigger boats from Rideau to stop for picnic or overnight
- It would be nice to have an area where larger boats could dock overnight
- Overall, I'm impressed; it looks well laid out and balanced. I am concerned about traffic along Lockview. I think that there should be restricted access from Lockview, but not total restriction. Can some sort of low level fencing be installed that allows people but not vehicles? Also, there would be a need to restrict parking on Lockview.
- I know wetlands are sacrosanct, but could one wet area be made available to children for "pond" study. Kids love to gather tadpoles etc. Can this happen here? Schools could use it too. Also plants to encourage butterflies are recommended. Bird Boxes as in bluebird boxes. I'd like to see as little intrusion by man as possible. The plans appear to show minimal amounts - well done! I presume there will be benches at appropriate "lookout" spots. These are not indicated
- Re: group picnic activity off Lockview Rd. you have created a buffer through the types of activities around residential areas elsewhere in the park (playgrounds). The same is not true for Lockview. Walkways throughout leading to the lookouts would be strongly preferred. The "group activity" is inviting parking chaos, noise and security issues that the other residential areas will not have to the same degree.
- Without a pedestrian/cyclist underpass or overpass I would not feel safe walking or cycling to this park from Barrhaven and I certainly wouldn't allow my children to access the park by crossing Hwy. 16, even at an intersection with pedestrian crossing signs. Overall, a superb plan and I'm very enthusiastically supportive.

- General concepts and approach are okay; Major problem is the group picnic area located across from the homes on Lockview Rd. As discussed, there is insufficient buffer between Group picnic and homes. This Group Picnic Area would be better left as natural setting with trails to the river view areas.
- This letter is in regard to your draft design for Gaffney Park. First, let me say that I am most pleased to see this beautiful area designated as a ' people place '. Barrhaven needs more park space and a large area such as this which also utilizes the water front will be a focal point for south Nepean. I grew up in Kingston where water front is abundant. On any summer day you can see people playing frisbee , walking their dogs ,jogging or just sitting in their cars watching the other people walk by. I spent plenty of time parked by the water near the hospital and that area holds many memories for me. Having looked at your draft design , I can see no area where the water front is accessible by car. This is disappointing as south Nepean has few such locations for older or handicapped citizens who would enjoy sitting by the water in their cars. I would like to suggest that a parking lot running parallel to the water line be included in your design. The lot could be set back fifty feet or so to allow for a bicycle path and foot traffic at the waters edge. I am also in favor of a large picnic area and outdoor amphitheatre. A wetland boardwalk would also be a welcome addition, as would a children's play area.
- Let's consider the cost to taxpayers. Let's minimize development so as to let the area revert to its natural state. Forest is fine for children's "adventures".
- Channel ferry potential hazard unless well monitored/ controlled. Eliminate parking in group picnic area near Lockview Road i.e. key that area accessible only by pedestrian traffic. Too nice to be spoiled by autos. Garbage disposal sites?? Washroom facilities near Jock River bridge. Plans show fair distance from nearest washroom at rental centre. Overall a great project. Recommend lots of community volunteers in construction.
- Good thought into design. Do not support fishing as there are too many toxins in fish and many people do not know how to fish using non-barbed hooks. If fishing is eventually permitted. I strongly urge that only non-barbed hooks be used and no lead veights of any kind.

Overall, the response to the Draft Design was primarily positive. Specific issues and concerns are addressed in the next section which focuses on the Park Concept Design itself.