

OCEAN PINES RECREATION AND PARKS COMMITTEE  
Annual Report – November 11, 2021

**Committee Members:** Patti Stevens -Chair; Martha Arthur – Secretary; Steve Cohen; Kathi Gottesman; Laura Scharle - currently recruiting 1-2 new members

**2021 Accomplishments and Recommendations for 2022**

1. Replacement and Improvement of Playgrounds – The Committee visited and evaluated playgrounds and parks in Ocean Pines and prioritized improvements to Robin Hood Park and Bainbridge Parks.

Spring: **Robin Hood Park** playground equipment and fence was replaced, mulch refreshed, and basketball court repainted.

**White Horse Park** - A Pollinator Garden was planted with hands on support and funding from the Kiwanis Club.

**Bainbridge Park**- Tres Denk, Committee member and President of Eastern Shore Mountain Bike Association repaired bike trails and spread new dirt and gravel. He made recommendations for expanding the bike trails around park perimeter.

Fall - Game Time representative Brian Lewis presented information and examples of park design; features and equipment. Committee visited accessible playgrounds in the area.

Committee will work with Debbie Donahue to explore options and engage community groups and businesses for ideas and support for Bainbridge and other parks. Martha Arthur will be committee liaison for the Bainbridge Park planning team that will develop a timetable and plan for the accessible playground project.

**2022 Budget Consideration** – Funding for planning and design of playground and site prep.

2. Waterfront Recreation Amenities

**Kayak and Paddle Board Storage** - Community members indicated strong interest in having access to store and use kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards at secure and accessible launch points. A project plan was developed for kayak/paddleboard storage rack structure to be built at the Swim and Racquet Club near the beach launch area. It was determined that an environmental study was required to put up a fixed structure. Debbie Donahue and Dept of Public Works identified an interim option to hang storage racks along the fence. Racks to accommodate 18 watercraft were ordered but delivery was delayed. Once racks are installed, storage slots will be leased annually as an Ocean Pines amenity. Funds collected will be used to pay for additional storage racks either at the same location or another place.

Kayak/Paddle Launch - Committee researched options and pricing for a kayak launch to enable people of all abilities to enjoy water recreation. It could be part of the recreational pier planned to replace the crab pier that was removed from White Tail Sanctuary. Examples of floating dock and launch system were identified at Belle Isle State Park in Virginia and St Michaels Public Launch on San Domingo Creek. Preliminary Cost Estimates were \$35- 50, 000

Laura Scharle developed a water trails map highlighting places to launch in Ocean Pines and destinations to paddle with difficulty ratings and amenities. It is now posted on OP website. [Kayaks, Canoes & SUP - Ocean Pines Association](#)

**Recommendation** - Public Works should pursue the permitting process required to build a fixed rack storage for Spring 2022 and to install a floating recreation dock and kayak launch. Committee recommends Pin Tail Park for consideration for this amenity as it has parking, portapots, and picnic area and is centrally located in Ocean Pines.

**2022 Budget Consideration:** Funding for Floating dock and Kayak Launch

### 3. Bike and Pedestrian Safety and Access in Ocean Pines

Improving safety for walkers and bikers both continues to be a priority for the committee. The number of people walking and biking for health, recreation, and getting around continues to grow.

The Committee co-sponsored the first Ocean Pines Community Bike Ride on May 1. 60 people road 12 miles through the Pines. Most completed a bikeability survey reporting a very positive experience riding with public safety assistance at key intersections. 50 respondents rated the road shoulder surfaces *poor and dangerous* citing numerous potholes, cracks, and rough areas left by utility installation, faded lane markings, and lack of cross-walks. There was also strong interest in improving and expanding off-road trails.

Committee members led two community walks in Ocean Pines on Walk Maryland Day – October 6 on the Robin Hood Trail and Library Trail. Residents of all ages participated.

**Recommendation:** Ocean Pines Public Works should work with Worcester County and State Highway Administration to improve or add -walks at Race Track intersections with Manklin Creek and Cathell Rd, and Manklin Creek and Ocean Parkway. Collaborate with Worcester County to apply for funding to develop a trail plan to connect North and South Pines and create Safe Route To School to Showell Elementary and Blessed Sacrament Schools.

**Budget Consideration:** Labor and materials to address serious erosion and root exposure on walking trails – Robin Hood Trail, Trail from Library to Golf Course.