

## Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Advisory 2022 Annual Report

### SECTION I: COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STATUS OF TERMS

Name	Date Appointed	Term	Comments
Bill Barnard	December 2021	1	Chairperson
Martha Arthur	March 2020	1	(on temporary absence)
Thomas (Mike) Fraser	May 2022	1	
Becky Lehnerd	Jan 2022	1	
Laura Scharle	Feb 2020	1	
Pattie Stevens	June 2021	1	

### SECTION II: SUMMARY OF MAJOR ACTIVITIES DURING REPORTING PERIOD –

1. Kayak Storage Racks at Swim and Racquet Club – coordinated to install 18 kayak storage racks at the Swim & Racquet Club for the 2022 season. OPA collected rental fees from membership for usage.
2. Ocean Pines Bike Day (May) was held for the second year to celebrate National Bike Month and was co-sponsored with Worcester County Bike and Pedestrian Coalition. The event drew 52 riders and was supported by Ocean Pines Police and Volunteer Fire Departments as well as the Recreation and Parks Department
3. Kayak “Paddles” and instruction sessions – Organized a pre-season indoor kayak safety training in March and a community group paddling trip in June. About a dozen attended both, Laura leading each one.
4. Bay Day - Five Rec and Park Committee members volunteered to support different aspects of this community event held at White Horse Park on May 15th.
5. National Trail Day (June) – host two community walks on National Trail Day.
6. Pedestrian safety at Manklin Creak & MD RT 589 – coordinated to add curb accessibilities at MD RT 90 and Manklin Creak Rd. stoplight.
7. AARP Grant Submission (March) – submitted grant to AARP for Recreational Trail enhancements (not funded)
8. Kayak Launch Coordination with Maritime Activities & Environmental – coordinated meeting with Maritime Activities and Environmental & Natural Assets to discuss kayaking enhancement plans.

### SECTION III: PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND ASSISTANCE REQUIRED

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

Improving safety for pedestrians/walkers, bikers and other users of Ocean Pines roadways continues to be a priority for the committee. The number of people walking and biking for health, recreation, and getting around continues to grow. It is recommended that appropriate

signage and crosswalks be added at high pedestrian and bicyclist traffic locations, such as at access to amenities, and at trail crossings. County and state officials have advised that Ocean Pines Association has the authority and freedom to mark crossings and add signage on their roads. Also, a public campaign to promote safe use of these facilities is recommended. Additionally, the overall safety for pedestrians and bicyclist along MD RT 589 is of concern. It is recommended that OPA continues efforts, in coordination with the appropriate county and state entities, to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety and levels of comfort on roadways in and around Ocean Pines, including participating in ongoing planning for the Route 90 Bridge to accommodate bike and pedestrian travel.

#### Recreational Trail Maintenance and Signage

Our recreational trail system is a valuable resource to our community. A systematic annual plan for maintenance is recommended, if one does not currently exist. Of immediate concern is the condition of the Sherwood Forest Trail and Swim & Racquet Club Trail. The Sherwood Forest Trail is heavily used by walkers year-round and has experienced significant erosion, with exposed roots making it dangerous in many places. The Swim and Racquet Trail paths have deteriorated completely at several points, and is generally in poor condition, especially for those with any mobility challenges. The Rec and Park Committee believes that volunteers and donations could be engaged to assist with trail improvements in coordination with maintenance planned by the Public Works Department. The committee would like to work with a Public Works designee to develop a plan to make these and other Ocean Pines trails safe for all. A work plan of scheduled maintenance would be beneficial to allow the committee to coordinate additional resources, as needed.

#### Off Shore Lake (South Gate Pond #2) Trail

It has come to our attention that the boundaries of Off Shore Lake trail (part of the South Gate Pond Trail #2) are not well established. It appears that portions of the trail go through properties abutting the pond. It is recommended that the plats be reviewed to determine the exact location of the trail. And, once established, create clear and visible wayfaring, through signage, and posted information for responsible use of the trail.

#### Bainbridge Park Playground Plan –

Previously, the Committee has acquired playground catalogues and heard a presentation from GameTime about examples of outdoor fitness and playground equipment associated with creating inclusive playgrounds. Committee members visited inclusive parks in Salisbury and Virginia and talked with other area Park and Recreation Departments that have created accessible playgrounds to learn about how they were planned and funded. This project was put on hold at the request of Recreation and Parks Director until staff resources allowed for adequate focus and attention. The committee is committed to supporting efforts to increase accessibility for all playgrounds. We recommend continuing the efforts to enhance our playgrounds to make them more inclusive by developing a long-range plan, starting with a feasibility study.

SECTION IV: REQUEST FOR ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT OPA BUDGET. CHAIRPERSONS SHOULD CONSIDER IMPACTS ON THEIR COMMITTEES RELATING TO THE OPA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

The following items are respectfully submitted for funding:

- Additional Kayak/Canoe/SUP Storage rack at Pin Tail Park (Previously approved for funding)
- Swim & Racquet Club and Sherwood Forest trail refurbishment Grading, gravel, and fill dirt.
- Signage and wayfaring for Recreational Trails. Additional benches, as needed.
- Crosswalk installations (signage and pavement markings) at trail crossings (especially Robin Hood Trail), and amenities access points indicated (Swim & Racquet Club, Yacht Club, White Horse Park, and Library)
- A feasibility study for an inclusive playground at Bainbridge Park.

SECTION V: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOARD ACTIONS

1. That appropriate signage and crosswalks be established, as follows
  - a. Robin Hood Trail – signage and crosswalks at all trail road crossings, add appropriate signage on trail for wayfinding
  - b. Swim & Racquet Club – crosswalk with appropriate signage at Ocean Parkway, appropriate signage on trail for wayfinding
  - c. Yacht Club – crosswalk with appropriate signage at Ocean Parkway
  - d. White Horse Park - crosswalk with appropriate signage at Ocean Parkway
  - e. Library - crosswalk with appropriate signage across Cathell Road
2. That an annual maintenance plan for recreational trails be established and funded. Contract support be secured if OPA staff resources are not sufficient to handle this. (Maintenance costs generally vary, with a range from \$5,000 to \$7,000 per mile, per year for similar trails, source: American Trails).
3. That the Swim & Racquet Club recreational trail be reestablished to its original footprint
4. That a review of plats (surveys?) be conducted to establish the boundaries of the Rt. 90 Pond trail and once established post appropriate signage, and update public information accordingly (i.e. brochures, web site, etc.).