

Chestertown Recreation Commission Meeting

January 13, 2021

Outline of Recommendations and Ideas

Pocket Park and Playground

Better not bigger. Safer not crowded. Prettier not louder.

Scale and Compatibility

Happy with current configuration as a dawn to dusk pocket park and playground geared towards families, supervised children, and users of the Gilcrest Rail-Trail, inclusive of the existing basketball rim and half court.

There is not enough room (without encroachments and/or State approvals) to do what is proposed by AJAX committee. Why crowd the pocket park?

Very nearby, at Wilmer Park and/or the open space between old train cars/Stepne Station and old train station/Tidewater Trader building there is ample room for more courts (i.e., volleyball, bocci, basketball), playground equipment and park amenities.

Improvements to this pocket park should not result in less public parking.

Comprehensive Plan

Public park improvements in and around Town should be undertaken in accord with applicable land use plans and with awareness of existing parks/playgrounds and recreational opportunities.

This “gateway” area into Chestertown has seen a noticeable neighborhood character transformation over the past 25 years from residential to mixed-commercial uses (retail, professional offices, dining) near the Gilcrest Rail-Trail origination point.

Pocket park is in the Historic District, Wilmer Park is not.

Safety and Beautification

Improvements in terms of playground equipment quality and safety and overall aesthetics.

Remove old macadam; add landscaping; stormwater management plan

Parkly
Restrooms

Users

Kent County remains on a downward trend in public school enrollment.

[2,600 KCPS students in 1990; < 1,900 students in 2020 – a 27% decline in school enrollment in last 20 years]

With basketball courts at Carpenter Park/Washington Park circa Sept. 2020; Gateway Park circa May 2016; Chestertown Middle School; Kent County Community Center/Worton Park, Washington College and the YMCA (under construction), is there a community need for another regulation-size basketball court?

The proposed AJAX plan is not consistent with current park usage and neighborhood expectations.

Historic Accuracy

What has been proposed is not the original AJAX basketball court location.

Consider a suitable marker near the true location of “Ajax” court with a story board and tribute to those with fond memories, consistent with Town historic designations and wayfinding.

Pocket park is in the Historic District (attention to detail).

Attachment (plat)

Ref: Letters to Recreation Commission dated November 2 and December 2, 2020.

