

TOWN of CARY

2011/2012 Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan

Public Meeting Notes

On July 18 and 19, the Town of Cary held two public meetings to gather input as part of the process to complete the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan. In terms of format for the meetings, a short project overview was presented to the public followed by several questions that were asked regarding the value and vision of parks, recreation, and cultural resources to the Cary community. Then participants were asked to circulate to different stations (Values/vision, System Overview, Parks and Recreation, Cultural Arts, Greenways and Open Space) that were setup around the meeting room. At each station were a series of questions. The questions were printed on large sheets of paper and tacked to the wall. Participants were given post-it notes to write comments. Staff and consultants were assigned to each station to answer questions as needed. Below is a compilation of all the comments that were received.

July 18, 2011 – Green Hope Elementary School (6 – 8 pm)

Values & Vision

- *What's the value of parks, recreation, and cultural resources to the Cary community?*
 - Place for dogs
 - Get kids outside and active
 - Quality of life
 - Attractor to Cary
 - Education, learning
 - Sense of community
 - Improve aesthetics
 - Economic driver
 - Provides facilities/amenities that we don't have at home
 - Alternative transportation
 - Healthy living
 - Connect communities
 - New experiences
 - Desirable place to live
 - = Money's top 10 list
 - = Increase property values
 - = More money for parks
 - Make create the identity of Cary
 - Offers a life boat of expression in a time of grave concern for the future

- *What is your vision for the future of parks, recreation, and cultural resources in Cary?*
 - Clean and green
 - #1 desirable place to live
 - Progressive/leader/new ideas
 - Renovated downtown

- Inclusive – something for everyone
- Well rounded
- Destination
- Healthy lifestyles
- Continue to build assets that serve diverse needs which are accessible and that integrate art into design
- Wired areas for free internet access (e.g. downtown started with a few businesses)
- Through online access to resources
- Clean green value
- Farmers markets with small quality business art offerings needed in a community this size
- Green family oriented
- Encourages walking and biking
- Visionary
- Local, regional, and national balance
- Clean air, clean water, public utilities rather than private

System Overview

- *The best things about Cary's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources system . . .*
 - Wide range of facilities & programs, greenways (5)
 - Visual growth & purposeful
 - Staff
 - Connection between greenways facilitates biking/walking between neighborhoods
 - Well kept facilities and parks, especially athletic fields (2)
- *Please improve Cary's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources system by . . .*
 - More greenways & connections (2)
 - Farmer's market (3)
 - Permanent structure with shelter for special events, educational seminars, chef demos, scouting events, community garden
 - Community Centers
 - Make it easier to sign up on-line
 - Co-locating facilities or locating at greenway trailheads
 - Allowing citizens to "un-enroll" in courses/classes online instead of having to walk in to centers
 - Environmental awareness
 - Reduce
 - Reuse (swap shop at Cary Convenience Center or other place to bring reusable items)
 - Recycle all park and venue must have trash and recycle and possible reuse bins
 - Adding facilities to western part of town (2)
 - Summer concert series with local bands and Midwest Cary
 - Providing specialized recreation for children
 - Leaving more trees for shade by greenways and playgrounds (2)
 - Encourage cycling and walking with wider trails
 - Buy land now before it gets too expensive
 - Sprayground
- *If only Cary had a _____ it would be the best place to live.*
 - Aquatics Center (2)
 - Gym

- A lot more green and undeveloped space
- Permanent space/facility for farmer's market (8)
- Truly connected greenway system
- Better connected bicycle trails (2)
- Indoor tennis facility
- Community gardens
- More non-chain restaurants
- A downtown destination with soul (i.e. good coffee shops, bars, jazz venue, place to gather after dark (5)
 - More attractive downtown destinations with galleries, restaurants and shops
 - Parking, access to CAC
 - Lively downtown with events and music every night, parking
- A stroll district
- More developed public transit
- Space Needle
- *The partnership opportunities I see are . . .*
 - Neighboring municipalities for a regional pool system open to residents of several towns
 - Non-profits to bring business and recreational opportunities to downtown Cary
 - More connections with schools for public use of facilities (facilities and fields) (2)
- *Other comments....?*
 - Revitalize downtown areas that providing easy access via bikeways and pedestrian ways
 - Using the models of Sedona/Taos, Banff of architectural standards so it looks like a downtown (Look at Apes)

Parks & Recreation

- *My favorite park in Cary is _____ because . . .*
 - Sears Farm Park-shaded play areas, trails, diverse landscape and equipment (2)
 - Middle Creek- disc golf (5)
 - Umstead
 - Hemlock Bluffs-wildlife study, nature-centered, no paved trails (although wildlife seems to diminish), attractive forest walk for kids (3)
 - Cary Tennis Park (needs indoor space)
 - Kids Together Playground
 - Jordan Hall
 - Bond Park-walking trails, kayaking, lake, community center, playground (shaded), easily accessible, cultural activities (8)
 - Annie Jones Park- Sports courts/fields
- *An ideal community center would have the following features . . .*
 - Place for performing arts and visual art display
 - Cardio fitness/Exercise equipment (3)
 - Kitchens for cooking class, places for meetings available for public rental/Lots of large multi-use space (3)
 - Pool/Lap Swim for Adults/Aquatics Programming-swimming class/aerobics (2)
 - Located near greenway trailheads
 - Some child-care offerings
 - Large indoor/AC open play area for kids
 - Therapy hot-tub/Jacuzzi

- *My neighborhood park should have . . .*
 - A disc golf course (2)
 - A cover over picnic area (Annie Jones is unfinished)
 - Bocce, Shuffleboard, and Badminton (Kids Together, Marla Dorell Park)
 - Greenway Access connecting to other parks
 - Public Art walk
 - A sidewalk to get to it from all road directions
 - Outdoor Soccer Courts: European-style soccer courts paved with rubber or other suitable materials. Similar to Cary Tennis courts for small soccer games.

- *There is no place in Cary for me to _____ (recreational activities).*
 - Community Garden (3)
 - Non-concrete Basketball Courts
 - Take dog to swim (indoors or outside)
 - Fully-equipped woodworking shop/woodworking classes
 - Cricket facility
 - Public golf course
 - Play in-line hockey outdoors (safe/designed for sport)
 - Curling
 - Buy local produce under covered shelter
 - Run on a track
 - Take my child with special needs
 - See dark sky at night for star/ comet watching
 - Walk where I can't see houses or hear traffic

- *Other comments.....?*
 - Permanent Structure for WW Farmers Market (12)
 - @AM Howard Site (2)
 - value smaller "green businesses"
 - Nice if accessible by trail or greenway
 - Healthy "green" produce
 - Art booths sale/display
 - Music/performances
 - Permanent structure for Downtown Cary Farmers Market (3)
 - Offer camping opportunities/Sponsored outdoor trips (canoeing, backpacking, etc.) over weekends
 - Public use of facilities at schools (track/gym)
 - Downtown community gardens
 - Downtown park not included here
 - Make Jordan Hall-creative re-use for the arts
 - Add to whole town's amenities: specifically underserved Western Wake portion by using lot at Morrisville an Louis Stephens for WWFM, community garden, educational and recreational space
 - More Recreational programs for non-youth and more co-ed offerings (age groups 22-30, 30-40, etc.)
 - I have to go to Raleigh or Durham to play co-ed 30-something sports with my wife-Why?

Greenways and Open Space

- *The open space properties or areas within the Town that should be preserved include...*
 - Dark sky park/open space to see stars/comets
 - Areas of natural significance (current example – Hemlock Park)
- *I use the greenway trails _____ recreation, transportation, etc.)*
 - Cycling (5)
 - Recreational
 - Hiking (me and my dog) walking (6)
 - Visiting with others in the neighborhoods by bike and foot
 - Walking (4)
 - Walking to a nearby mall for coffee/beer
 - Running-distance (3)
 - Exercise (3)
 - Birding
 - Rollerblading (2)
 - Route to Kildaire Farms (eating and shopping)
 - Getting somewhere faster
 - Recreation
 - Would love for trails to offer trailhead at or near recreational facilities
 - Letting kids learn to ride their bikes
- *I would like to use greenway trails to get to _____ (destination)*
 - Destination Cary
 - Downtown (3)
 - Friend's homes
 - Coffee shop
 - RTD
 - To all the greenway trails
 - Facilities
 - RTP
 - Raleigh NC Museum of Art
 - Bike paths
 - American Tobacco Trail (5)
 - From Amberly/Carry Park
 - At O'Kelly
 - Kildaire Farms Rd
 - Bond Park from Annie Jones
 - School (Alston Ridge, Mills Park, etc.)
 - Grocery and small retail (West Cary)
 - Cary Tennis Park
- *The missing greenway link I consider the most important to complete is...*
 - Along Green Level Church Road
 - Connections to the American Tobacco Trail (5)
 - Piney Plans Road
 - Kildaire Greenways to link to other town greenways
 - Connect Carpenter Village to Davis Drive
 - Downtown Cary
 - Bond Park from White Oak Creek Greenway (RR crossing)
 - White Oak Creek Greenway over Davis Dr. Only by trails to bond Lake (2)

- *Please improve the greenway trail system by.....*
 - Carpenter Village neighborhood
 - Connections to West Cary area
 - Complete trails around Amberly Lake Greenway from NW Cary Parkway and West Cary
 - Adding a trail to South camping opportunity
 - Making sure restrooms are strategically located (2)
 - Water fountains – even if very primitive
 - Signage regarding proper trail etiquette (about when passing especially like the ATT)
 - Good connections to Raleigh (2)
 - Connecting to Morrisville
 - Bikeway and pedestrian ways to downtown Cary to revitalize it and bring people to new Cary Art Center on Academy
 - Connecting trails within Kildaire Farms to town greenways such as Annie Jones, Farmington, Wood and Heater Park greenways
 - Connect greenways to parks
 - Add corridor along James Jackson

- *Other*
 - Thank you for the new greenway markers – they are so helpful (2)
 - We need a space needle

Cultural Resources

- *The arts and cultural activities that I want to participate in are...*
 - Performing arts, concerts, theater
 - Cultural and global fairs/festivals
 - Bigger draw, higher educated entertainment at Koka Booth (DPAC is killing us)
 - Concerts and plays
 - Old fashion sing alongs
 - Town band
 - Activities for children with special needs
 - Arts and cooking classes for adults, Mon.-Fri, 9 am – 1 pm (traditionally reserved for young children)
 - Outdoor concerts downtown
 - Concerts in Cary Art Center
 - Woodworking, pottery, glass blowing
 - Pocket gardening

- *I would like to see more _____ for my kids.*
 - Acting/theater opportunities
 - Where is specialized children’s education
 - Education/recreation programs that foster environmental stewardship (especially sustainability, reduce, reuse; Cary Clean , Green and Creative
 - Theatrical opportunities for different groups of children; maybe incorporate into “summer camp” concept
 - Music classes (professional early childhood)
 - Opera for kids
 - Photography classes, robotics classes, technology classes for children 10-18
 - More classes (pottery, photography, etc.) for kids under 16 years
 - Child friendly arts (like the “mice” at Greenville, SC)

- *The arts and cultural facilities that I want to see centralized are...*
 - Recreation classes for children under 10 years ages
 - Reuse for the art and gallery space/studio space available in Town buildings that are under capacity
 - Anything but make them support a thriving downtown
 - Create better location for our downtown farmers market (that was formerly at train depot. Current site is not working)
 - Find a place to bring back the bandstand in downtown area. Cary Town Band wants it again but also great opportunities for other groups, concerts, etc.
 - Light garden for walking in downtown at night
 - A "Weaver St" type farmer's market in downtown

- *The arts and cultural facilities I want to have closer to home are...*
 - Theater (stage) (2)
 - Small theatre (open air venue or more traditional set up) in West Cary
 - A "stroll" district with arts and cultural facilities
 - Gallery for exhibits
 - Small theatre (like Koka Booth, but much smaller scale) in West Cary
 - In new areas – in West Cary provide space for fine art education for those artist residents not willing or able to drive to Cary Arts Center on Academy
 - Distribute intro classes around Town: two major sub-centers- Western at Community Center (e.g., Mills Park), Southern at Bartley – reuse farm history and heritage focus
 - Both ceramics, wheels and kilns
 - Painting/drawing
 - Movement/performing arts

- *Cary history can be preserved by ...*
 - Repurposing existing buildings and restoring to original look
 - Find larger facility for Cary History Museum – Page Walker is great but too small and 3rd floor is "hidden"; too many items in storage need a display home. Jordan Hall or library (after new one is done)
 - A Cary Museum
 - Ag. Park – preserve our farming history and promote current farming families. Buy local and keep farms in business.
 - Utilizing the Town-owned lands at Morrisville Carpenter and Louis Stephens for preserving agricultural history – farmer's market, cultural and educational center
 - Preserving the Howard Farmland with farmers market and community gardens and related public art
 - Having working farms on the West side
 - Doing some research when structures are purchased as to age, etc. before automatically destroying to rebuild
 - Education
 - New theatre in downtown – history of each of the buildings that are renovated
 - Repurposing Jordan Hall for creative reuse for the arts
 - Continuous monitoring of the inventory, partnership with friends of Page Walker to publicize and recognize
 - Promoting historic structures in the most robust ways (i.e., historic events at Page Walker and other structures)

- *I would like to discover public art at..... (places).*
 - In unexpected ways and places
 - Downtown
 - Parks and greenways. Randomly scattered, not clustered in one place
 - Greenways (3)
 - All Cary parks
 - Bond Park
 - Parks, entrance and exits to Cary that signifies Cary's history
 - Reuse art and sculpture at Hemlock Bluffs, Bond Park and at Solid Waste Facilities
 - Highway 55 "gateway" to Cary (North and South)
 - New apartment complexes, new development entrances, new parks at "welcome center"
 - Feature local Cary or Wake County artists for public art
 - In unexpected ways and places

- *Other comments.....?*
 - Public use of school facilities needed (running tracks?)
 - Shared incubation facility for start-up businesses
 - Specialized recreation program for children?
 - Diversity is essential
 - Water conservation is essential
 - Have input session at Herb Young or other Eastern Cary site

July 19, 2011 – Cary Senior Center (6 – 8 pm)

Values

- *What's the value of parks, recreation, and cultural resources to the Cary community?*
 - Quality of life
 - Stuff for all ages/seniors
 - Planned growth creates community
 - Appreciate green spaces
 - Connected system
 - Walkability
 - Family activities
 - Distinguish Cary through the Park system
 - PRCR is critical to the quality of life in Cary. Cary is the best place I've ever lived because of these facilities and activities
 - Provided recreation opportunity, improved health for residents, connects people to nature, accessible for all ages and abilities
 - Adds to draw of town – for new residents to move in, for tourists to visit. Premier sports complexes such as Cary Tennis Park add to this appeal
 - Immense value to town of Cary community
 - Gives us our essential connection to nature
 - Humanizes us

- Provide access for healthy activities and community purpose
- Promotes awareness of nature and the importance of preserving natural spaces

Vision

- *What is your vision for the future of parks, recreation, and cultural resources in Cary?*
 - Strong downtown plus balance with all areas
 - Connectivity to all resources
 - Grow the trail system to connect to neighborhoods, shopping , schools and other communities
 - Interconnectivity of trails, pedestrian ways, public transportation, and residences, employment, and cultural destinations
 - Currently Cary developments are all independent, dead-end cul-de-sacs which while safer and quieter, do not allow connectivity
 - Pride/ownership community involvement
 - Need to distinguish Cary
 - Central destination
 - Tourism
 - Don't reproduce things found elsewhere (close driving time)
 - Serve population
 - Unique
 - Public transportation
 - Parks and recreation mitigates blithe
 - Plan for green spaces as we grow
 - Reputation for excellence
 - Tennis is maxed – need indoor tennis courts, older player clay courts
 - Have high quality
 - Weaver Street co-op or similar market as downtown attraction
 - Why is that big beautiful building in downtown Cary a bank? It has potential
 - Parking garages instead of sprawling parking lots
 - A distinctive, connected network of parks and greenways including a vibrant downtown
 - More green open space

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources System Overview

- *The best things about Cary's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources system . . .*
 - Cary has always spent money on useful parks and public spaces – good job!
 - Town of Cary support
 - Town support programs
- *Please improve Cary's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources system by . . .*
 - Public pool (3)
 - Pool in west Cary (2)
 - Connect greenways/trails/walkability (3)
 - High school tennis is closed to the public – waste of public resources
 - Small tennis complex in West Cary rather than expand Cary Tennis Park
 - Indoor tennis
 - Public clay courts
 - Have modern downtown library
 - Connect to American Tobacco Trail
 - Add more community gardens
 - Add a cricket field

- Add a waffle ball field
- *If only Cary had a _____ it would be the best place to live.*
 - Downtown (vibrant, diversity, functioning, activities) (5)
 - Connected greenways
 - Reliable public transportation to both RTP and airport
 - Permanent structure of a farmer's market with room to grow
 - An urban growth management plan to reduce sprawl
 - Urban investing and culture and connected greenway system in West Cary area where the highest density is and the least park and recreation services
 - Community pool and exercise equipment, and indoor track
- *The partnership opportunities I see are . . .*
 - Public/private partnerships
 - Help small businesses migrate downtown
 - Use Apex and Morrisville for downtown expertise
 - Work with existing regional arts, inc, NC Opera, museum, NC Philharmonic, Wake Tech, area schools to participate in Downtown activities
- *Other comments....?*
 - Cross town trail linking Raleigh to Cary to Durham
 - Provide a larger area blow up in the corner of each so we can understand their locations
 - Need to purchase that old Victorian place across for CAC to use as an after-theater coffee/dessert shop. It's been underused too long

Parks & Recreation –

- *My favorite park in Cary is _____ because . . .*
 - Cary Tennis park-family loves tennis, opportunities to watch and play (2)
 - Bond Park- accessibility to neighborhood, lake trail (3)
 - Walnut Street Park-accessibility
 - Mills Park not built
 - Dog Park- needs more policing and stricter spay/neuter regulations
 - Dunham Park/Lions Park- accessible/like small parks located in neighborhoods
 - North Cary Park
 - Kids together-art/disability access
 - Cary Arts Center
 - Hemlock Bluffs-biodiversity, trails over interesting terrain (3)
- *An ideal community center would have the following features . . .*
 - Indoor Rock Walls (2)
 - Sustainable architecture/ LEED and site design
 - Hire a landscape architect
 - Swimming Pool with Lap Lanes, LED Lighting, indoor and outdoor near community centers (2)
 - Fitness Equipment (2)
 - Accessible by bus with a bus stop in walking distance of the community center
- *My neighborhood park should have . . .*
 - Been built 3 years ago at Mills Park Dr. during school construction
 - Birds and other wildlife trails without bikes
 - Sustainable site design with zero runoff and introduce public to nature
 - A landscape architect designed site
 - Sidewalk access

- Sprayground
- Dog Beach/Pool
- Large open areas for dogs to run off leash
- Sidewalk access
- Public Art (2)
- Walnut Street Park should have been attached to a greenway
- Be within ¼ mile walk
- Have flower/ horticulture garden
- Nice park seating for adults
- Simple playground
- Natural Areas
- *There is no place in Cary for me to _____ (recreational activities).*
 - Walk from my house because Mills Park Dr. doesn't have a park yet
 - Play indoor/clay court tennis
 - Swim lessons for children
 - Play Cricket
 - Seriously rock climb
 - Disc-golf course
 - Swim year-round/indoors without belonging to YMCA, but within 2-3 mile drive. Want several pools scattered about Cary (sized like Chapel Hill YMCA on Airport Rd.)
 - Add shuffleboard courts at Bond Park Senior Center
 - Not enough places to watch birds
- *Other comments.....?*
 - *Cary needs a park downtown by the cultural arts center*
 - *More nature trails*
 - *Downtown needs to be improved as a destination*
 - *Please move the Cary "downtown" market to a downtown location/permanent farmer's market location downtown (6)*

Greenways & Open Space

- *I would like to use greenway trails to get to... (destination).*
 - Downtown Cary (2)
 - American Tobacco Trail (4)
 - White Oak Greenway reconnected at I-540
 - CAT/TTA Hubs stops
 - Raleigh Greenways
 - Bond Park from Southbridge/Cary Park
 - Shopping (2)
- *I use the greenway trails to...*
 - Recreational Biking (10)
 - Biking as mode of transportation
 - Dog Walking (4)
 - Running (4)
 - Health
 - Fitness (2)
 - Access to Nature

- *Please improve the greenway trail system by...*
 - Connecting pieces for longer sections (4)
 - Creating Loops
 - More sign markers and names at street crossings (the current ones are great)
 - Connecting for transportation options
 - Create unpaved sections of trails
 - Make more greenways
 - Outdoor Art (2)
 - Water fountains, also consider for Pets(3)
 - More greenways in Central and older Cary neighborhoods
 - Continue to incorporate multi-use trails
 - Add restrooms
 - Add shade options
 - Widen bike gates on greenways-they are inconsistent. Some are narrow and dangerous for Seniors
 - Restore White Oak Creek wetlands next to greenway-drainage led to wildlife damage
- *The missing greenway link I consider the most important to complete is.....?*
 - A North-South route like Black Creek and White Oak
 - Black Creek from Umstead to Bond
 - White Oak Creek from Bond to American Tobacco Trail (2)
 - Connections to Raleigh system
 - Greenway access from Dutches Village (High House and Bay Oak)
 - Herb Young connected to Hinshaw greenway
 - Cary Park to American Tobacco Trail
 - Greenways connected to older neighborhoods
 - Finishing Black Creek
- *Other comments....?*
 - More bike lanes to get riders safely to ATT/Everywhere
 - Bike education for riders and drivers
 - More nature trails
 - Get accurate use-counts by tracking use when people are out—often pre-dawn because of lack of shade
- *The open space properties or areas within Town that should be preserved include.....*
 - Preserve biologically diverse open space esp. wetlands
 - Environmentally sensitive areas
 - North Cary Par (2)
 - American Tobacco Trail
 - Farmland across from Carpenter Village
 - Area across from and adjacent to Mills Park-avoid high density housing
 - Green Hope Greenway

Cultural Resources

- *The arts and cultural activities that I want to participate in are...*
 - Concerts, plays, performances, and associated support activities like lighting, costuming, stagecraft
 - Performances, lectures, music
 - Concerts
 - More free concerts

- Jewelry-making class
- Arts and culture I use are concerts, gallery shows, historical learning opportunities, craft classes
- *I would like to see more _____ for my kids.*
 - Filmmaking camps
 - Interactive outdoor art
 - Public art as landmarks for neighborhoods and children to remember
 - Incorporate public art into playground equipment as in a climbable art piece
 - Cary does a great job of cultural arts activities for children – theatre classes, art classes, etc.
 - Classical music performances – chamber groups, piano concerts
- *The arts and cultural facilities that I want to see centralized are...*
 - Art studios
 - A central place for painting, drawing classes
 - Add farmer’s marker downtown to help focus activity in downtown
 - More indoor performances spaces, small and large
 - Art studios, art museums
 - Concerts, performances, recitals
- *The arts and cultural facilities I want to have closer to home are...*
 - Have more exhibits in existing spaces
 - Art in landscape
- *Cary history can be preserved by ...*
 - Preservation and publicity
 - Preserving architecture and historic landscapes and gardens
 - Saving and restoring historic buildings and areas
 - Public history art
 - Making it visible, legible but not pedantic nor too precious
- *I would like to discover public art at..... (places).*
 - Public art as a landmark for children to remember when they live
 - I want to appreciate public art around disc golf courses – it will add something that brings professional tours to Cary
 - Places unexpected (2) – like out in nature
 - Greenways, trails (2)
 - More open art and architectural arts, open galleries
 - Fusing public art statues with the disc golf culture
 - All parks
 - Shopping centers
 - I like public art to be surprising and playful
 - Any place might be surprising and in a way that is innovative, forward looking and a little daring (or dare I say maybe even a little controversial, in a good way)
- *Other comments.....?*
 - Indoor concert/performance space with good acoustics to seat 500 people
 - Cary values aesthetics – whatever we have needs to look good
 - Downtown is not centrally located – spend money and spread resources throughout Cary – growth is west (and south) – access
 - Aquatics
 - Parking lot within walking distance of facilities