

**TOWN of CARY**  
**2011/2012 Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan**  
**PRCR Advisory Board/Committees Joint Meeting**  
**S.W.O.T. Exercise**  
**May 10, 2011**

On May 10, 2011, the Town conducted a joint meeting of its PRCR Boards and Committees. The purpose of the meeting was to “kick-off” the 2011/2012 Master Plan process. The Boards consisted of the PRCR Advisory Board and the Public Art Advisory Board. The Committees include the Athletic, Cultural Arts and Greenways. The Boards and Committees were divided into 4 groups and asked to complete a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) for Greenways, Recreation Programs and Community Facilities, Parks and Open Space and Cultural Arts.

<b>GREENWAYS – Group 1</b>	
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bond Park Hub</li> <li>• Black Creek &amp; White Oak</li> <li>• Developer Built Trails</li> <li>• Length of greenways for cyclists and runners, etc.</li> <li>• Gentle terrain</li> <li>• Ability to be organized and plan</li> <li>• Great support in community</li> <li>• Connectivity (some greenways)</li> <li>• Level of use</li> <li>• Diverse – variety of types and locations</li> <li>• Plans, regulations, and standards</li> <li>• New signs</li> <li>• Natural areas</li> <li>• High quality parks</li> <li>• Well-maintained</li> <li>• Natural trails are outstanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disconnected segments; lack of connectivity on some major greenways; many short, dead-end greenways</li> <li>• Town's reliance on multi-use paths too close to high-speed vehicular traffic. These are NOT greenways</li> <li>• Reliance on multi-use trails – should use sidewalks as connectors and use savings from reduced multiuse trailways to build and expand "natural" greenways</li> <li>• Gates/pinch points at access points, gate design</li> <li>• Shape of Town borders</li> <li>• Low density</li> <li>• Almost all land for trails is along creeks</li> <li>• Lack of community ties – How to make Cary residents feel a part of Cary?</li> <li>• Challenges – bikers vs. hikers compatibility</li> <li>• Roadway crossings</li> <li>• Quality and distribution of parking</li> <li>• Visible trailheads</li> <li>• Downtown connections</li> <li>• Few “natural” options</li> <li>• Need more grade-separated crossings</li> <li>• Same standards</li> <li>• Amenities</li> <li>• Multi-use paths</li> <li>• Not well-signed</li> <li>• Note much public information</li> <li>• Length of greenways</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect segments, improve connectivity in Cary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dept. of Transportation/Western Wake Expressway</li> <li>• High speed roads without grade separated</li> </ul>

GREENWAYS – Group 1	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections to the region and adjacent systems (e.g., American Tobacco Trail, etc.)</li> <li>• Connections to destinations (e.g., shopping, schools, parks, etc.)</li> <li>• Addition of amenities (water fountains, restrooms, parking, trailheads)</li> <li>• Unpaved / natural surface trails</li> <li>• Focus on completing stretches (vs. tiny segments here and there)</li> <li>• Open up trails to natural features</li> <li>• Use as a true means of transportation</li> <li>• Growth of neighborhoods and neighborhood trail systems</li> <li>• Outside regulations and buffers</li> <li>• Coordination with other jurisdictions</li> <li>• Combat obesity</li> <li>• Incorporate public art</li> <li>• Become useful for short distance commuting</li> <li>• Standards for multi-use amenities</li> <li>• Motor vehicles (?)</li> <li>• Opportunity to be part of a larger regional greenway system</li> <li>• Gate redesign for existing gates</li> </ul>	<p>crossings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finances</li> <li>• Limiting view to Cary only</li> <li>• Difficulty in trail connections (i.e., buy out of property railroad track crossings, etc.)</li> <li>• Support from neighboring communities for connection</li> <li>• Street crossings</li> <li>• Tough Right-of-Way in some areas</li> <li>• Heavy neighborhood resistance</li> <li>• Public knowledge of value of greenways</li> <li>• Lack of pedestrian orientation generally</li> <li>• Slow down in development</li> <li>• Some outside regulations/buffers</li> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Total development of natural areas</li> <li>• Unsupportive property owners</li> <li>• Need more sensitivity to appearance trail as integral part of greenways - major goal should be to not cut down trees in development of greenway</li> <li>• Lack of making greenways a priority in budget process</li> </ul>

REC PROGRAMS & COMMUNITY FACILITIES – Group 2	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide variety/diversity of programs</li> <li>• Very good staff – work hard with programs</li> <li>• Responsive to community</li> <li>• Offer reasonably priced activities/affordable</li> <li>• Quality of facilities (top notch)</li> <li>• Co-location of greenways and parks</li> <li>• Keep going forward with locations</li> <li>• Public recreation/schools working together (multiuse of facilities in the community)</li> <li>• A lot of facilities – can rent for different events</li> <li>• Maintained well – 10 year old (still look good)!</li> <li>• Opportunities to practice/play near where folks live (avoid unnecessary travel)</li> <li>• Good planning of facilities</li> <li>• Some greenways connect to other areas of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of inter-connective greenways – difficult from paths to roads to etc.</li> <li>• Getting better – mile or two here/there (would be better to access if connected)</li> <li>• Transportation/access to park facilities</li> <li>• Need for practice facilities (basketball, softball, etc.) – very difficult to accommodate – participation continues to increase</li> <li>• As population has grown – co-ed programs haven't kept up (i.e. 30+ year-old co-ed basketball) – add more opportunities (all ages for adults)</li> <li>• Aquatics (swim lessons) – Town doesn't offer facilities. Plan needs to assess if needs are being met.</li> <li>• Local neighborhood pools might address issue</li> </ul>

**REC PROGRAMS & COMMUNITY FACILITIES – Group 2**

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>county</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs offered for kids to adults</li> <li>• Group activities are offered</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer fitness classes – no equipment (that’s a concern) – perhaps want to grow into that area</li> <li>• Social dancing is offered</li> </ul>	<p>throughout the summer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most private pools are outdoor (YMCA and Triangle Aquatic Center are indoor)</li> <li>• Some of the pools are public – need to pay as go (needs to be addressed) – inventory all pools if possible.</li> <li>• Lacrosse – more and more popular/demand (no programs)</li> <li>• Golf camps as well</li> <li>• Geographic distribution in the western part of Cary</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public community center – work to next level – offer different activities (e.g., fitness/work out areas, aquatics, etc.)</li> <li>• Geographic scheduling with younger leagues</li> <li>• 45 minutes across Cary – investment in N, S, E, W league distribution</li> <li>• Same issue in Senior Softball leagues</li> <li>• Types of facilities (maybe rather than mega-center) – maybe smaller scattered centers</li> <li>• Joining Y could be cost prohibitive</li> <li>• Possibly keep families together on one site – multi-generational facility</li> <li>• Lack of childcare (need to consider) – this would free up families to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Lack of financing</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Who staffs</li> <li>• Running on greenways (access)</li> <li>• Competition from other facilities</li> <li>• Reduced costs could effect private businesses</li> </ul>

**PARKS & OPEN SPACE – Group 3**

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hemlock Bluffs – unique species flora and fauna, trails, REI grant and volunteer efforts, big affinity for support</li> <li>• Skate Park is very successful- serves certain segment of population</li> <li>• Specific special interest groups exist in Cary and which creates a strong pride of ownership</li> <li>• Kids Together Park</li> <li>• Dog Park</li> <li>• Symphony lake</li> <li>• Facilities – Page-Walker Arts and History Center, Cultural Arts Center</li> <li>• Citizen driven – all the great iconic parks here</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hemlock Bluffs – only one classroom, outdoor and can be cold, haven’t expanded other nature preserves</li> <li>• Lack of nature preserves</li> <li>• Lack of services for teens, other disk golf and skate park (gap from organized sports to teen who want non organized sports). Hard group to serve.</li> <li>• Service area? We do not have a service area identified, should we? We would have to have a lot more parks if we had a half mile area service area.</li> <li>• North-west area is light in parks even with land banked land. Need a community center up there like Bond Park</li> </ul>

PARKS & OPEN SPACE – Group 3	
<p>have been citizen driven with active volunteer groups or strong community leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art in parks</li> <li>• Success is due to community input – we always get community input</li> <li>• We have a lot of good open space</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More preservation areas</li> <li>• Link open spaces, wildlife corridors for wildlife movement,</li> <li>• What do we want to see more of? More neighborhood parks or more crown jewel parks? Keep focus of working with staff – good precedent set for Walnut Creek Park</li> <li>• Inside the Maynard Loop look for opportunities, and don't buy expensive land (not talking about Town Center Park)</li> <li>• Inside Maynard Loop not a priority?? Or is it? People will move out west because will have more greenways and services.</li> <li>• Town Center Park – needs to be a flagship urban park, not what we are used to. Tivoli Gardens, amphitheater, need an urban park and need examples from elsewhere with beer gardens and enclosure 18 hours a day.</li> <li>• What ratio do we need of active vs passive? Take some of the pressure off of Bond Park</li> <li>• Larger library downtown in relation with Town Center Park</li> <li>• Town Center Area Plan and Streetscape – build off of these initiatives – need some planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need a standard for “non-jewel” parks in neighborhoods, keep a balance and keep the identity</li> <li>• Economy has kept us from keeping up with growth like we used to be able to</li> <li>• Town center park – will need some education to understand economic development</li> </ul>

CULTURAL ARTS – Group 4	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide spectrum of age groups</li> <li>• Very Diverse – multi-cultural groups</li> <li>• Good partnering with community groups</li> <li>• Facilities (All of the building)</li> <li>• Collaboration amongst cultural arts players. Making art happen together across disciplines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting the message out to make people aware of facilities and programs</li> <li>• Need a bigger theatre venue; the new Cultural Arts Center (CAC) capacity is only 400</li> <li>• Cary is a large geographic area that is hard to serve</li> <li>• Lack of artist studio environments</li> </ul>

**CULTURAL ARTS – Group 4**

<p>(e.g., visual, performing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outstanding staff that is supportive</li> <li>• Strong community support</li> <li>• Strong and loyal community support for events (Lazy Days, symphony, etc)</li> <li>• Wonderful examples of public art throughout Cary</li> <li>• Signature facilities and events (e.g., Divali and Koka Booth, Lazy Daze, Summer fest series, Applause, Cross Currents Chamber Music Festival)</li> <li>• Good diversity of programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing with digital media</li> <li>• Public art is not evenly distributed</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>THREATS</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning for future facilities and programming is in place</li> <li>• Good “Cosmopolitan” residents that come from a background of the arts and expect that in their community. Rom for more improvement in this area.</li> <li>• Cross-pollination of user groups and programs to be accommodated at CAC will yield more opportunities for growth</li> <li>• Create a (concentrated) point of center for the cultural arts in the downtown area (e.g., Arts District)</li> <li>• Western part of Cary has a great opportunity for public art</li> <li>• Consider a data base amongst performing arts facilities for listing of events. (i.e., one-stop shopping).</li> <li>• Opportunities for expansion of Senior center</li> <li>• Jordan Hall new availability for cultural arts use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth has been stymied by limitations of facilities</li> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Other competing facilities and organizations (DPAC, Raleigh, etc.)</li> <li>• Possible loss of Jordan Hall to other uses</li> <li>• Lack of a plan or maintenance of historical resources</li> </ul>