

"Orienting Project Club" 1000
People a year
Tom
Committees -

PLEASE READ

PRELIMINARY DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION: NOT FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

Dear Mr. Garner,

Thank you for requesting our comments and suggestions regarding the Chambers Vukich Master Plan. It is the opinion of the membership, that this new plan is not ~~in any way~~ compatible with the White's Woods survey findings reported in July by the Commissioners. To summarize the Township's own report on voter's responses, 40% of those voters who responded to the survey stated a clear preference for either no change to the existing setting, or, if there are changes that they be minimal, 13% stated a preference for basic facilities (~~parking, rest rooms, etc.~~), 40% wanted "passive recreational activities that are compatible with the wooded, natural setting of White's Woods," ~~hiking trails, picnic shelter, nature study exhibits, etc.~~ Thus, 93% of the voters who responded wanted White's Woods to remain largely unchanged which is clearly quite different from constructing a lengthy road right into the heart of the woods.

has approved your efforts to protect us age of White's Woods

Not only is the Chambers Vukich plan counter to what the voter's indicated they want, but their plan is ambitious and would require a large amount of funding for both ~~funding~~ ^{construction} and maintenance. Further, if the plan is implemented, it would fragment the entire forest (the White's Woods Nature Center and IUP Co-op property) to the detriment of wildlife,--for example, breeding of warblers, vireos, scarlet tanagers. (We note that the planners have changed the name to White Wood's Park which ~~understates the uniqueness of this resource.~~ We feel that the plan reflects Chambers Vukich's goal as landscape architects, rather than the clearly stated desires of the township's voters. The Township survey response suggests an overwhelming desire for a natural landscape. We agree with the survey results and believe the highest use of White's Woods is as a viable, natural ecosystem. ^{with the} Voters have indicated they do not want another landscaped "park."

Regarding the overall plan, we believe that any development needs to be confined to the already developed periphery. The plan for enhancement on 12th street looks reasonable so far. If further development must occur, we suggest that it be limited to the access area directly adjacent to Fulton Run Road. A small parking area and restroom near the road would provide a jumping off point for exploration of the woods. Please remember that the survey respondents who wanted more grandiose action stated their needs under "general recreational needs in White Township, not specifically to White's Woods."

Our opinion is that it is not necessarily public to be in present form

Our opinion is that the plan would be returned to Chambers Vukich with a request that they modify their proposal so that it ~~close~~ follows White Township voters wishes. We look forward to discussing this with you at the next meeting of the township supervisors. Attached for your further information, on the next page, are some representative further comments and suggestions from our membership in response to the plan. Thanks again for your consideration.

Sincerely, John D. Coffman, President, Friends of White's Woods

Further Comments and Suggestions and Questions from the Membership:

Regarding the 12th Street Entrance:

- A small information kiosk would encourage residents to take advantage of the natural offerings.
- Benches near entrances and along trails would be helpful.
- Ecotourism should be stressed.
- What surfacing will be used to make trails handicap accessible?
- Will "shade loving ground cover" and new shrub planting be native species?
- With "Rail to Trail" plans coming to fruition nearby is it necessary to encourage bike trails? Who will police bike traffic?

Regarding the High Point/Overlook:

- The road is not necessary. The tract is not large enough to warrant interior development and parking for 45 vehicles. Has a study been done to determine the need for this?
- Overlook platform does not add to hiking/nature study and is not warranted since no expansive natural areas exist (e.g. marshes, lakes). It will only increase the possibility of accidents and liability
- Many governmental agencies are realizing that roads to secluded areas lead to uncontrolled group activity (e.g. drinking, fights, and damage) and this plan makes no statement about legal liability or police action.
- A fire-pit will encourage fires which pose a potential disaster
- Picnic areas should be limited to 12th street entrance
- Will underground springs be affected by a road/parking lot?

Regarding Fulton Run Access:

- Purchase of 8 acre parcel is an excellent idea and should be replanted with deciduous trees native to area.
- Purchase of additional buffer areas (e.g. from Carson Estate) should be considered.
- Planning with the IUP Co-op should be initiated before final decisions are made.
- Will wildflower demonstration area be native plants? Standard roadside wildflower plots are high maintenance and require herbicide spraying and re-planting every other year.

POSSIBLE VOTING CATEGORIES:

1. ACCEPT TEXT AS IS (with some omissions, additions...to be discussed)
2. ACCEPT TEXT, BUT W/ STRONGER LANGUAGE
3. ACCEPT TEXT BUT SOFTEN LANGUAGE
4. COMPLETELY RE-DO TEXT

Western PA
Conservation
20th Sept
5pm - 7pm
Annex

Next
Meeting
(dues)
Wed
7pm