



## **Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update**

*November 24, 2003 Meeting Minutes*

**In Attendance:** Chair Doug Varn, Marty Bracco, Jessica Bullock, Laura Kaufman, Susan Kurtenbach, Gail Moran, John Mullins, Patience Nelson, Rickey Sain Sr., David Stannard, Kathy Stohr, Katie Kelly, Mary Kay O'Grady, Rich Shoum, David Kindler, Mark Gartland, Julie Samuels, Sharon Patchak-Layman, Peter Dowd, Barbara Ebner, Gary Balling, Lisa Lightcap, Diane Stanke

- I. **Welcome** – The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by Chair Doug Varn who swiftly reviewed the evening's agenda. Doug reported the formation of a survey subcommittee whose members include Kathy Stohr, Rich Shoum, Barbara Ebner, Peter Dowd and himself.
- II. **Demographics Presentation by Dick Barrett** – Doug introduced Dick Barrett, a UIC Professor and an authority on demographics. Mr. Barrett distributed and reviewed demographic information from the 2000 Census Report. Dick explained that the question regarding race in the 2000 Census was worded differently resulting in information that may not be totally accurate. He predicted the Hispanic population in Oak Park may rapidly expand in the next 10 years. He recommended that the demographic questions regarding age be grouped in 5-year increments, emphasizing that age and gender questions are significant to ask. Dick also recommended rewording the race/ethnicity question on the draft survey. He suggested that we include in the final CP report an appendix to show that the response rate for the survey was a good statistical representation of our community. Generally 50 responses provide a satisfactory confidence level for a particular group. Doug and Gary made a note to speak with Ron Vine about how he will ensure an acceptable sample representation. Kathy Stohr volunteered to reword the survey question regarding daycare. A short discussion ensued regarding how the map of Oak Park will be broken down into areas. Some suggestions included community policing areas, school districts, community centers, or census tracts. Dick explained why he thought Evanston and Elmhurst would be good benchmark communities and why Berwyn would not. Some suggested criteria to use in selecting benchmark communities include median household income, percent of renters vs. owners, and percent of bachelor degrees and higher. He warned that population density information can be skewed by cemeteries, forest preserves, etc. Useful information can be found on the internet at the Northern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC).
- III. **Benchmarking** – Doug discussed the benchmark information emailed to all committee members. Jessica Bullock is the chair of the benchmark subcommittee. If anyone would like to volunteer for this subcommittee or has comments or suggestions regarding the information, contact Jessica.

- IV. **Community Survey Discussion** – Doug prefaced the survey discussion with the fact that this document is a working draft and all comments and ideas are welcome. He stated that a transportation question was mistakenly omitted but would be added to the survey. The key idea to keep in mind is that we want to make sure that the relevant issues are addressed in the survey so that we can collect useful data. A few comments and ideas included:

**Neighborhood Centers:** Do most people have a strong attachment to these facilities and do they walk to them?

**Survey Categories:** Kathy Stohr recommended 3 broad survey categories including space (ie. open, passive and active space), facilities and programs.

**Consistency of terms** – A couple of attendees emphasized the importance of using the same terms consistently. Does the term parks refer to open space only or to facilities also? Do leisure activities, recreation programs and classes all refer to the same thing?

**Final survey question** – A lively discussion ensued regarding the final survey question. Everyone agreed it needs to be reworded at the very least or possibly eliminated.

A myriad of other questions were scrutinized and recommendations were made. Gail Moran thanked everyone for their hard work in developing the survey so far.

- V. **Closing Remarks** – Doug wrapped up the discussion and thanked all in attendance. The survey subcommittee will be meeting again on December 1. We are aiming to mail the surveys around January 2. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm.

**Next Meeting – Monday, December 22 at 7pm – Carroll Center, 1125 Kenilworth**  
*(Carroll Center is located 2 blocks west of Oak Park Avenue and 1 block north of Roosevelt Road. You can park on Kenilworth, which is on the east side of the building)*