



SKATE PARK Q&A

What is a skate park?

A skate park is an environment for skateboarders and inline skaters to ride and develop their skills. Some skate parks, like the ones in Ithaca and Williamsport, are very large poured-concrete facilities. The skate park we are proposing is small – about 40 feet by 90 feet of level asphalt with approximately six pieces of equipment: a skateable bench, a grind rail, two quarterpipe ramps, a wedge combo, and a grind box. The tallest piece of equipment is three feet, not including the railing. Even the skate park in Montgomery, also funded by a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant and uses equipment by Woodward Ramps & Rails, is twice the size of this proposed park.

Why is a skate park important in Blossburg?

Blossburg V.I.B.E.'s mission is to improve the quality of life for those who live, work, play or attend school in Blossburg. In our visioning session in 2004, we learned that Island Park is considered an important asset and projects designed to enhance or improve the park are important to our community members. In addition, the results of the visioning sessions indicated that additional places for youth to gather for safe and healthy activities are necessary to improve the quality of life in Blossburg. The skate park project will help us achieve those goals.

Since the publication of the article, “As Obesity Fight Hits Cafeteria, Many Fear a Note From School” in the *New York Times* about obesity in the Blossburg schools (Kantor, Jan. 8, 2007) local residents have become more aware of the need for more healthy activities. During the public meeting we held March 5, the consensus was that the skate park is an additional way to address these issues.

As you can see from the letters of support and donation we have gathered, these concerns and goals are widely shared.

Where will it be located?

The skate park will definitely be located on Island Park but the final location has yet to be determined. Two are under consideration: close to the existing basketball court or on the right as you enter the Island. The advantage of having it close to the existing basketball court is that youth are already congregating there and it gives them an additional activity in that location. The disadvantages are that it would take up some parking for the Little League field and pine needles would accumulate on the surface, which is a riding hazard. This location may also require a four-foot tall fence around the area to protect riders and those using facilities around the skate park. The advantages of having it near the entrance are fewer trees and higher visibility, but it takes parking from the softball field and other large uses of the Island like the Coal Festival.

Who is involved in the skate park project?

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At its public meeting on March 5, V.I.B.E. created a "Skate Board," a team of community members and youth who are actively working on the skate park project. The Skate Board's next meeting is Thursday, March 22, at 6pm in the community room of Blossburg Memorial Library.

What is the timeline for this project?

The borough is the official applicant for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant under the Community Conservation Partnerships Program. We are applying for \$48,000 with a \$12,000 local match. As of this writing, we have written commitments for \$7,500 of the \$12,000 local match. The grant application is due April 13, 2007. We expect we would hear about approval sometime in the fall, with construction to occur in spring 2008 and grand opening to occur during the Coal Festival in 2008.

Who owns the skate park?

Blossburg V.I.B.E. is coordinating the financing and construction of the skate park. The borough will own it as it is yet another recreation facility at Island Park.

How will the skate park be supervised? What are the hours of operation?

The skate park should be considered as a public use facility equivalent to the basketball court, tennis courts, baseball and softball fields, and playground equipment, meaning that anyone may use them anytime, unsupervised. The skate park hours will be the same as the hours for Island Park. (See TonyHawkFoundation.org in the supporting documents.)

Who will maintain the skate park?

According to Dave Ely of George Ely Associates, a distributor of Woodward Ramps & Rails skate park equipment, the "SkateLite" surfaces of the equipment have a five-year warranty. The metal parts have a 15-year warranty. Ely's first skate park installation was in Sunbury in 2001 and no pieces have needed to be replaced or repaired outside a few nuts and bolts and touch-up paint.

The skate park package comes with a maintenance schedule. Blossburg V.I.B.E. volunteers will perform the maintenance checks and handle equipment repairs as needed.

Who will pay for liability insurance? What liability considerations are there?

Blossburg V.I.B.E. has been in contact with Steve Sumner of Gannon Associates, which provides insurance for the borough. He estimates the annual insurance cost to be approximately \$1,000. Blossburg V.I.B.E. pledges to raise the funds to cover the liability insurance annually, although we would like to see the borough or the recreation board take on this small additional liability cost. We discussed rules, waivers and other measures to reduce the liability insurance cost, but none make a difference. The Skate Board may choose to request that a safety equipment ordinance be passed by the borough council that would require helmets and other safety gear to be worn at all times while skateboarding or in-line skating in the borough or at the skate park.

What are the safety policies? What are the rules of use?

Please see the attached draft rules. The Skate Board will finalize the proposed rules for the DCNR grant application.