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## The Express-Times

# Noise and 'riff-raff' take center court in Forks Township supervisors' park plan discussion

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FORKS TWP. | Plans for a new township park are creating friction over placement of basketball courts there.

The controversy led to a heated supervisors' meeting Thursday with discussions over noise versus access, recreation versus peace and a concern over pickup games in the streets.

Specifically addressed was the proposed Penn Ridge Recreation Area at Penn Ridge Boulevard and Silo Drive. The plan calls for the land to have a playground and basketball courts.

"The families (in that area) are underserved in the township," said Supervisors Chairman David Howell. Those who have complained about the potential for noise "are selfish, self-indulgent people."

All the supervisors agreed having courts in a park was a safer alternative to the portable basketball backboards and nets youngsters are pulling out in the streets.

However, Supervisor Eric Chuss said some area homeowners have come forward to object because, when they moved into their homes, they didn't expect to bear basketball bouncing noise.

"A resident came to me asking what the (small engineering marker) flags are," Chuss said. "When I told him it was going to be a tot lot and basketball court, he went ballistic."

Chuss said residents from a nearby over-55 development attended a previous meeting to voice concern over the courts attracting "undesirable elements" and "riff-raff."

The courts will not be lighted.

One attendee at Thursday's meeting raised the same issue, but when Howell asked her who specifically these elements were she could not say.

"The whole idea that it would attract an undesirable element is ridiculous," Howell said.

Supervisor Robert Egolf, who sits on the parks and recreation board, said he's spoken to people who said they want the park. "And the recreation board recommends it," he said.

Supervisors Vice Chairwoman Bonnie Nicholas said she doesn't necessarily object to the estimated \$34,000 price tag.

"I do want to do a better job of telling residents what's coming," instead of just plunking it down in front of them as a surprise, she said.

A motion was made to create specifications for the park and to put the basketball court out for bid. The tot lot is already funded.

Howell, Egolf, Nicholas and Supervisor Donald Miller voted yes. Chuss voted no.

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