Site Context

The 29.75 acre Municipal Park located along McLaughlin Run Creek has had numerous green practices implemented over the years to make it more environmentally sound. The site consists of the Township of Upper St. Clair Administration Building, Veterans Park, Founders Field, Marmion Field, Township Tennis Facility, 3-Hole Golf Course, Community Activity Center, Basketball Courts, and a new Playground and Picnic Area that opened in 2013.

Sustainable Practices

Water- Stream bank stabilization on McLaughlin Run Creek was completed through the rehabilitation of riparian buffers. Plans for a rain garden to be installed in 2014 will reduce water pollutants from the parking lot located at the Administration Building going into McLaughlin Run Creek. A portion of the Creek was relocated to prepare a meandering flow that will slow water throughout the park reducing excess erosion to the creek banks. This change has assisted with avoiding downstream flooding in the neighboring Bridgeville community.

Natural Landscaping- Native riparian plantings were installed along the creek throughout the golf course to improve water quality. Protective measures have been taken to preserve the approximately 60 year old ash trees within the Park from the emerald ash borer. Predator insects are released yearly to control and reduce the need for chemical insecticides on vegetation.

Materials Selection and Construction- During construction of the playground all disturbed soil was properly seeded during the spring and erosion and sediment protection was installed along McLaughlin Run Creek. The playground equipment is made of recycled plastics and metal. The playground surface is recycled plastic that can be recycled. The rubber infill for the synthetic turf surface is 100% recycled rubber. During demolition of the previous playground, all metal was scrapped at the local scrap yard to recycle. To reduce energy used for transportation of the new scoreboard at Founders Field the Township partnered with other customers in the area who were also having materials and supplies shipped by the vendor.

Connect People to Nature- McLaughlin Run Creek and the wooded areas within the park provide opportunities for children to participate in unorganized play. Partnership has been created with Citizens for Land Stewardship to provide litter control. The Park connects residents to key places within the Township via one mile of accessible trails and sidewalks. The site hosts numerous activities including the Township’s Annual Community Day event and parade on McLaughlin Run Road.

Operations and Maintenance- Automatic timers were used on all sport fields. On-field lighting was designed to reduce light pollution. A full maintenance plan was been implemented for the grounds of the park via the Public Works Department. All on-site vegetation trimmings are composted at the Township’s composting facility.

Environmental Stewardship Messaging- Interpretive signage explains the relocation of McLaughlin Run Creek and the benefits of the riparian buffers. Signage is planned for the rain garden that will be used by the Township Library and Community Development Department as an educational tool on water quality management.

Information provided by: Paul Besterman, Director of Recreation & Leisure Service, Township of Upper St. Clair (2014)