

INFORMATION PACKET for
DRAFT MASTER PLAN and
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
Midway State Park, Maples Springs, New York
June 24, 2008 6:30 pm
Bemus Point Elementary School Gymnasium



David A. Paterson
Governor

Carol Ash
Commissioner

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Information Packet
Midway State Park Master Plan Public Information Meeting
June 24, 2008

Agenda for Public Information Meeting

1. Introductions and Welcoming Remarks
2. Overview and Timeline of the Planning Process
3. Overview of the Park
4. Public Input
5. Next Steps

Introduction

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has developed new Priority Themes and Initiatives that will help guide the agency's activities. These new priorities are Revitalizing our Parks and Historic Sites, Natural Resource Stewardship and Interpretation, and Creating Connections and Sustainability. The master plan for Midway State Park is part of an accelerated planning initiative that will advance these themes, and determine the best course of action to preserve and utilize park resources for this and future generations.

Midway State Park, distinguished by its spectacular Chautauqua Lake views and historic amusement rides, is one of New York States newest state parks.

In addition to the traditional park offerings such as picnicking, walking and enjoying the lakeshore, this park includes the unusual. Amusement rides, a roller skating rink, antique arcade games and a historic carousel make Midway State Park one of New York State's more unique parks.

The purpose of this public information meeting is to actively invite public participation and involvement in the planning process. Public participation will help OPRHP in identifying issues, concerns and alternatives as well as determining the depth to which each of the topics is explored within the Draft Master Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement(DEIS). It is important to provide public input opportunities now and throughout the planning process to encourage identification of the compelling issues to be addressed within this planning effort.

This information packet and the public information meeting are intended to provide the public with a concise overview of Midway State Park, the setting, the resources and the issues identified to this point. Additionally the meeting is designed to provide an opportunity for public input at an early stage in the master planning process.

Additional information can be obtained from OPRHP at:

Allegany Region
2323 ASP Route #1 Suite 3
Salamanca, NY 14779

716-354-6575

Planning Bureau
Agency Building 1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12238
518-474-6722

Information Packet
Midway State Park Master Plan Public Information Meeting
June 24, 2008

Overview

A variety of factors have contributed, over the past century, to the development of the attractions that now make up Midway State Park.

Listed as the 16th oldest continuously operated amusement park in the US by the National Amusement Park Historical Association, Midway State Park started its existence as a trolley park in the late 1800's.

Timeline

- 1898. Park officially opened by the Jamestown and Lake Erie Railway. The park consisted of 12 wooded and 5 cleared acres, a beach, dancehall, dinning room and various court and field games.
- 1907. Now called the Jamestown & Chautauqua Railway, the company secured control of the steamships and leased Long Point for picnic grounds. The same year, a new 450 foot dock was built to allow passengers of the larger steamers to utilize Midway Park.
- 1913. Jamestown & Chautauqua Railway and Chautauqua Steamboat Co. sold to A.N. and S.B. Broadhead who electrified the trolley line in 1914.
- 1915 The land that Midway Park was on was purchased and the lakeside pavilion (The Hippodrome) was built. The pavilion had a dance hall and skating rink on the second floor with spectacular views of the lake, and dining room, kitchen, concessions, shooting gallery and dressing rooms for bathers on the first floor.
- 1924 Wooden roller coaster "Jack Rabbit" constructed at the park. This ride was later taken down (1939).
- 1927. "Red" Walsh joined the park's management team as overseer of the food concessions operation and leased the roller rink and arcade.
- 1934 – 1939 Thomas Carr leased the park and ultimately bought it from the railway, making constant improvements and renovations. Midway Park's survival through the depression can be attributed to Mr. Carr's role and interest in the park.
- 1950's Automobiles become the major transportation to the park and the trolley line and steamships dwindle.
- 1951. Park is acquired by Mr. Walsh from the Carr estate.
- Mid 1950's Walsh family buys more land and expands the park, adding group picnic buildings and more rides. A complete Herschell Kiddyland was added as well as bumper cars in 1958.
- Late 1960's. Walsh family installed an historic Herschell Carousel, a "Tilt-a-Whirl", and a "Chair Plane" ride.
- 1969. Giant slide added
- 1972. "Paratrooper" added
- 1970's – 80's Go carts, miniature golf and modern arcade games added.
- 1984. Michael and Janis Walsh take over operation of the park.
- 1985. Dragon roller coaster added.

Information Packet
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June 24, 2008



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Midway State Park



Map produced by NYCRRIIP GIS Unit, March 17, 2008.

Information Packet
Midway State Park Master Plan Public Information Meeting
June 24, 2008

- 2006. Midway Park is acquired by New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and becomes Midway State Park.
- 2007. First operating season as a state park.

Master Plan Timeline

Public Information Meeting – June 24, 2008

Draft Plan/DEIS – January 2009

Hearing – February 2009

Final Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) - May 2009

Findings and Adoption – May 2009

Environmental Setting

Midway State Park is a relatively small but complex park with mostly highly developed areas. These areas include amusement rides, picnic areas and pavilions, developed shoreline, a large building housing a dance hall, roller skating rink, dining room and concessions, an arcade building, docks, houses and parking lots. Small areas of relatively undisturbed woodland exist on the northern end of the park and an open field on the southern part.

Cultural Resources

Historic

The entire park has been determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Archaeological

There has been one archaeological survey conducted in 1978 within the Park boundaries. This survey covered only a small portion of present day Midway State Park and does not meet the current standards adopted by the New York State Historic Preservation Office in 1995 and would, therefore, need to be redone using today's standards.

This 1978 report does, however, indicate that one precontact site was identified within the Park boundaries. The archaeological sensitivity of Midway Park is high given that it is adjacent to Chautauqua Lake and that an archaeological site has already been identified within the Park boundaries.

Information Packet
Midway State Park Master Plan Public Information Meeting
June 24, 2008

Environmental Resources

Ecological Communities

The ecological communities in the undeveloped areas of Midway State Park are generally characteristic of those found in this part of New York State on these soil types. Detailed mapping of these communities will be accomplished by OPRHP Environment Management Bureau staff during the summer of 2008.

Flora and Fauna

The dominant feature of the vegetation in Midway State Park is the significant alteration resulting from human development activities. This influence is most noticeable in the amusement ride area and ornamental landscape features but is also evident in the disturbed shoreline, the old field and the former cottage area.

Commonly visible faunal species include Whitetail Deer, Turkey and small mammals including Raccoon, Squirrels, Chipmunk, and Muskrat. Numerous aquatic and land based bird species are found in the park, both year round residents and seasonal migrants. A more complete analysis of fauna and flora will be undertaken as part of the master planning process.

Topography and Soils

Chautauqua Lake and its drainage area lie in a glaciated valley. Steep slopes are typical of its shoreline. Midway State Park, however, is located in one of the lowland areas and has a gentle, flat area about 100 meters wide as its shoreline. The park slopes up away from the shoreline and the ground is generally rolling further from the lake with an embankment of 20' in the center of the park. A knoll in the center of the park rises approximately 50 feet above lake level.

The soils at Midway State Park are mostly formed over sandy or gravelly deposits. The soils closer to the lake (Pompton Silt Loam) are moderately well drained and further away from the lake (Chenango soils) are well drained. Generally the soils are suitable for recreation purposes.

Wetlands

There are no mapped freshwater wetland areas within the boundaries of the park.

Water Resources

Chautauqua Lake is listed as a Class A potable water supply by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. In addition to supplying drinking water the lake is also suitable for bathing, food preparation, fish propagation, fishing and contact recreational uses such as swimming. Nitrogen

Information Packet
Midway State Park Master Plan Public Information Meeting
June 24, 2008

and Phosphorus loads in the lake are very high and can, at times, produce algal blooms in the shallow areas and limit the recreational use of the lake shore.

Maple Springs Creek runs through the southwest portion of Midway State Park and is classified C, suitable for fisheries and non-contact activities.

Scenic Resources

Expansive views of Chautauqua Lake are spectacular from the shoreline and docks. The second floor of the Hippodrome has removable panels in the wall that also allow views of the lake and the park.

Current Recreation Uses

Midway State Park provides traditional and unique recreational opportunities. Among the more traditional are picnicking, boating, fishing, walking, winter activities, nature study and bird watching.

Non traditional uses include the amusement park rides, arcade games, roller skating rink and dance hall.

Infrastructure

Water Supply - A total of 12 buildings are served by the on site well water supply, including the park office, a roller rink, several picnic pavilions, concession stands and 2 cottages. The main portion of the park is currently served by several wells that are routed through a pressured treatment system consisting of water softening and chlorination. These wells vary as to yield, and water quality.

All uses of the water supply are within the park. Future development within the park may increase demand. Provision for future demand increase is part of a current design that provides storage volume as part of well safe yield rates. The storage capacity will provide for additional storage during peak use.

Wastewater - The site is served by the Chautauqua Lake South and Central Sewer District, which has a low pressure vacuum sanitary system with its northwest end point located at the Park.

Gas and Electric – National Grid supplies electricity to the site. National Fuel Gas supplies gas to the park office, Hippodrome and two houses.

Information Packet
Midway State Park Master Plan Public Information Meeting
June 24, 2008

Operations

- Park Staff
- Park Offices
- Facility and Vehicle Maintenance
- Park Police
- Sustainability

Preliminary List of Potential Issues and Concerns

- Building placement/Removal/Rebuilding etc.
- Camping/Cabins
- Carousel
- Connectivity with other parks/areas
 - Snowmobile trails
 - Hiking trails
 - Steam boats/cruises/tour boats, etc...
- Education
- Entertainment
- Entrance and landscaping
- Expansion of season and other types of recreation
- Food Services and Concessions
- Lake Access
 - What types should be provided?
 - Natural shoreline
 - Tour boats/steam ships
 - Fishing
 - Swimming
- Liability Issues
- Lighting
- Manager Housing
- Natural Resources
- Hippodrome
- Park Office
- Partnering with Long Point
- Picnic Shelters
- Public Safety
 - Stairways, Security Issues, Fencing
- Rentals
 - Canoe, Kayak, etc.
- Restoration of former cottage area
- Rules and Regulations
- Shoreline Protection
- Staffing

Information Packet
Midway State Park Master Plan Public Information Meeting
June 24, 2008

- Sustainability
- Trees and forestry
- Vehicular Access and Parking
- Water Quality
 - Algae and milfoil

Next Steps

- The issues, concerns and alternatives identified at the public information meeting and through written comments will be summarized and made available. The Draft Master Plan/Draft EIS will address these issues.
- Further opportunities for public input may take place during the preparation of the Draft EIS/Draft Master Plan.
- Public review of this document will include a public hearing and public comment/review period. Comments made during this time will be considered in the preparation of the Final EIS/Final Master Plan.
- After the issuance of the final plan and a public consideration period, a findings statement will be issued along with the Commissioner's decision regarding adoption of the plan.

Written comments will be accepted until July 30, 2008. Please send them to:

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