

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In 2004, the Village of Hampshire completed their *2004 Comprehensive Land Use Plan*, which identified substantial growth over the next 20-30 years. The Village's Comprehensive Plan recognizes a number of components related to the growth – one in particular relates to *Parks, Recreation and Open Space*. As a goal, the Village's Plan states “work with the Park District to cost-effectively enhance existing parks and develop new parks, recreational facilities and trails that serve all age groups.”

In order to accommodate the projected growth as a result of new developments, the Hampshire Township Park District in December of 2004, elected to develop a Comprehensive Park Master Plan to assess current and anticipated park and recreation needs. After reviewing several proposals, the firm of **Land Design Collaborative, Inc.** was selected to assist the Park District in development of the Plan.

The Comprehensive Park Master Plan includes the following primary components:

- An inventory of resources;
- Open space and park standards;
- Recreation programs;
- A policy framework;
- Park improvements and recommendations;
- A Capital Improvement Program; and
- An implementation plan.

The Comprehensive Park Master Plan provides the Park District with a clear direction for future programs and facilities, along with documentation to support the proposed course of action.

Purpose of Comprehensive Park Master Plan

The purpose of the Comprehensive Park Master Plan is to provide a roadmap for the improvement of Hampshire Township Park District's park and recreation facilities over the next 10 years. It identifies specific projects to be implemented, sets priorities and schedules, and defines expected costs. The Comprehensive Park Master Plan is intended to serve several functions:

- Inform residents and user organizations of the changes planned for each park facility;
- Facilitate long-term capital budgeting for the Park District;
- Provide for the donation of new parks based upon the growth in the Park District;
- Permit the Park District Board of Commissioners and staff to implement projects in a more timely and orderly manner;

- Achieve continual improvements to park facilities to enhance the experience of all users and to impart a positive image of the Park District; and,
- Identify and implement new recreation programs to better serve the needs of Park District residents.

Despite the specificity of the Plan, it remains flexible and subject to change as individual projects come up for consideration. Many of the projects will require the development of detailed implementation plans by the Park District. At those times, there will be opportunities for residents to provide further comment on the project and influence its final form.

The Plan has been developed to be both responsive to the residents of the Park District, and consistent with the Mission of the Park District. For the Plan to be effective, it must be a synthesis of ideas and facts, not merely a combination of opinions and conjecture. To achieve this end, the planning process has included a number of methods for providing public opinion, such as public meetings.

The planning process has also relied upon the input and direction of the Park District Board of Commissioners, the professional skills and talents of the District staff, and the consulting firm of Land Design Collaborative, Inc. Their combined efforts have produced a Comprehensive Park Master Plan that is responsive to the residents and faithful to the Mission of the Hampshire Township Park District.

General Background and History

The Village of Hampshire evolved from a settlement that was established in the early 19th century. Following the exit of Indian tribes in

FIGURE I-1: LOCATION MAP

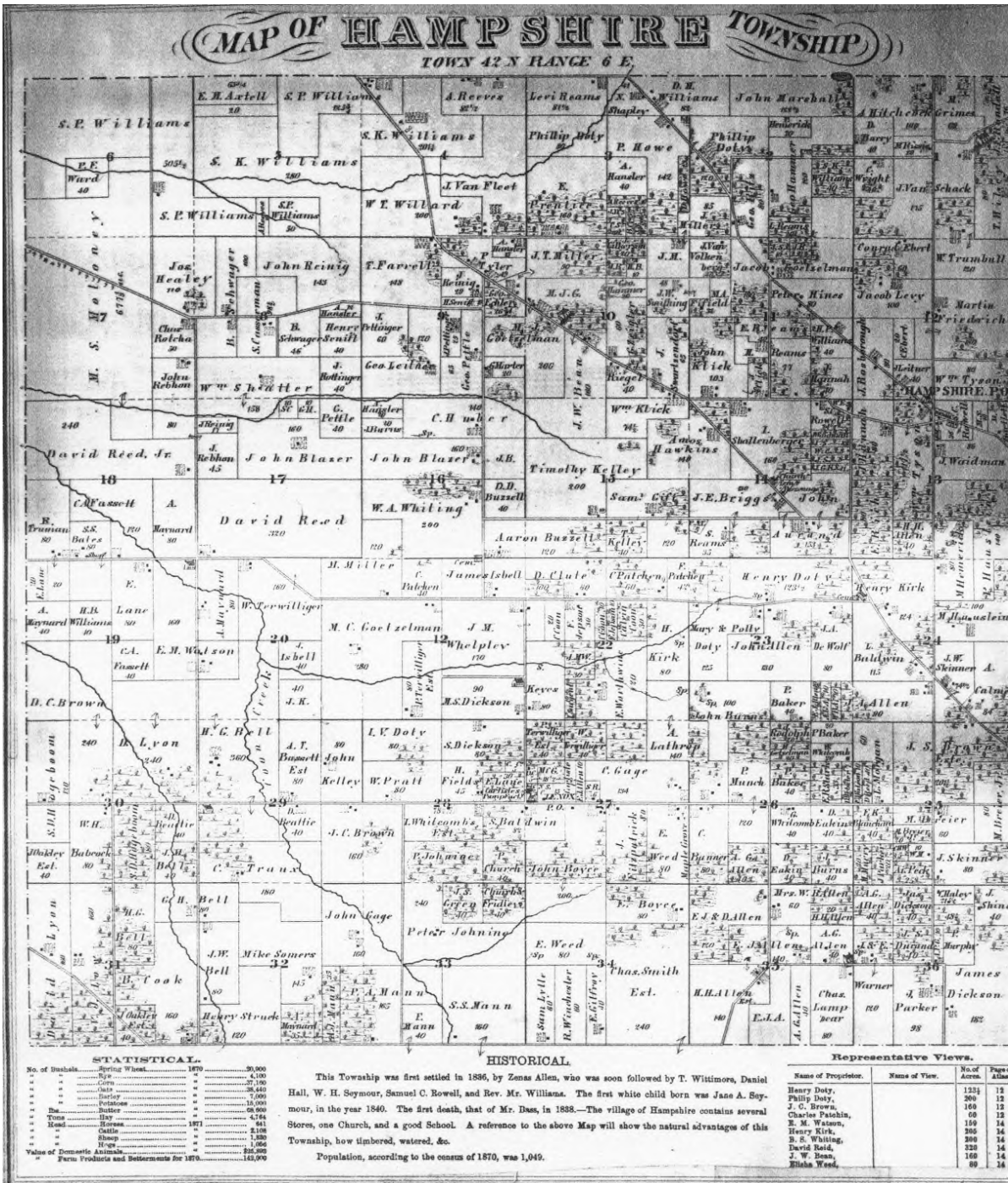


Figure 1-2: 1872 Historical Map of Hampshire Township

approximately 1835, small settlements developed throughout the northern region of Illinois. One of these settlements was Henpeck, the first home for those who established Hampshire.

Henpeck was strategically located on the road to Galena along what is now US 20. Henpeck provided an ideal resting place for travelers heading west on US 20. In 1875, Samuel C. Rowell realized that the new Chicago Pacific Railroad would have a significant impact on the area, and moved his general store to a site that is now the northeast corner of State Street and Washington Avenue. In 1876, the Village of Hampshire was incorporated.

The Village of Hampshire's population has grown to more than 4,600 people and its location, with access to rail, I-90 and major highways makes it attractive to developers and families wishing to live on the edge of the Chicago-metropolitan area. There has been steady growth and business expansion over the past decade, and Hampshire has worked to maintain the small-town atmosphere that has attracted so many new residents while promoting new growth and development

In 1948, the Hampshire Township Park District was formed. The District was formed to encompass the Township of Hampshire, covering an area of 36 square miles, including the Village of Hampshire.

Village Park was the first park in the Village, and was created sometime in the 1880's. Later the park was named after Clarence Seyller, who was one of the first board members of the Park District.

Based on a newspaper interview with long-time resident Clyde Waidman, the park extended from Jefferson Street on the north to Grove Street on the south, and from the residential

section on the west to a line with Grace Street on the east. Since then land was added on the east and south. In the late 1800's and early 1900's, the park contained a large spring-fed pond where the ballfield exists today. The pond was large enough for ice skating, boating and fishing. Around 1929, the pond was drained and backfilled with soil. Over the years, many events were held in the park, including a circus, 4th of July parade, plays held in a tent, as well as special events such as the 1936 Centennial Celebration.

During the time of the WPA in the 1930's, the park was cleaned up and an old log cabin was donated to the park by the Higgins family and served as a shelter. After several years, the cabin was torn down. During this time, trees now standing were planted.

There was originally a pavilion where the present restrooms are located. The pavilion and the sloped area along the west boundary served as an amphitheater where band concerts, lectures and other events were conducted. In the 1950's, the restroom, backstops, and a new playground were added to the park. A flagpole was erected as a memorial to all war veterans, and a new shelter was constructed in 1974 and three new tennis courts completed.

Sometime during the 1940's or 50's Bruce Ream Memorial Park, consisting of 15 acres, was added to the Park District. Since the addition of Bruce Ream Memorial Park, no new land was acquired by the Park District.

General Community Background

The Park District is located in the far northwest part of Kane County. The District is predominantly residential and agricultural. It is located

approximately 50 miles west of the City of Chicago.

The Village of Hampshire is the only incorporated municipality within the Park District boundaries. The Village has a downtown area that spans both sides of the Chicago-Northwestern Railroad tracks that provides identity and makes the Village of Hampshire functionally distinct and different from its neighbors. This historic center is surrounded by agricultural fields and rural housing developed on lots that are four acres and larger. Many of these lots include equestrian facilities or farm animals reminiscent of agricultural land uses that have historically dominated this part of Kane County.

A number of major roadways serve the community. At the northern boundary of the District is the Northwest Tollway (I-90) with

interchanges on IL Route 47 and US 20. The Tollway is a major transportation route serving northern Illinois and the areas between Chicago and Rockford. Along the eastern boundary of the District is Illinois Route 47 which is a north-south arterial serving the region. US 20 runs diagonally across the northeastern portion of the District, while Illinois Route 72 runs east-west along the southern boundary of the Village of Hampshire.

The major character within the District and surrounding the Village of Hampshire is rural. It has a gently rolling landscape with numerous oak groves. There are numerous farms and small large-lot subdivisions. Future development of small lots with extensive open space systems are planned for areas surrounding the Village.

**FIGURE I-3: HAMPSHIRE TOWNSHIP
PARK DISTRICT MAP**

