

To: Town Council of Howey-in-the-Hills

From: Parks and Recreation Board, Town of Howey-in-the-Hills

Date: 8/11/2023

Subject: Pine Park Land Proposal

Dear Members of the Town Council,

We write to you today to formally express our concerns and stance regarding the recent proposal to potentially sell or transfer the land earmarked for Pine Park to Lake County's Fire Department. After thorough deliberation, the Parks and Recreation Board unanimously disagrees with this suggestion.

Historically, this particular parcel of land was acquired with a clear intent to promote outdoor recreation and provide a green space for the residents of Howey-in-the-Hills. Such spaces are invaluable for the well-being of our community, offering not just physical health benefits but also fostering community spirit, local interactions, and a shared sense of belonging.

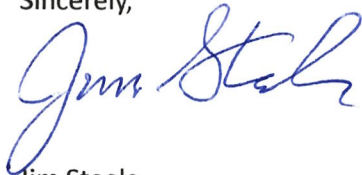
Given the growing interest in outdoor recreational activities, particularly bicycling and pickleball, we believe it's imperative to capitalize on this trend and provide facilities that cater to these needs. Specifically, our recommendation is that the land should be developed into a bicycle trailhead. This would serve as a starting point or gateway to nearby cycling routes, encouraging both locals and visitors to explore our beautiful town and its surrounding areas. In addition to this, there is a notable demand for pickleball courts, an amenity that is currently lacking in our vicinity. Establishing these courts would not only cater to a rapidly growing sport but would also create an inclusive space for all ages to participate and enjoy.

Selling or diverting this land for purposes other than recreational use would mean a lost opportunity for our town. Moreover, it goes against the initial vision and purpose behind acquiring the land, which was to enhance the recreational opportunities for our residents.

In conclusion, we strongly urge the Town Council to prioritize the recreational needs of our community and respect the original intent behind the land acquisition. Let's work together to make Pine Park a reality, a space that promotes health, wellness, and community interaction.

Thank you for your consideration. We remain committed to working collaboratively towards the best interests of Howey-in-the-Hills.

Sincerely,



Jim Steele

Chairperson, Parks and Recreation Board

Town of Howey-in-the-Hills