



**Township of Long Hill**  
**Recreation Element**  
**of the**  
**Master Plan**

**Prepared for**  
**The Long Hill Township**  
**Planning Board**  
**February 2014**

## I. Introduction

Long Hill Township occupies 12.14 square miles in southern Morris County with a population of approximately 8,700 residents. It is made up of five towns: Gillette, Homestead Park, Meyersville, Millington, and Stirling. Initially named Passaic Township, the Township was renamed “Long Hill Township” in 1992. The northern part of the township is occupied by the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge which provides township residents with great opportunities for passive recreation activities including bird watching, hiking, fishing, bicycling, kayaking, and canoeing. The Passaic River, which borders the township on the southern and western limits, is a key distinguishing factor impacting everyday life in Long Hill Township. Within the township, there are 12 miles along the Passaic River available for fishing, kayaking, and canoeing.

Recently ranked #5 by “New Jersey Monthly” on the list of Top Towns to Raise Young Children, Long Hill Township has an excellent school system. Students in Long Hill attend public school in the Long Hill Township Schools (Grades K-8) and attend high school at Watchung Hills Regional High School. The high school is a regional high school located in Warren and educates students from the communities of Long Hill, Warren, Watchung, and Green Brook. Because of this sending district relationship, many of our local youth sports programs are organized with these towns.

The philosophy of the Parks and Recreation Department is to provide a variety of active and passive activities for residents of all ages while maintaining our parks and facilities to the highest safety and aesthetic standards. Development of programs will be considered based on need and available facilities whether they are focused around sports programs or cultural, social, and educational in nature.

Recreational activities are an important consideration in Long Hill where there is a strong community feel in this mostly residential community. Long Hill Township has a Recreation Director responsible for managing recreation programs and activities. The Parks and Recreation Department hires many seasonal employees throughout the year to assist with the Basketball Programs, the Summer Recreation Camp, and lifeguarding at Stirling Lake. Maintenance and improvements to current facilities are managed through the Public Works Dept. There is a Recreation Advisory Committee comprised of local volunteer community members appointed by the Township Committee. In addition to providing feedback and making recommendations on recreation programs and facilities, the Recreation Advisory Committee in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for managing and assisting on several community events annually including but not limited to: Halloween Parade, Meyersville Tree Lighting, Egg Hunt, Lake Dances, Community Concerts, Memorial Day Picnic, and many other community events.

Long Hill Township Parks and Recreation manages a variety of facilities including recreational playing fields, playgrounds, plus a swimming lake & fishing pond. The Parks and Recreation Department also utilizes the Long Hill Board of Education facilities to run several different programs including the Travel and Recreation Basketball (Youth & Adult) Programs and a Summer Recreation Camp. In addition, space is also rented from the local church for a pre-school program

**II. Facility Overview (Developed)**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park (Formerly known as Riverside Park)</b>	23	915 Valley Rd Gillette, adjacent to Town Hall facility	3 tennis courts, 2 multi-purpose grass playing fields, a basketball court, 3 tennis courts, a playground, Bocci Ball courts, a horseshoe pit, a canoe/kayak launch area, and a walking path (includes rest room facilities)
<b>Stirling Lake Park</b>	7	Corner of Chestnut & High Streets Stirling	Swimming Lake during summer season (membership req'd), sand beach, walking path, outdoor shower/foot wash area, covered pavilion/picnic area, barbecue area, playground, beach volleyball court, fishing pond (includes rest room facilities)
<b>Meyersville Field/Complex</b>	2.15	New Vernon Rd. Meyersville	Baseball/Softball Field with lights, basketball court, tennis court, playground, batting cages
<b>Long Hill Little League Fields/Complex</b>	10.4	Poplar Drive Stirling	Complex is leased by the town to Long Hill Baseball/Softball Assn. Facility includes 3 fields: 2-40x60 fields (one with lights), and one 60x90 field; a batting cage, restrooms, a picnic area, ample parking, and a "Snack Shack" Trailer with running water & electricity.
<b>Hicks' Tract</b>	59.2	Access from Knollandale Rd Millington & Largo Lane Stirling	Wooded area with 3 foot paths/trails, paved access road for emergency vehicle access/ bike & pedestrian access
<b>Turtlerock Park</b>	1.26	Central Ave. Stirling	Passive recreation area with benches, adjacent to Stirling Train Station

**Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park** (formerly known as Riverside Park) is located next to the Town Hall building. This 23 acre complex is home to 3 tennis courts, 2 multi-purpose playing fields, a basketball court, a playground (ages 5-12), 2 Bocci Ball courts, a horseshoe pit, a canoe/kayak launch area, and a walking path. Efforts are underway in 2013 to repair and resurface the existing tennis courts and the basketball court. This is an active park which caters to a lot of different activities. Dogs are permitted in the park but not on the playing fields. There are quite a few dog walkers that visit the park daily.

There are several walking paths within the park. The main contiguous path which encircles Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park Field #1, measures 1,590 feet (slightly larger than ¼ mile). There are additional paved pathways around Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park Field #2. Many walkers visit Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park daily. In

addition, due to an absence of tracks for running in town, the local schools utilize Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park to run Cross Country and Track.

Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park Field #1 is a multi-purpose regulation sized grass field typically utilized and lined for soccer and boys' lacrosse. Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park Field #2 is also a multi-purpose grass field typically utilized and lined for soccer, girls' lacrosse, and field hockey. The fields are utilized by our residents as well as local sports associations: WHSA (Soccer), Hills Lacrosse, Long Hill Girls' Lacrosse, Long Hill Field Hockey, and others.

An outside building houses rest rooms and a storage closet for sports equipment and sprinkler system controls. There is parking for approximately 200 vehicles.



**Stirling Lake Park** is located adjacent to residential streets. The property was deeded to the township by the local homeowners' association with the stipulation that it had to remain as recreational property. A swimming lake is staffed and operated through the Parks and Recreation Department and is open during the summer season. Seasonal memberships are required, and the lifeguard is staffed by certified lifeguards during regular business hours. (Swimming is prohibited when not staffed by lifeguards.)

The swimming lake is spring-fed by two pumps which run constantly during the summer season ensuring a constant flow of fresh water. Water overflow runs into a tributary which leads into the Passaic River. In addition, there is a system of aerators which run continuously to maintain needed water movement and circulation. The facility is tested weekly, and samples are sent to an outside contracted lab. Results are submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department and the local Board of Health. In addition, an outside company is contracted to treat the water for algae. The lake is a non-chlorinated, spring-fed, body of water.

The Stirling Lake Park provides an excellent venue for outdoor concerts. Annually, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Recreation Advisory Committee sponsor a Summer Kick-Off Concert which has become a wonderful community activity for all ages.



Behind the guard house is a regulation size beach volleyball court. This is a popular activity for residents and members of the Lake. In addition, the court is heavily used during Parks and Recreation Department sponsored lake dances for middle school students.



In the summer of 2013, kayaking was added as an activity at Stirling Lake with much success. Three kayaks were purchased and made available for use to the members. Several improvements are scheduled for Stirling Lake for the 2014 summer season. They include additional recreational equipment such as kayaks, paddleboards, and an inflatable aquatic obstacle course. In addition, a new floating dock system will be installed. It will improve the swim lane area, provide better accessibility and safety of the facility, and include a water slide.

Adjacent to the swimming lake is a fishing pond. The fishing pond is stocked annually just before the Local PBA Fishing Derby in April. Fishing is permitted in the pond when the park is open with a proper fishing license.

Stirling Lake Park also has a playground for ages 5-12. In 2012, the Public Works Department rehabilitated the surface underneath, removed all existing ground material, and installed all new playground safety mulch. In 2013, improvements were made to the fencing surrounding the playground area. Adjacent to the playground is a covered pavilion area with picnic tables and a nearby area with several charcoal barbecue grills.



The park is open from sunrise to sundown. Dogs are not permitted. Parking is limited for the facility. There are 38 marked spaces, plus an additional two handicapped spaces located in the parking lot off of High St. In addition, there are a few parking spaces on the entrance road to the parking lot, plus two additional handicapped spaces located at the eastern entrance to the park. Limited grass parking is available to staff at the eastern end of the park.

**Meyersville Field/Complex** sits on land that was deeded to the Township in 1961 by Mr. & Mrs. Bailey Brower and Mr. & Mrs. John Noe for the expressed purposes that the land be used exclusively for public park and playground. The complex consists of a baseball/softball field with lights, a small basketball court, one tennis court, and a playground with a picnic area. In addition, beyond the outfield fence, there is a batting cage. There are no restroom facilities, but a port-o-john is at the location. There is limited parking available which can be insufficient depending upon events taking place at the location. This facility is bordered by wetlands. Because there are lights for the baseball/softball field, play is allowed on the field until 10pm nightly.



Currently, this field is used by Long Hill Little League teams, Fall Ball teams, a women's softball league with three (3) Long Hill teams that play against teams from neighboring towns, a local Fire Department league, township residents, our local schools, and by local club teams.

This field gets a lot of usage, and there are often discussions as to the purpose of this field stemming from disagreements over the original purpose of this field. Baseball players want to see this field as a 50x70 field with a pitching mound (higher than what exists today), while softball players want to see this field remain as a softball only field. This field also has the added attraction because of the lights.

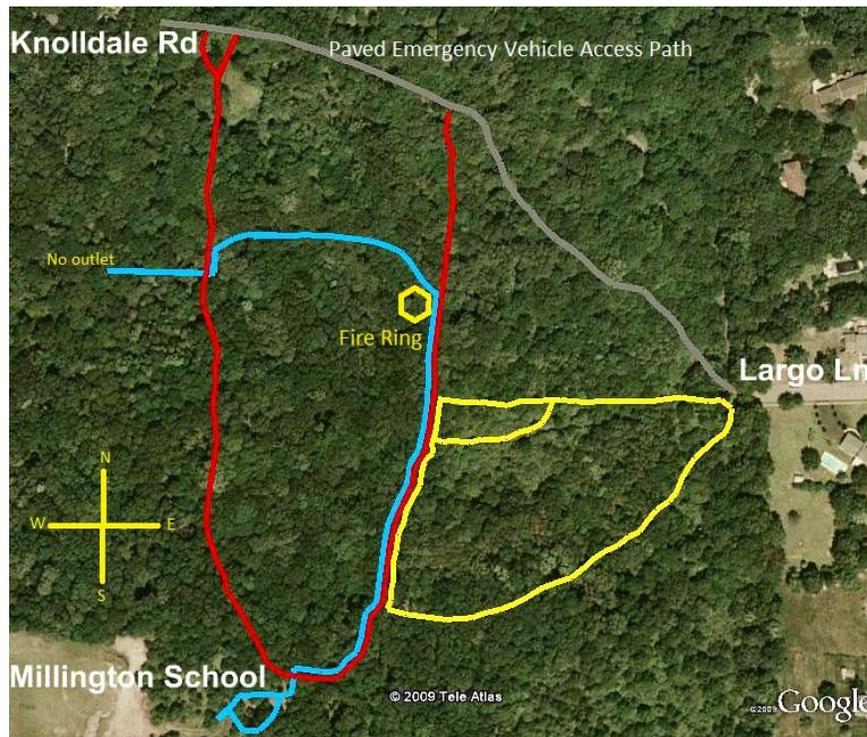
**Long Hill Little League Fields/Complex** is located at the end of Poplar Drive. The complex is located right next to wetlands, borders the Passaic River and is subject to periodic flooding. The complex is leased by the town to the Long Hill Township Baseball/Softball Association. A lot of the routine maintenance for the complex is covered by the Association, and many volunteer hours are given. The complex is stretched to meet demands for field time, and the Long Hill Little League Teams do utilize the Meyersville Field often. Currently, the Little League Fields Complex does not have a 50x70 field which is necessary for the U11 and U12 baseball players. In addition, there has been some recent consideration by Little League (nationally) to also move U10 baseball players onto a 50x70 field for safety reasons since

the new bats enable the players to drive the ball much harder at a younger age. In addition, the complex does not have any softball only fields. (Softball fields have dirt infields—not grass like you would find for baseball.)



There are lights only on what is called “The American Field” which is a 46x60 baseball field. The remaining two fields, “National Field” (46x60) and “Senior Field” (60x90) do not have lights.

**Hicks’ Tract** is a tract of land located between Millington and Stirling. This 59+ acre piece of wooded property was purchased by the Township with an Open Space grant in 1963 from Mr. & Mrs. Halsey Hicks. Hicks’ Tract is accessible by road from Knollandale Road in Millington and from Largo Lane in Stirling. There are also walking trails that lead into the area behind Millington School. Hicks’ Tract is a wooded area with several walking/hiking trails that have been developed and maintained by our Public Works Department along with our local Boy Scout troops. There are 3 trails in the area delineated as: blue, red, and yellow.



There is a paved emergency vehicle access through the property which allows for bicyclists also to cross through the park plus pedestrian traffic. Dogs are permitted. The park is open sunrise to sundown.

The local Boy Scout/Cub Scout and Girl Scout troops do routinely hold camp-outs in the park with permits. There is a fire pit where they gather for different ceremonies such as flag burning. It's also a great place for roasting marshmallows!

During Super Storm Sandy (October 2012), the park sustained a lot of damage which uprooted many trees. Due to concerns that the normally heavily shaded forest floor covered with pine needles would become a fire hazard, a concerted effort was made to remove fallen trees, clear trails, and re-plant new trees. Today, the work continues to restore the trails and the trail markings. Over the years, many local Boy Scouts have taken on improvement projects (including Eagle Scout projects) in the park.



**Turtlerock Park** is a small park located next to the Stirling Train Station. This park is an area designated for passive recreation with several park benches and planted gardens.



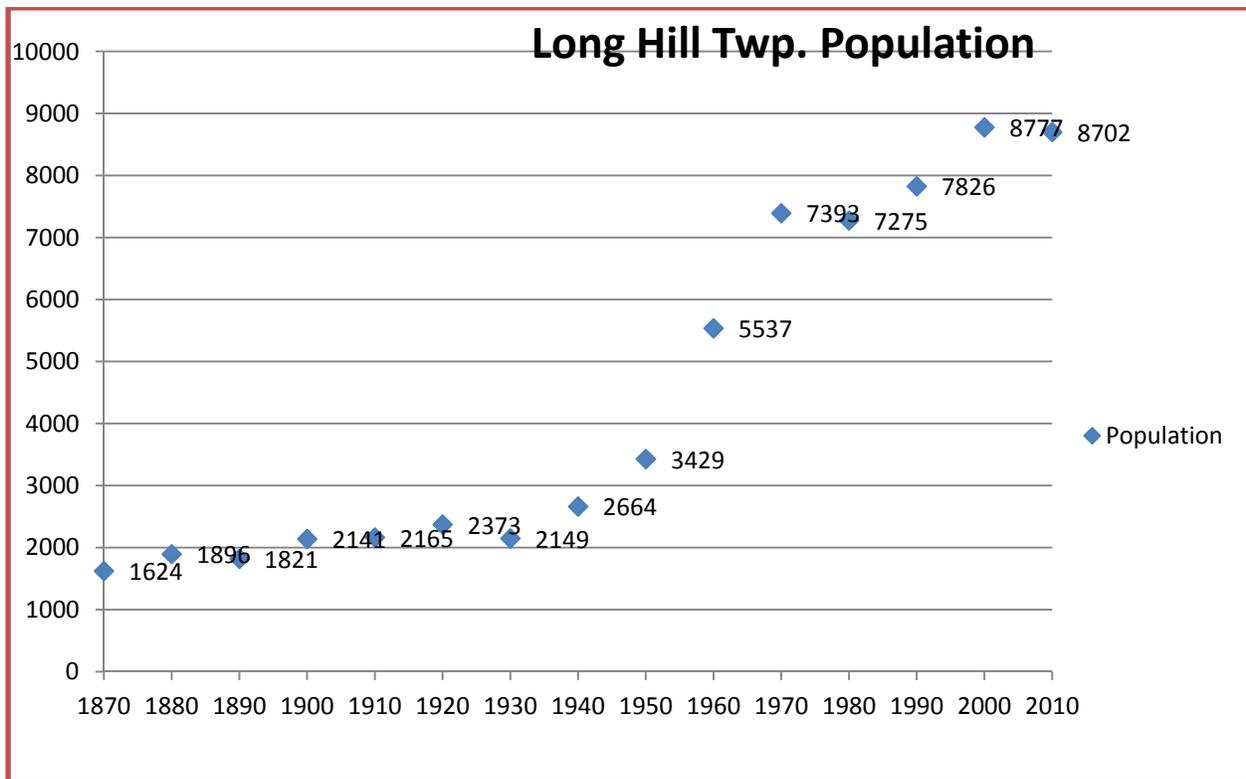
### III. Additional Lands Held in Fee Simple for Recreation and Conservation Purposes

There are an additional 335.48 acres held as “Fee Simple Green Acres-encumbered areas. With regard to certain parcels of land, there have been discussions in the past to develop some of these properties to address increased needs for playing field space. It has been a balancing act recognizing the need for additional recreational space and the concerns of property owners living close-by. Concerns for increased traffic in neighborhoods have stifled the discussions around many of these possible projects.

Many of the other pieces of property involved in this inventory are small, wooded, and spread out within the township. In addition, many contain significant environmental constraints and limited area dry enough to develop for either passive or active recreation.

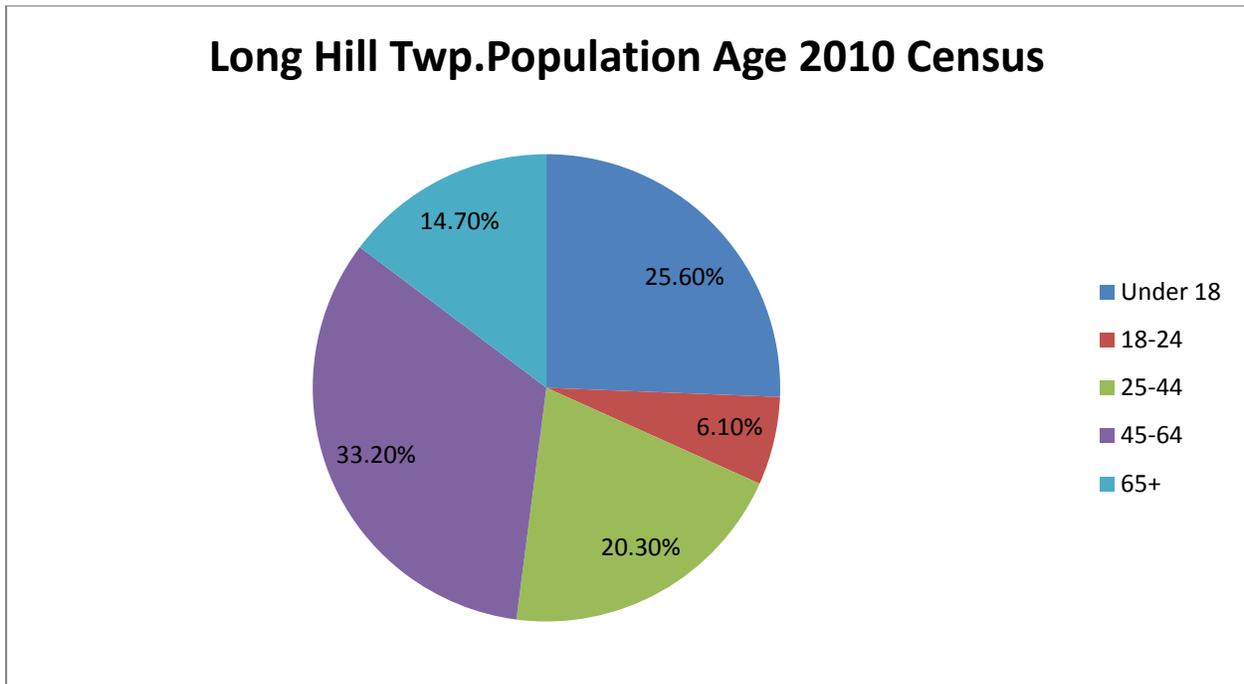
### IV. Demographics

Long Hill Township is a predominantly residential community with approximately 8,700 residents, 3,100 households, and 2,434 families. The township is nearly completely developed. While the population was growing steadily, the population did plateau on the 2000 Census and declined slightly on the 2010 Census, given the recent economic downturn.



Just over 25% of Long Hill’s population is comprised of residents under the age of 18. The largest segment of our population is residents between the ages of 45 – 64 (33.2%). Approximately, 15% of Long Hill’s residents are 65 and older.

## Long Hill Twp. Population Age 2010 Census



According to the 2010 Census data, Long Hill Township’s average household size is 2.79, and the average family size is 3.19. For every 100 females, there are 97.1 males; for every 100 females 18 years and older, there are 94.7 males.

As of July 2013, there were 890 dogs licensed to homeowners living in Long Hill Township.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) recommends that a park system be comprised of a range of 6.25 acres to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 residents. According to this equation, Long Hill Township should have between 54.37 and 91.35 acres of developed open space. Long Hill Township does meet this recommendation with 103 acres currently developed for active and passive recreation. However, the balance between passive and active recreation is not adequate. A large portion of the park acreage comes from the Hicks’ Tract which is a predominantly wooded area held for passive pursuits such as hiking and camping. We are currently not meeting the needs for active recreation. Additional playing field space to support soccer, baseball/softball, lacrosse, field hockey, and other organized sports is needed.

### V. Demands for Playing Fields

The Long Hill Township youth sports programs are popular outlets for residents under the age of 18 (particularly, residents ages 5-14). The Long Hill Parks and Recreation Department organizes sports programs in the following areas:

SPORT	Ages/Grades	2013 Participants	2012 Participants
Recreation Basketball	Grades 1-8	267	270
Travel Basketball	Grades 4-8	112	101
Adult Basketball	Adults 18+	26+	17+
Girls’ Lacrosse	Grades 5-8	31	42
Girls’ Field Hockey	Grades 5-8	40	39

In addition to the sports programs, the Parks and Recreation Department also organizes clinics throughout the year including: Lacrosse, Field Hockey, and Volleyball.

The Parks and Recreation Department also works with several local sports clubs. Through partnership agreements with these organizations which are organized along regional sending district lines (Long Hill, Warren, Watchung, Green Brook), Long Hill Township lends its fields to these programs at no charge.

SPORT	Ages/Grades	2013 Participants (Long Hill Residents/All Other)	2012 Participants (Long Hill Residents/All Other)
Recreation Soccer (WHSA) Fall & Spring	Pre K-8	304/1,556	295/1,612
Travel Soccer (WHSA) Fall & Spring	2-8	48/480	48/428
Hills Lacrosse (Boys Only) Spring	3-8	54/187	67/242

Our organized sports programs that use Long Hill’s fields have been clamoring for a turf field in Long Hill. Most surrounding towns have at least one turf field. A turf field offers additional advantages over grass such as increased usage without having to let the field rest, less cancellations due to damp/wet fields, extended playing seasons because teams are able to get onto fields earlier in the spring season and continue later in the fall without the fears of damaging a grass field. There are also benefits from a maintenance standpoint given the savings on mowing, weekly field lining, repairs to depressions and divots, and costly repairs to replace worn out areas usually in front of and around the goals for the different sports.

Between 2012 and 2013, field usage of Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park Fields #1 and #2 increased 27%. The fields are also showing significant wear due to the usage. We are in continual need of repairs for both fields due to overuse. Additional fields (a combination of turf and grass), will help us to maintain existing fields by allowing the fields to rest and be rotated, allow for better scheduling, and will help us answer the increased demands for field time from our organized sports programs.

The Long Hill Township Baseball/Softball Association (commonly known as Long Hill Little League) operates from the Little League Fields located at the end of Poplar Drive in Stirling. The township owns this property and leases it to the association. In addition, the Long Hill Little League also books additional time at Meyersville Field. The Little League is continually looking for additional playing fields and has a real need for a 50x70 baseball field.

SPORT	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Fall 2013
Baseball	290**	90	20*	242**	78	30*
Softball	179	62	75*	183	68	78*

\*Fall Programs combine teams with sending district towns, but report shows only LH players.

\*\*Spring numbers do not include Senior Boys (ages 13-15) which are registered through the Warren program, but these boys do also utilize Long Hill facilities.

Residents and non-residents can rent the fields/facilities for events such as birthday parties. Several local clubs and sports organizations also rent the fields for a fee. With regard to fields (Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park Field #1, Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park Field #2, and Meyersville Field), the charts below detail hours field permits were issued. Note—the charts only show when a permit was issued and not when the field(s) was used without a permit.

Month/Year	Organization	Matthew G. Kantor Field #1	Matthew G. Kantor Field #2	Mey. Field	Total Hours
Mar. 2012	WHSA	58	34	0	92
	Hills LAX	28	0	0	28
	LHT Rec.	0	55	0	55
	Little League	0	0	0	0
	All Other	0	1.5	0	1.5
April 2012	WHSA	74	29.5	0	103.5
	Hills LAX	34	8	0	42
	LHT Rec.	5	65	0	70
	Little League	0	0	12	12
	All Other	2	4.5	32	38.5
May 2012	WHSA	70	38	0	108
	Hills LAX	36	8	0	44
	LHT Rec.	0	65	0	65
	Little League	0	0	51.25	51.25
	All Other	5	0	31.5	36.5
June 2012	WHSA	47.5	21.5	0	69
	Hills LAX	18	0	0	18
	LHT Rec.	0	35	0	35
	Little League	0	0	74	74
	All Other	1	3	36	40
July 2012	WHSA	0	0	0	0
	Hills LAX	6	0	0	6
	LHT Rec.	0	18	0	18
	Little League	0	0	91	91
	All Other	13.5	16	37	66.5
Aug. 2012	WHSA	16.5	18	0	34.5
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	0	1.5	0	1.5
	Little League	0	0	4	4
	All Other	0	0	32	32
Sept. 2012	WHSA	96	40.5	0	136.5
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	0	47	0	47
	Little League	0	0	40	40
	All Other	0	0	46	46
Oct. 2012	WHSA	69.5	58.5	0	128
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	6	40	0	46
	Little League	0	0	50	50
	All Other	2	0	38	40
Nov. 2012	WHSA	56.5	36	0	92.5
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	0	10	0	10
	Little League	0	0	0	0
	All Other	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>644.5</b>	<b>653.5</b>	<b>574.75</b>	<b>1,872.75</b>

NOTE: No permits issued for Field Usage in Jan., Feb., Dec. 2012.

Month/Year	Organization	Matthew G. Kantor Field #1	Matthew G. Kantor Field #2	Mey. Field	Total Hours
Mar. 2013	WHSA	8	8	0	16
	Hills LAX	54	26	0	80
	LHT Rec.	5	60	0	65
	Little League	0	0	2	2
	All Other	0	0	32	32
April 2013	WHSA	31	31	0	62
	Hills LAX	104	40	0	144
	LHT Rec.	0	50	0	50
	Little League	0	0	99	99
	All Other	2	0	36	38
May 2013	WHSA	40	40	0	80
	Hills LAX	104	44	0	148
	LHT Rec.	0	75	0	75
	Little League	0	0	118	118
	All Other	0	0	54	54
June 2013	WHSA	44	44	0	88
	Hills LAX	88	44	0	132
	LHT Rec.	0	60	0	60
	Little League	0	0	94	94
	All Other	0	0	51.5	51.5
July 2013	WHSA	0	0	0	0
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	0	8	0	8
	Little League	0	0	91	91
	All Other	30	16	40	86
August 2013	WHSA	0	0	0	0
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	0	16	0	16
	Little League	0	0	2	2
	All Other	2	0	26	28
Sept. 2013	WHSA	93	40.5	0	133.5
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	0	47	0	47
	Little League	0	0	54	54
	All Other	2	0	10	12
Oct. 2013	WHSA	88.5	53	0	141.5
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	5	52	0	57
	Little League	0	0	55	55
	All Other	11.5	34.5	20	66
Nov. 2013 Fields Closed For Winter 11-16-13	WHSA	63	31.5	0	94.5
	Hills LAX	0	0	0	0
	LHT Rec.	0	6.5	0	6.5
	Little League	0	0	0	0
	All Other	0	0	0	0
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>		<b>775</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>784.5</b>	<b>2386.5</b>

## VI. Board of Education Playing Fields

The Long Hill Township Public Schools also have playing fields behind their facilities. There are 3 school buildings each with fields. The school field inventory is shown in the chart below.

School	Playground	Baseball/Softball	Soccer	Outdoor Basketball
Gillette School	Yes	One baseball /softball field	No	No
Millington School	Yes	(1) Softball	Yes	One hoop
Central School	No	60x90 Baseball (1)	Practice only	Yes

All Board of Education playing fields are grass, and they have no access to a turf field for any sport. None of the three school buildings have a running track. The Middle School (Central School) sponsors both a fall Cross Country Team and a spring Track & Field Team. In addition, the local parochial school, (St. Vincent de Paul School) also has similar programs with no facilities on campus to support the sports. The school teams come to Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park to run on a paved path, and they run Cross Country meets across the fields and on the perimeter of Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park. Once a year, the local schools attend a Track Meet at the local High School (Watchung Hills Regional HS) to compete with sister sending district schools.

Additional local school sports teams also utilize the town facilities. The Central Middle School soccer team occasionally uses Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park for soccer tournament games. St. Vincent de Paul School utilizes Meyersville Field for all of their softball games and practices.

The Board of Education manages the school athletic facilities/fields, and permits are needed to reserve time. Several of the school fields are in need of some repair / upgrades. In addition, the lack of rest rooms at the facilities makes use of their fields less desirable.

The Parks and Recreation Department pays a fee each year to the Board of Education to cover additional janitorial expenses incurred to run programs in the schools. Both Millington and Central Schools are used to run the following programs: Basketball (Oct. – May), Volleyball clinics, Summer Recreation Camp (6 weeks during the summer).

## VII. Facility Priority Needs Assessment

The purpose of this assessment graph below is to articulate a prioritized list of active and passive recreation needs and desires for the residents of Long Hill Township. This prioritization takes into account current activities and activities not currently available to residents because facilities are not available.

Facility	Rank
Additional Multi-purpose lighted turf field (soccer—inc. small-sided) , LAX, FH (1) with 400m track	1
50x70 Baseball Field/Softball field –grass or turf with lights (1)	2
Additional Lighted Multi-purpose turf or grass field—practice or regulation size	3
Indoor Recreation Space	4
Additional Bike/Hiking Trails –prefer some paved areas for bike riding; some wood-chipped pathways to connect neighborhoods for better mobility within the town	5
Dog Park	6
Swimming Pool	7
Additional Playground for Toddlers; area for children ages 5-12 with swings	8

### VIII. Conclusions/Recommendations

Striking the right balance between passive and active recreation should become an area of focus in the future. The demand for fields for organized sports is growing, and we do not have enough fields to meet the demand. While we may meet the Parks and Recreation recommended acreage for our population size of developed open space for recreation use, we do not have enough area developed for active recreation. Additional playing fields will help us to maintain existing fields, allow for better scheduling, and will help us answer the increased demands for field time from our organized sports programs. Plans to increase our active recreation should include an artificial turf field(s) in our mix of playing fields. Having a turf field(s) available for active recreation will allow increased playing times by our sports teams. Games that would normally get canceled due to wet field conditions on grass fields would be played on turf. Seasons and playing times can be extended on turf, not having to worry about resting a turf field.

Our #1 identified need is for a lighted all-purpose turf field with a 400m track around it. This addresses many community needs. It gives our athletes the benefit of increased playing times due to the durability of the turf and with the addition of lights to extend play when it is dusk/dark. We currently do not have a track in the township as part of the recreation facilities or school facilities, and it is needed by our residents for walking/jogging and by the schools for their athletes participating in track & field programs.

The need for a 50x70 Baseball Field /Softball Field is also a priority. Utilizing the Long Hill Baseball/Softball Association Fields (also referred to as the “Little League Fields”) along with Meyersville Field, we still are not able to fulfill the requests of all groups wishing to use the field(s). We also recognize that there is another challenge in that many towns have begun converting their 46x60 baseball fields into combination 46x60 / 50x70 fields. Our local baseball/softball association is currently entertaining this for their two 46x60 baseball fields. There is pressure to move the younger kids up from 46x60 fields to 50x70 for safety reasons.

The Parks and Recreation Department would like to run additional indoor programs for the community but with limited access to indoor recreation space, we are unable to. We have tried to run programs utilizing the Community Room in the Library but have found it too difficult for scheduling. Additional recreation programs could be considered with access to indoor recreation space. We are fortunate that we are able to use the public school gyms for our basketball programs and volleyball clinics during the school year and also utilize the facilities in the summer to run our summer camp (grades K-8). However, we still face constraints with programming given available space and program demand.

We still rent space at a local church to house our very successful pre-K summer camp program. Within the 2013 Parks and Recreation National Database Report, it is noted that 74% of the Parks and Recreation Departments reporting currently have a Recreation/Community Center.

Connecting neighborhoods and the community via trails and paths continues to be a priority for us as we have very few sidewalks in Long Hill. Providing safe alternatives for pedestrian traffic and cyclists needs to be a focus in future planning.

We currently do not have a dog park; and by default, many residents walk their dogs in Hicks' Tract and Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park. The Parks and Recreation Department has received numerous requests from dog owners for a separate dog park where they can let their dogs run and exercise. While dog walkers use Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park to exercise their dogs, dogs are not permitted on the playing fields. We do have issues controlling where dogs are permitted and getting dog owners to clean up after their dogs. Currently, there are 890 registered dogs in Long Hill Township.

Although we do provide Stirling Lake for aquatic recreation and swimming, there are still other residents who request a swimming pool. Many residents go outside of Long Hill Township to join community pools in neighboring towns because they do not like swimming in a lake. Having a pool as an alternative to Stirling Lake for swimming in Long Hill should be considered in the future.

An additional multi-age playground should also be considered. With more than 25% of our population under the age of 18, we want to make sure we are providing ample opportunities for our youth to stay active. Increased emphasis on child health and childhood obesity issues are an important consideration for us in future planning.

The mission of the Long Hill Parks and Recreation Department is to provide the community with safe and welcoming parks and recreation facilities while offering affordable and diverse programs and services for all members of the community which promote healthy lifestyles, good sportsmanship, encourage community involvement, and foster environmental stewardship.

The following citizens are appreciated for their efforts in preparing this report:

**Recreation Advisory Committee Members**

<b>Tracy Aroneo, Chair</b>
<b>Beth Smargiassi, Vice-Chair</b>
<b>Elise Moholkar, Secretary</b>
<b>Melissa Marszalek</b>
<b>Steve Kesselmeyer</b>
<b>Nancy Mink</b>
<b>Laura Wood</b>
<b>John McCarthy</b>

<b>Township Committee</b>
<b>Guy Piserchia, Mayor</b>
<b>Brendan Rae, Deputy Mayor</b>
<b>Cornel Schuler, Liaison to the Rec. Adv. Comm.</b>
<b>Bruce Meringolo</b>
<b>Guy Roshto</b>

<b>Parks and Recreation Department Director</b>
<b>Lisa Scanlon</b>