#18 TOA - GROFF PARK MODERNIZATION PHASE II --RE-- $500,000

Community Preservation Act Committee- Proposal Request Form for FY 2018

Project Title: ____Groff Park Modernization—Phase 2_____

CPA funding category: Check all that apply

	Community Housing
	Open Space
	Historic Preservation
X	Recreation

Amount of CPA Funds Requested:
$___$500,000.00_____

Submitting Entity: _____Town of Amherst_____

Contact Person: _____Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager_____

Phone: _____413-259-3045_____

Email: _____malloyn@amherstma.gov_____

Please complete this form in its entirety and include the following in your proposal.

Overview of Proposal: Please describe your project and your feasibility analysis.

The Town applied unsuccessfully for a PARC grant to rehabilitate Groff Park with a new spray park, pavilion, playground and accessibility improvements. This proposal seeks funding to complete the restoration as one construction project. The funding would be directed toward the playground and pavilion and general amenities.

Describe how your request meets the CPA criteria:

1. Description of funding needed, including:

a. Documentation of cost estimates, budget

b. Other sources of funding, e.g., grants, self-funding, fund-raising

c. Timeline on how CPA funds would be spent, including over multiple years

The Town worked with Berkshire Design Group to develop preliminary plans and cost estimates to construct a new spray park (replacing the wading pool), playground, pavilion, rain garden and accessible pathways, as well as additional amenities and features. The design envisions a fully accessible park that meets growing demand in the community for various recreational opportunities for families, children and young teens, older citizens and those with mobility impairments.

The estimated cost for the project is $1,050,000. $550,000 has been previously recommended by the CPA Committee and approved by Town Meeting. This request is for the balance of the project cost.

Town staff have discussed ways to reduce costs. These include using in-kind labor for some of the site preparation and demolition, electrical work and plumbing. Town-owned shade trees will also be planted to reduce this cost. Staff is also researching the design of spray parks that may be completed by the supply company and not the architect.

The project would take 1 ½ years from design through construction. Design and construction would begin in 2017 and be completed during the construction season in 2018.

A more detailed budget is:

- Design fee:	$50,000
- Site preparation:	$15-20,000
- Spray park and associated amenities (seating, trash receptacles):	$450-500,000
- Playground	$350-400,000
- New Pavilion	$80,000
- Accessible walkway:	$10-15,000

2. **Urgency of the Project, if any.**

The existing conditions of the wading pool, playground and pavilion are poor and continue to deteriorate (see attached existing conditions images and site assessment report). The wading pool was closed much of last year, while the playground, installed nearly 20 years ago, also needs new equipment and surface to make it accessible and safe for users. The playground area is bounded by 6"x6" timber that restricts access and is also rotting. The wooden retaining wall on two sides of the playground is failing. The two significant play elements, each for a different age group (2-6 years and 6 plus) are primarily wooden structures that are rotting and need constant maintenance to keep users from getting hurt. See the existing conditions assessment for evidence of this deterioration.

3. Estimated timeline from receipt of funds to Project completion.

With funds previously appropriated by Town Meeting, the design for the park will be completed in 2017 and construction started in summer/fall 2017. The goal would be to complete construction in 2018 before school gets out for the summer.

4. Acquisition or preservation of threatened resources.

Groff Park is one of the most widely used recreation areas in Town, serving much of Amherst and nearby communities. The park offers formal recreation fields, concession area with bathrooms, hiking trails, open space for passive recreation, wading pool, playground, and picnic areas with grills. The park is used year round for organized activities as well as passive recreation.

The demand and use of the park, combined with the age of some amenities, places pressure on the Town to maintain its safety and functionality. Put frankly, areas and elements of the park are reaching their useful life and need replacement.

5. Population(s) to be served by the Project.

All Amherst, particularly residents of South Amherst and East Hadley Road. Within one mile of Groff Park are environmental justice populations that would benefit greatly from improved facilities (see attached map). The project will make the spray park, playground and new pavilion fully accessible to serve diverse population and range of users.

The following is an list of estimated users of Groff Park

Spring Programs	
Flag Football	440
Adult Softball	1800
Summer Programs	Daily Visits Per Season
Adult Softball	4,300
Ultimate	1,200
General Day Camps	960
Fall Programs	
Ultimate	500
Football	3,360

Wader (Summer)
Children 2,500-3,000 est.

Pavilion Rentals, April thru November
Rented to: 56 groups for a total of 2,000 - 2,500 est.
Sample of Renters:
Individuals for Family Gatherings and Birthday Parties
UMass Departments

Public Policy Dept	Graduate History Dept
Microbiology Dept	Integrative Learning Dept
Education Dept	Chinese Studies Dept

Schools

ARMS	Montessori
Wildwood	

Community Groups and Non-Profit Organizations

Big Brothers Big Sisters	Community Action
Boy Scouts	Community Emergency Response Team
Center for New Americans	Jewish Community Center

Notes:

* Sports and Camps utilize the pavilion for shelter, lunches, playground, and programs.
* Winter usage includes residents who hike, walk dogs, picnic, use playground and snow shoe.
* Spring - Fall usage also includes residents who hike, walk dogs, use playground and picnic.
* Pavilion rental groups often use playground and wader.
* The park, pavilion, playground and wader are heavily used by residents of South Amherst.

6. How will the CPA investment in your property, facility or project be maintained over time?

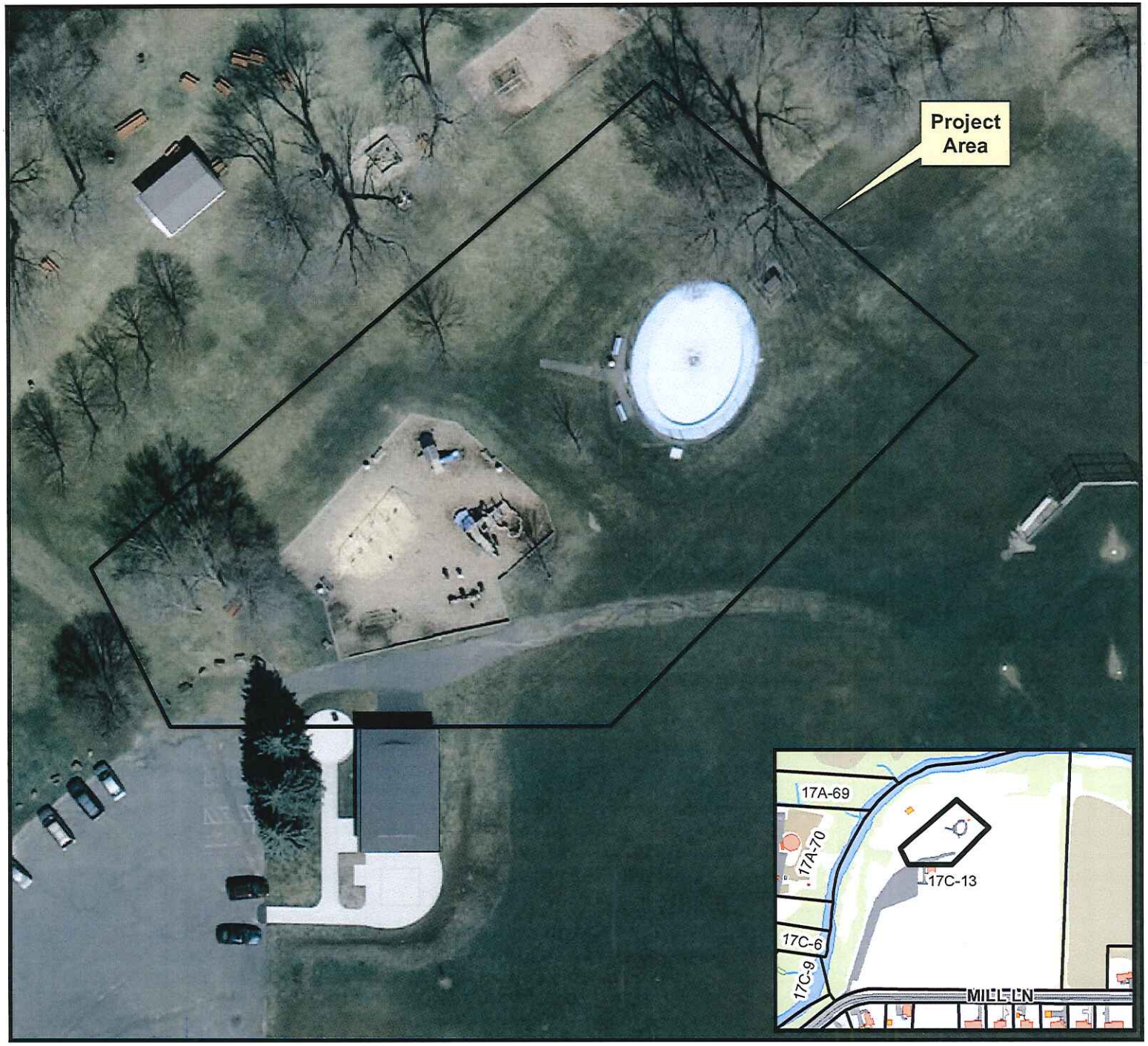
Groff Park will be maintained by the Town, through seasonal and annual maintenance, and through volunteer efforts coordinated by DPW, LSSE, and the programs that use the park. The Tree & Grounds Division of DPW is responsible for the maintenance and care of all the towns' parks, commons, athletic fields, cemeteries and public shade trees. An example of volunteerism is Mass Impact Day—each year in the fall, UMass students help with seasonal maintenance through this event. This past year they helped weed, spread mulch on the playground, paint and repair seating and tables.

7. Which relevant Town committees and/or commissions are you working with?

The Conservation Commission and LSSE Commission will be involved in the improvements to Groff Park. The project is a collaboration of Town staff from LSSE, DPW, Conservation and Planning,

8. Other information regarding the Project deemed necessary for CPAC

The design has responded to community concern about not being too heavy handed or making the park feel 'urban'. The pavilion will be a shade structure or similar structure that is less visually obtrusive than a bricks and mortar pavilion. The spray pad will not be enclosed with a fence (as the wading pool is now). Over six new shade trees will planted and a rain garden installed to catch runoff. The rain garden will also serve an environmental education component as signs and interpretive stations will be installed with information available on the water cycle, using the spray pad and gardens as a model for the larger water cycle. Given the location of the proposed spray pad to the Fort River, it will use a re-circulating system to minimize water use while any water discharged from the system would flow to the rain garden. Classes from Crocker Farm Elementary School, located less than a mile to the south, already uses the park as an outdoor classroom, which will be enhanced by the rain garden and interpretive information.



PARC Grant: Improvements to Groff Park

Town of Amherst

Project Area: Boundary Plan

0 25 50 Feet

1 inch = 50 feet

GROFF PARK—EXISTING CONDITIONS

OF AMHERST
ROFT PARK
DING POOL
10-4 SAT SUN

Amherst, DPW Tree & Grounds
December 1, 2015

Groff Park

Site Assessment

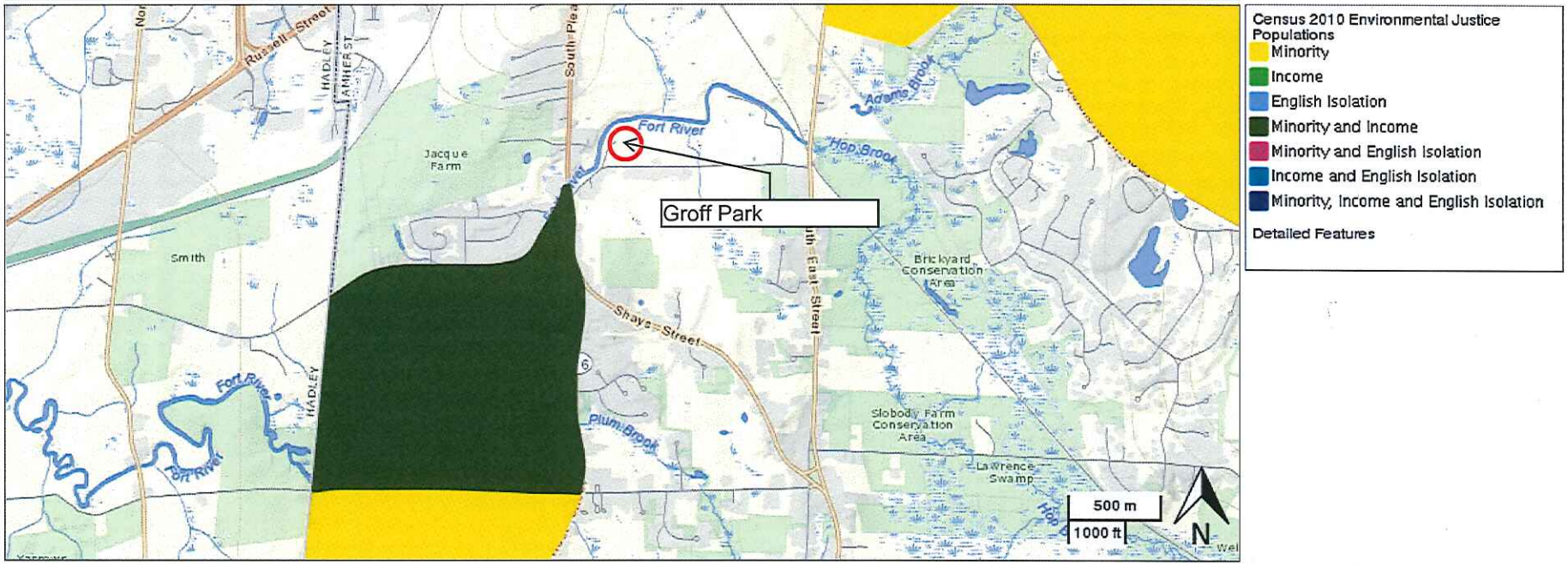
Upper playground was updated almost 20 years ago in 1997 and is showing it's age. The landscape timber wall and other wood components of the play structures have reached the end of their life cycle and are in need of replacement. With exception of the bathrooms built 2005 none of play structures or pavilion are handicapped accessible.

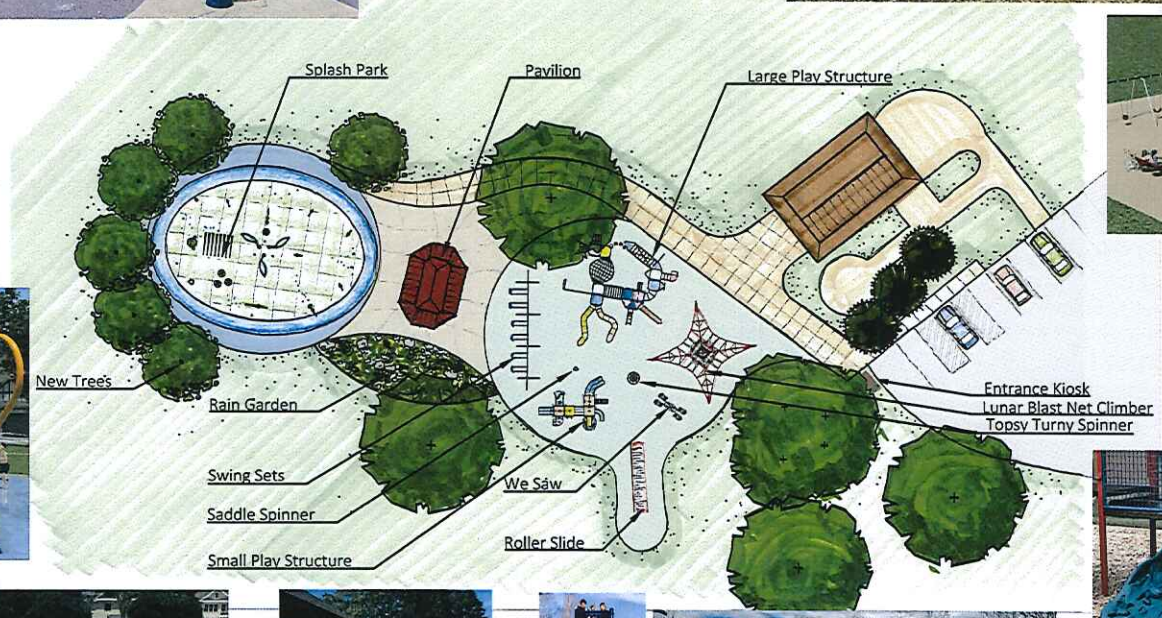
The wading pool built in the 1960s was originally designed as a drain way system and was converted to a standard pool filtration system to conserve water use. In 2014 a more thorough inspection to bring the pool up to code lead to the removal of the spray feature in the center of the pool, installation of a shower and some temporary patches to cover crumbling surface.

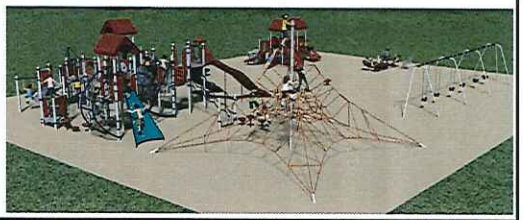
Going Forward

Updating the infrastructure; spray park, playground and building a new pavilion near the playground will make the park more accessible and improve visitor experience while reducing current maintenance challenges.

Groff Park-EJ Populations







The Berkshire Design Group, Inc.

Landscape Architecture
Civil Engineering
Planning
Land Surveying

GROFF PARK PLAYGROUND RENOVATION

Conceptual Master Plan

Amherst, MA

July 11, 2016

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