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Playground's design is shady

By Lisa Wakeland



This is the updated rendering for the Juilfs Park playground. It includes an additional shaded, sand play area and better sight lines for adults watching children.

The Anderson Township Park District is a little closer to a final design for the new Juilfs Park playground, which will be replaced this year.

Feedback from park users and township residents altered the design slightly from what was presented last summer, said Park District Executive Director Ken Kushner.

"We looked at the site a little more and this is potentially what will be there," Kushner told the Board of Park Commissioners during a recent presentation.

"The main thing was shade for participants who use the playground."

The silo that currently sits on top of the main play structure will be repurposed for a shaded shelter on the northwest end of the playground, he said.

The playground at Juilfs Park, 8249 Clough Pike, was built in the mid-1980s and has a sand surface. While children often love the sand, parents aren't as enthusiastic about that surface.

Two sand play areas will remain on the east and west sides of the playground, Kushner said but the remainder of the surface will be a rubber-material poured in place, similar to what is on the Beech Acres Park playground off Salem Road.

"It will all be pre-manufactured play equipment, with the exception of a couple facades, ... and will be as fully accessible as possible," Kushner said.

The play structure will have slides, climbing structures, monkey bars, swings and other features.

There is also a short wall that can be used as seating for kids or adults near the east end of the playground. The new plans will have better sight lines for parents or grandparents watching kids on the playground, Kushner said.

Park Commissioner Duffy Beischel said he likes the new design, but expressed concern that children could fall off the wall and get hurt if they're playing on it.

Kushner said they might need fencing to address that concern, but the seat wall helps with the various grade changes on the playground site.

Final engineering plans need to be finished before the installation, Kushner said.

The Park District set aside \$380,000 of taxpayers' money in this year's capital budget for the playground replacement.

The new playground will have roughly the same footprint as the current playground, but a slightly different orientation. It is located west of the main office.

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