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Preliminary Anderson Twp. park plans include fishing, camping, disc golf

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The Anderson Township Park District is one step closer to unveiling a development plan for Johnson Hills Park.

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Consultants from Human Nature Inc. presented a preliminary concept for the park, off Bridle and Little Dry Run roads, at last night's park commissioners meeting.

"We wanted to maintain the character of the site and build on the history of the park," design consultant Gary Wolnitzek said.

Johnson Hills Park could have a fishing lake, a tent-camping area, Frisbee golf area, shelters and other amenities that play up the park's natural features.

Hiking trails would be maintained throughout the 136-acre park.

"I like that we have a single plan to choose from," park commissioner Nadine Gelter said.

There was some debate about how much camping space to offer, the size and feasibility of a lake and whether there should be a vehicular access road through the park between Bridle Road and Crooked Stick Court.

The large barn that currently houses Bridle Run Stables would be replaced with a shelter that can hold around 240 people, but park commissioners have not decided if they will tear down the barn or renovate the space.

Other discussions included using the Moorman House, on the east side of the park, for a small horse stable operation.

Mark Bissinger, vice president of the board of park commissioners, suggested turning the home into a historic farm with a few animals and community vegetable gardens.

The home of Marian Johnson, whose husband is the namesake of the park, will stay on the property.

Duffy Beischel, president of the board of park commissioners, suggested using the home's first floor as a nature education center.

"We need to refine on our own before going to the public," Beischel said of the preliminary plans.

Human nature will revise the preliminary design concept and present a new plan at the park district's September meeting.

"We're still months away from a master plan," said Ken Kushner, park district executive director .

The park district plans to conduct public hearings and open houses for the preliminary Johnson Hills Park plans later this year.

Additional Facts

Next meeting

* The Board of Park Commissioners will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 10.

* Meetings are conducted in the park district offices in Juilfs Park, 8249 Clough Pike.

* Call 474-0003 to confirm.
