

The **Board of Finance** held a Public Hearing on Thursday, February 25, 2010 in the Lecture Hall of the Newtown High School, 12 Berkshire Road, Sandy Hook. John Kortze called the hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: John Kortze, James Gaston, Marty Gersten, Joseph Kearney, Harry Waterbury and Michael Portnoy.

ALSO PRESENT: Approximately 50 members of the public and no press.

Erin Heneghan, 56 Appleblossom Lane spoke in support of the skate park saying the skaters are dedicated, talented athletes who have no safe, legal place to skate in town to go.

Tim Ciavara, 111 Head of Meadow Road said the skaters don't go looking for trouble but have a bad reputation. He said they needed a legal place to go.

Kyle Robertson, 56 Appleblossom Lane said other sports have their own fields, courts and facilities but skateboarders don't have a place to go. It is a growing sport.

Adam Robertson, 56 Appleblossom Lane would like to see a skate park in town because there are a lot of skateboarders and no place to go in town. They feel left out without a place to practice.

Dan Toby, 69 Alberts Hill Road, Sandy Hook said skaters like to skate together. Years ago skaters did drugs but today skaters don't do drugs. Store owners don't like to see a group of teenagers skating.

Michael Schlesinger, 19 Saw Mill Ridge Road said it is unfair that other sports have courts and fields and skaters have to go in the street. Skaters don't want to get in trouble. A skate park is needed locally.

Deborra Zukowski, 4 Cornfield Ridge Road said high school is crucial. When her daughter was in school the system was very good for the very smart but there weren't enough seats for the average students. We now have the space and need the teachers. Ms. Zukowski requested that education be emphasized.

Kinga Walsh, 21 Horseshoe Ridge Road doesn't think Newtown is perceived as a place to move to for one of the best school systems. The high school is on probation and the schools are literally falling apart, class sizes are larger than the states average. She applauded the teachers. How will Newtown reach goals without financial backing, how can students learn in a dangerous and unhealthy environment, how can teachers provide high level of education when stripped to the bone? She suggested a stop to short sighted planning. We will have to pay to reopen a mothballed school and an HVAC system will have to be put in then, how is that saving money? Another suggestion is to redistrict the student population to allow for better balance and to maintain lower class sizes giving the students the best opportunity to learn. The Town and school system overlaps need to be examined. Private funding should be considered. The town needs more of a tax base. We are in a crisis situation with many buildings in disrepair. Maintaining a 10% debt service cap and working toward a goal of decreasing it to 9% may be a good short term goal but putting of the inevitable is only creating larger costs down the road. Streamline communication of the budget process and town decisions. Add questions to the ballot as to why a budget passed or didn't pass.

Robin Fitzgerald, 24 Old Farm Hill Road said the board should stop treating education as a commodity. Taxpayers feel unheard and vote yes for a budget they don't want because they are fearful it will get worse. It's irresponsible to talk about dollars in

Rec'd. for Record 2.26.2010
Town Clerk of Newtown 2:50pm
Debbie A. Aurelia

savings until you know what they will be and how they will be spent. There is a fear of children being left behind without having a quality education. She quoted articles and studies found on the internet relative to education and crime saying that quality education is one of the most effective forms of crime prevention. Also, quality after school programs is one component proven to keep kids from becoming criminals. A relationship has been found between unsupervised care afterschool and susceptibility to cigarette, alcohol and marijuana use, depressed mood, risk taking and lower academic grades. A recent study found youth that do not spend time in after school activities are 37% more likely to become teen parents. She implored the Board to send the education budget to the Legislative Council without being cut.

Mark Mockovak, 3 Nelson Lane hopes, as a parent, the Board of Finance doesn't touch the Board of Education budget. If they are asking for the money than the money is needed. He asked the board how often they go to the schools saying he hopes they spend some time in the schools in order to make decisions.

Julie Luby, 15 Fox Run Road South observed the Board of Education labor over every line of the budget, removing anything that was non-essential to the school system.

They've sent a bare bones budget. She asked the board to send the budget along as is.

Felicia Delgiudice, 2 Leopard Drive, Sandy Hook supports the school budget and is unsure how there is talk of cutting the school budget when, at the same time, there is conversation about extending kindergarten to a full day.

Keith Alexander, 8 Fawnwood Road, Sandy Hook referenced the Newtown Bee article that used the marriage metaphor. He said it isn't so much asking a husband or wife to buy something less but more like asking your kids to go out and work to buy a pair of shoes if you take money from the education budget. He supports the Board of Education budget.

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 7:37pm

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

The Board of Finance adjourned the Public Hearing at 7:37 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Susan Marcinek, Clerk

Att. A: Newtown Skate Park handout

Newtown Skate Park

- **Mission Statement:** Designed to make a difference in the life of each child, in the youth of today by offering educational and recreational opportunities to promote self esteem, respect for others, social responsibilities, and develop leadership skills in a safe environment.
- **Vision Statement:** To Provide a safe facility open to the entire community, while helping develop self image, enthusiastic attitude, greater self awareness, and constructive peer interaction.

Support our Kids!!!



Did you know?

- Currently there are 2,858 registered skate parks in the U.S.
 - There are 16 million Skateboarders in the U.S.
 - Skateboarders are in your community! (Skateboarding is a multi-million dollar industry.)
 - Sports are healthy for kids! 1 out of 8 American kids suffer from obesity. Building confidence, Skateboarders will happily spend hours at their sport.
 - Countless studies show, kids who participate in sports are less likely to use drugs---it is wrong to treat these kids as criminals and trespassers because we can't provide them with a safe place to practice their sport.
- WE ARE SENDING THE WRONG MESSAGE TO THE TEENS OF OUR COMMUNITY.**
- Studies show skate parks have no more noise than the ambient surrounding noises that exist in other types of parks-Most notable study is the Portland, Oregon's Park and Recreation Department-their 10,000-square foot skate park emitted less constant noise than light automobile traffic.
 - Keep Your Eyes Open for Skateboarding coming in the 2010 Olympics.
 - ESPN Summer & Winter X Games started in 1995!

Statistics

Sport Percentage of Injury Comparison

- Ice Hockey 3.60%
- Football 2.78%
- Basketball 2.57%
- Soccer 1.42%
- Baseball 1.26%
- Volleyball .54%

Skateboarding .49%

Sources: BMX Online, Action Sports Foundation, The Skate Park Association of the United States (SPAUSA), International Association of Skateboard Companies (IASC), Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Superstudy of Sports Participation, Sports Participation in America, 2007 Report

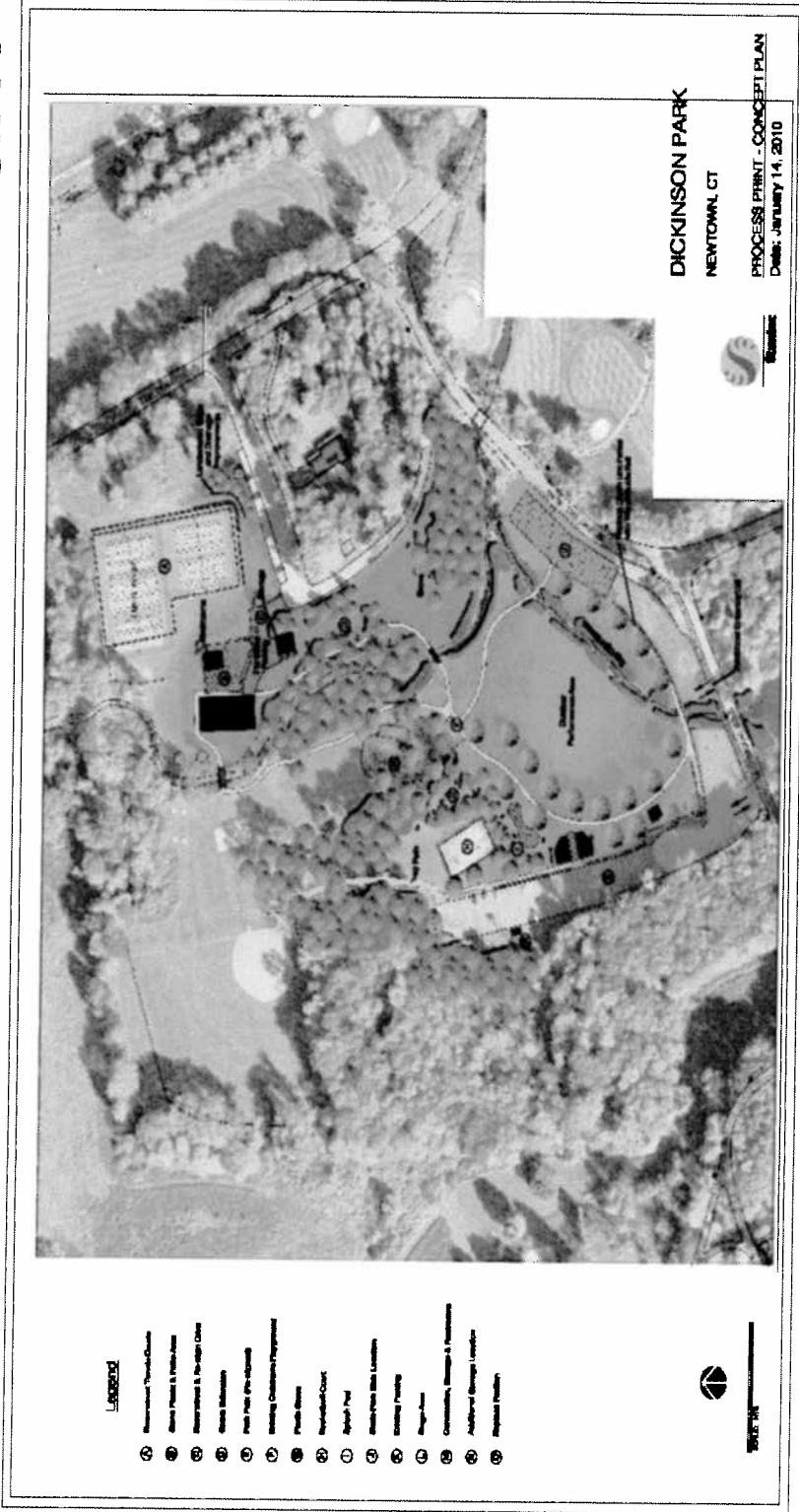
Almost all skateboarding accidents happen on the streets, not in parks, with a high percentage involving motor vehicles.

Skate parks with smooth riding surfaces and protective gear requirements have a very low injury rate. Irregular riding surfaces account for over 50% of all injuries to skateboarders.

“You are all set from an insurance point of view. The Insurance Company for the Town (CIRMA) may inspect the park after it is completed, but otherwise, there are no insurance issues at this time.”

Best Wishes Arnold Finaldi, CPCU Rose & Kiernan Insurance

Location: Dickinson Town Park



“The Land Use Agency would need engineered drawings and location of the facility placed on a survey for a signed approval. This would include lighting, parking, any built structures and the utilities associated with the skate park. However, I can endorse this park in the location we discussed last week. I believe the site has good potential and is well suited for this use.”

Rob Sibley
 Deputy Director of Planning and Land Use.

Equipment

- ARC- American Ramp Company
- 20 Years Manufacturing experience
- Located in Joplin, MO
- Concrete base

SOLO

MODULAR CONCRETE

Our Solo modular system could very well be the best of both worlds. Modular design that allows for reconfiguration and cost savings while at the same time using a concrete riding surface with a dense feel and great traction. The years of worry free maintenance combined with the desired concrete riding surface, precast precision, and incredible concrete strength make this a hands down winner for many communities.

- 15-YEAR WARRANTY
- PRECAST PRECISION

SOLO^{ES}

SOLID CONCRETE RIDING SURFACE

PRECAST PRECISION

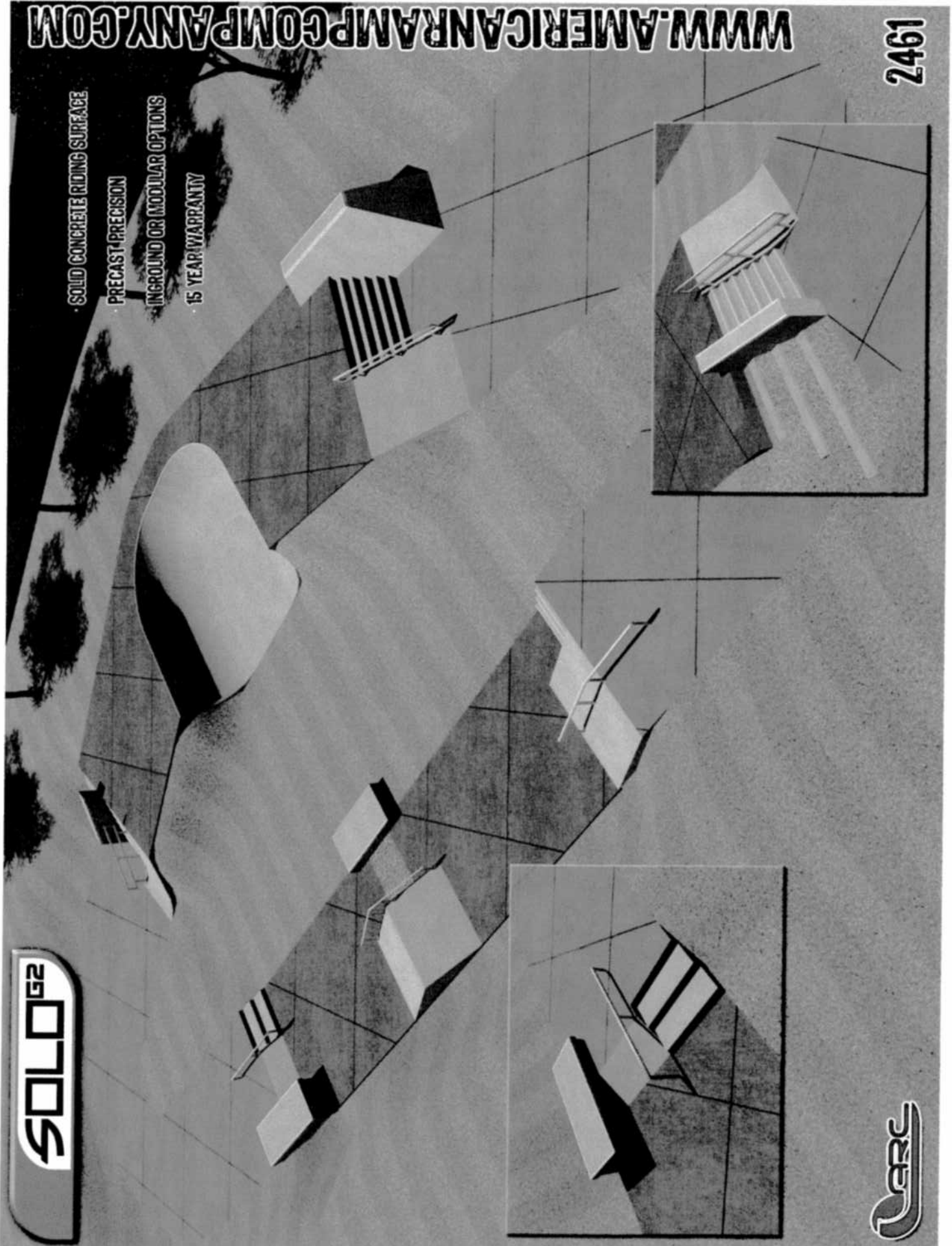
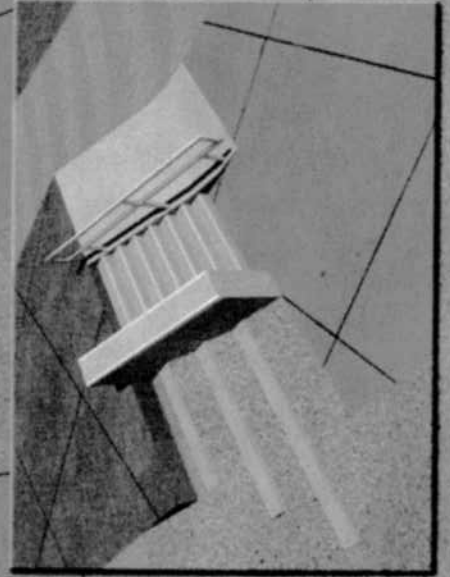
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DRAWN BY JD Fields
DATE 2/17/10

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REP. AGENCY

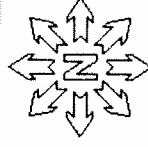
American Ramp Company

REP. NAME

Mark Leone

REP. PHONE

(858) 829-9264



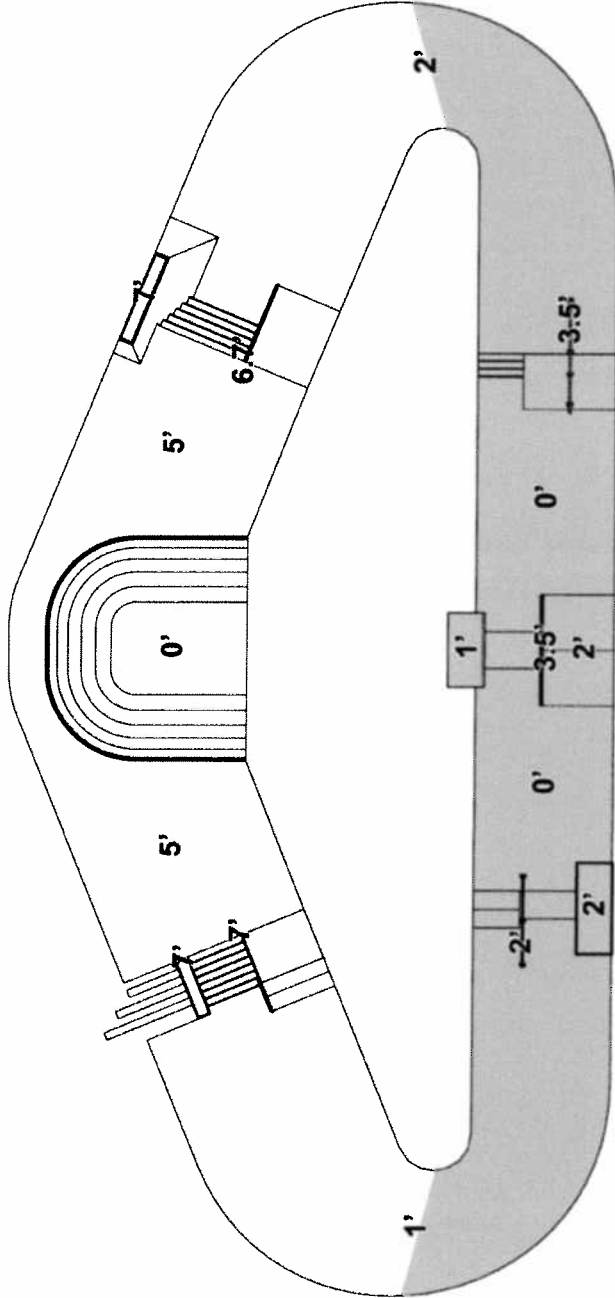
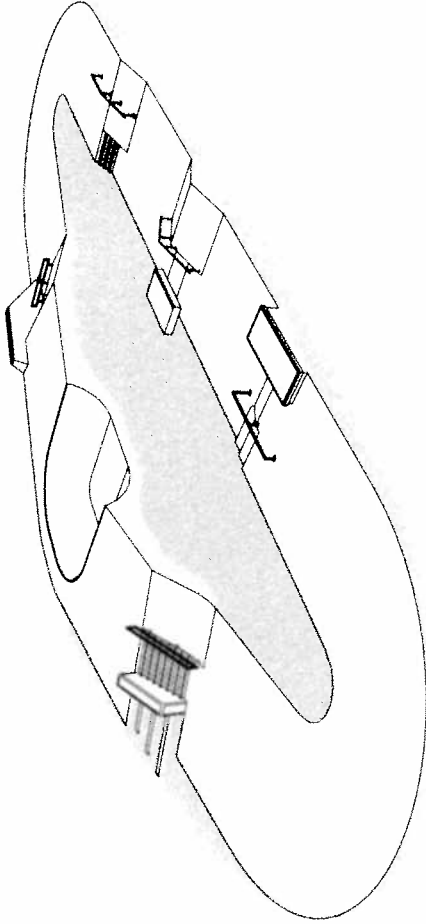
CUSTOMER APPROVAL DATE

LOCATION

Newtown, CT

DESIGN NO.

2146



█ = Alternate Bid

Method of Operation

Park Rules To Be Posted On Site

1. Skate park is for skateboarding, rollerblading, and biking only. All other uses prohibited
2. Spectators should watch from outside the perimeter of skate park area for safety.
3. No Minimum Age is required. However, anyone under the age of 10 **MUST** be supervised by an adult.
4. Proper use of safety equipment (helmets, knee pads, elbow pads, is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED!** In accordance with the State of CT helmet laws, it is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that children under the age of 16 wear a helmet while riding in the park.
5. Enter at your own risk. Know your abilities and skate within them. Exercise common sense and general courtesy to other riders.
6. Fighting, profanity, loud music or rude, disruptive behavior will result in ejection from the park.
7. Tagging or graffiti is a means of defacing Town Property, and is strictly prohibited. Violators will be prosecuted.
8. Drugs, alcohol, tobacco products and glass containers are strictly prohibited. Violators will be prosecuted.
9. Use of this park is at your own risk? All users assume all risk of injury. The Town of Newtown and its agents are not responsible for injuries of any type.
10. Park hours are 8:00am until 8:00pm

LAST BUT NOT LEAST HAVE FUN

Possible Future Operation of this park may be run by an association made up of community youth and adult volunteers! The association will monitor the usage of the park and implement under the direction of the Parks and Recreation Commission changes when necessary.

Maintenance

- Vendor package includes maintenance schedule for safety inspections. Precast precast concrete features and concrete pad are basically maintenance free.
- Park Association Committee comprised of teens and adults to help Parks and Recreation maintain park cleanliness and monitoring.

Funding

- Donate to Skate has already raised \$18,000
- Parks and Recreation commits \$50,000
- \$25,000 being requested in the 2010-2011 municipal budget
- Continued fundraising by Donate to Skate: also seeking grants, corporate & company donations
- Any in house work by Town and volunteers would help cut the total cost of \$100,000

Athletic Skill and Ability



Our Town could create the next Tony Hawk! Skate parks support a diverse range of activities. Skate parks are often a central place to make life long friendships, practice, and build confidence! Health and Physical activity is an important social value.



Thank you for your support!

- **“We don’t want to sound too sappy, but we are convinced that when teenagers, parents, police, politicians, business leaders and civic groups all get together and push the same wheel, and that wheel actually turns, the effort alone makes the world a slightly better place.” Tony Hawk**

