

## **Abiqua Heights Open Space Master Plan**

1/4/05, JGJ

### **Master Plan Description:**

The overall intent of this plan is to preserve the pastoral, green, open characteristics of the site while introducing opportunities for Abiqua Heights residents to use the site year-round. This plan also introduces scenic improvements such as two recirculating "springs" which flow into the existing pond. There are also environmental components such as native plantings along the pond shore, and a "habitat island" in the pond to give ducks or turtles refuge from cats and dogs. All of the existing trees are preserved in this plan.

A specific description of the plan elements follows:

**Lawn:** Lawn on both the open area north of the pond and on the treeless slope is to be top-dressed and smoothed out for a better footing. The lawn is to be irrigated in the designated "lawn play area" so it can withstand more intensive use and have a pleasing appearance year round.

**Paths:** Crushed granite paths provide pedestrian connectivity from five neighborhood access points and throughout the open space and still maintain the "soft" nature of the site.

**Shelter Area:** "Abiqua Lodge" is a Cascadian style (heavy timbers, rough local stone) 24' x 28' shelter placed on the pond edge, open on all sides with a large stone fireplace 1 barbeque on the south end. The shelter is situated looking out over the length of the pond, a view which makes the pond appear its largest, and also provides a picturesque view of the shelter from the open space. Under the covered area is a concrete floor and picnic tables, plus the stone fireplace. A wooden deck on the pond side allows people to gather right to the pond edge. The shelter is appropriate for organized functions as well as a place for individuals to relax out of the rain or sun.

**Play Fort:** The other proposed structure is the kid's Play Fort, located behind the shelter. This climbing / play structure is intended to match the style of the shelter and is located close enough to the shelter to allow parents to monitor their children's play.

**Courts / Fields:** There are two defined "sport" areas in this plan. A basketball court is proposed near the Play Fort with one hoop and concrete surfacing slightly larger than the 3-point line. There is also a horseshoe pit located north of the pond. A small (8' wide) backstop for softball is proposed in the lawn play area, but otherwise the lawn area is intended for undefined play, not specific sportfield layout. The sloped lawn on the south hill of the site is intentionally left as is (aside from some top dressing and reseeding) as an uncluttered visual resource and a play hill for sledding, etc.

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**Pond:** The pond edge has a sand edge, lawn edge and native planting edge. The sand edge is in the highest use area; sand has great drainage properties (helpful in dealing with water from the nearby springs) and can take intense foot traffic much better than lawn. The lawn edge provides an appealing interface of lawn and water in keeping with the pastoral nature of the site. Since runoff from the lawn directly into the pond would compound the algae problem a small interception swale at the water's edge will be necessary to catch runoff and direct it away from the pond. A large part of the pond edge is planted with native and exotic plantings to provide visual interest, low maintenance and wildlife habitat.

Springs: A recirculating water feature pumps water to a "spring" where it bubbles from the ground and flows along the edge of the shelter. The spring and stream also provide aeration to help control algae growth. A smaller "spring" on the west end of the pond contributes to the aeration and keeps floating debris from continually gathering in one area of the pond ..

Existing Trees: All of the existing trees are to be preserved\*. No irrigation is proposed under the existing trees since they have fared well without up until now. Oaks are especially sensitive to adding irrigation after establishment. The plan proposes planting of young douglas fir and Oregon oak among the existing trees to establish a succession of trees.

\* Since many of the trees are large and fairly mature, and with the possibility of increased use with these improvements, an assessment of the existing trees by a certified arborist, with comment on public safety, is recommended.

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