



CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
210 STATE ST. CHARLEVOIX, MICH. 49720

Office of Planning and Zoning
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MEMORANDUM

TO: General Public

DATE: August 2, 2010

SUBJECT: Proposed Disc Golf Course at Mt. McSauba

**SEEKING PUBLIC COMMENT ON DISC GOLF AT MT.
MCSAUBA RECREATION AREA**

This memorandum concerns a proposed disc golf course at Mt. McSauba. For years, disc golf has been played on Mt. McSauba, first on a formal course and later on informal, user-created courses marked by duct tape around tree trunks. On May 20, 2010, the Charlevoix City Council met and discussed an accident in which a hiker had been hit near the eye with a golf disc. At that meeting, Council determined that something would have to be done to accommodate disc golf at Mt. McSauba. Prohibiting disc golf outright would be problematic, they discussed, as it is popular enough in the community that a ban would produce significant enforcement issues and only increase pressure for an acceptable location for a disc golf course. Further, such a ban would go against the City's commitment to increase community recreation opportunities. Council directed City staff to explore options on how to utilize the McSauba space in a way that would allow disc golf to be compatible with the area's other uses (hiking trails, day camp, etc.). In the interim, the City Manager took preventative measures to prevent additional accidents, directing City staff to temporarily place signs around McSauba indicating that disc golf is not an appropriate use on the hiking trails.

In late-June, City staff along with several members of the disc golf community

surveyed the McSauba area, taking photographs and sketching possible hole locations. From this research, the City created a map of a possible disc golf course. Staff used the old formal and more recent informal courses as a guide, taking advantage of the fact that many of these holes, by virtue of their long-time use, have already been tried and tested.

In the creation of the map, one of the main points of discussion was whether to create a nine- or eighteen-hole course. Staff opinion is that because the area has so many other uses, a disc golf course would have to be limited to nine holes in order to decrease conflicts with those uses. Further, staff recognized the importance of ensuring that the course be created in a way that makes it compatible with the natural environment, which creates limitations for use in and of itself. The topography and dense forests create issues with hole placement and movement of players from one hole to another. Additionally, the City wanted to minimize the likelihood that the course would negatively impact natural vegetation, sensitive hillsides, and wildlife habitats. With these reasons in mind, City staff designed the currently proposed nine-hole course.

Staff also researched the possibility of extending an 18 hole course into the North Point Preserve property immediately north of Mt. McSauba. This property is technically owned by Charlevoix Township and was purchased in part through a DNRE trust fund grant. The plan for North Point was to manage it as a natural area. Many people in the community contributed toward the local share of the funding for the successful trust fund grant. A major proponent and contributor of this project was the Little Traverse Land Conservancy, whose position is that disc golf is an incompatible use with the goals established for the preserve. Because of this position City Staff have not pursued any discussions with the township about using any portion of the North Point Preserve for disc golf.

The proposed disc golf course map can be viewed at www.cityofcharlevoix.org. Written comments related to the development of the course can be submitted to the City of Charlevoix Office of Planning and Zoning, Attn: Mike Spencer, 210 State St., Charlevoix, MI 49720. Comments may also be e-mailed to [mspencer@cityofcharlevoix.org](mailto:m Spencer@cityofcharlevoix.org).

****PLEASE SUBMIT ALL COMMENTS BY SEPTEMBER 3, 2010 by 5PM****