

Good graffiti okay at Amity's Skateboard Park

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For Journal Register News Service

The Amity Township Board of Supervisors said Aug. 17 they are okay with good graffiti on the graffiti wall at the Skateboard Park, Lake Drive, and that there isn't a problem at the site.

Township Manager Charles E. Lyon told the board that a resident has asked him if he is "okay with it" and the occasional slurs and gang symbols that are painted on it.

Lyon said the wall does sometimes contain slurs and gang symbols but they are immediately painted over by township road crew members.

He said all other graffiti is left on the wall.

"I didn't see anything offensive on it [the wall] at all," said Supervisor Paul R. Weller. "If the kids start painting equipment, then shut the park down."

"We have been very fortunate with our skateboard park," said Supervisor Terry L. Jones. "I don't feel our teens have abused it and feel it's working. I had to walk to see the board and there isn't a problem."

The park was constructed in 2005 following a petition with 350 local signatures and funds raised by the Skateboard Park Committee.

Over the years township police said there have been reports of vandalism and drug and alcohol use at the park by older teens who don't use the park for its intended purpose.

Amity Township Police Chief Kent A. Shuebrook told the Amity Township Crime Watch in November 2009 that police had 15 reports of violence and two drug offense arrests in the area of the Skateboard Park within that last year.

"It doesn't mean it had anything to do with teenagers," said Shuebrook at that meeting. "Let's not blame all the kids that hang out there. Let's not create a mountain out of a molehill that the park is in jeopardy of being closed. There are probably more drugs at the Daniel Boone Middle School than at the Skateboard Park in the whole year."

Township Police and Crime Watch members said at that meeting that they wanted the Skateboard Park to remain open and be improved with new funds.

Former Skateboard Park Committee Chairman Brent S. Frampton, Douglassville, said he initiated the idea of the park and started the committee but other committee members have resigned and he

couldn't do it alone.

"The kids are using the park, but if it isn't maintained, the equipment won't be safe to use," said Frampton. "Increase taxes \$200 a year? I don't think so. Maybe an annual competition with prizes? We need more parents to be involved."

He said his survey on www.amityskatepark.home.stead.com indicated that 37 percent (238) of the kids wanted a mini half pipe installed. Other equipment on the survey were a pyramid, bench, stairs, launch ramp, bank, and spine that together received 397 votes.

Frampton said a Pottstown skateboard store was interested in sponsoring annual competitions to raise funds.

"Funding could also get improved lighting and a security camera," said Frampton. "The annual competition could be a fun, family time and it could be a real valuable area to do things with the playground there."