

CHPB Proposal for Shared Use of Two Ephesus Tennis Courts

3/25/2022

Background

Demand for pickleball continues to rapidly grow in Chapel Hill as well as the rest of the country. Chapel Hill has over 1500 players who have joined the Chapel Hill Pickleball email listserv. On average about 150 people play every day at the Ephesus Pickleball courts. The courts are in use all day long from the early morning (6:30AM in the summer) until the lights go off. During most of the day, there are many players waiting to play (often more players waiting to play (>24) than playing on the six courts (24 at a time).

Chapel Hill Pickleball (CHPB) has been working with P&R to develop more public pickleball courts in addition to Ephesus Park, which are the only dedicated pickleball courts in Chapel Hill. Two years ago, P&R helped support our plan for shared use of the roller hockey rink in Southern Community Park for pickleball. There are now 5 pickleball courts lined on the hockey rink where temporary nets are set up. This has been a very successful program with pickleball times available almost every day of the week now. During SCP pickleball hours, the courts are full with players waiting every day.

At this time, P&R has not been able to identify other pickleball locations that are feasible now, or in the near future. The tennis courts at Ephesus park are under-utilized, with the majority of the courts being empty for most of the day and evening times.

Proposal

We propose shared use of 2 of the 4 tennis courts at Ephesus Park. This is a common solution employed in many communities where demand for pickleball courts vastly outstrips the number of available courts. It is often an interim solution until additional pickleball courts can be constructed. CHPB views this as a temporary solution, with the idea that shared use with pickleball of the underutilized tennis courts can help accommodate the demand for pickleball courts and satisfy the needs of the expanding group of players.

We recognize that tennis players will rightly have concerns about giving up time on some of the tennis courts. We provide this proposal as a draft starting point, so that both tennis and pickleball communities can find a way to share the courts in ways that benefit both communities. To this end, pickleball is willing to fund improvements (fixing cracks, and potentially resurfacing) the tennis courts to bring them into better condition for all players. This includes tennis courts 1 & 2 which would still be reserved solely for tennis use in this proposal.

The main goal of this proposal is to provide access to more pickleball court time to facilitate the many players wishing to play pickleball in Chapel Hill. Additionally, though, it would allow for the resumption of pickleball leagues and tournaments at Ephesus. These activities both provide significant revenue to P&R (potentially \$85K annually, see table below), with multiple clinics, leagues and tournaments possible every year.

Shared Use

This is a draft proposal to give everyone something to react to. This idea has been used successfully nationwide. It has been successful at the Southern Community Park roller hockey rink with multiple sports. It has been very successful at Bethesda Park in Durham where tennis courts are shared half-time with pickleball. The most important factor was to clearly delineate defined hours where each sport had priority. This means if the time is reserved for tennis, if there are pickleball players on the court, they have to yield to tennis players immediately.

Pickleball lines would be added to the tennis courts as unobtrusively as possible, while meeting pickleball standards. Portable nets for pickleball would be used. They would be set up and taken down by pickleball players. Costs for the nets, adding pickleball lines, as well as fixing the playing surface on ALL courts would be funded by pickleball.

Below is a draft schedule for sharing the court time. We propose sharing of courts 3 and 4 since they are in worse condition than courts 1 & 2, and because the pickleball play would then be consolidated to one side of tennis play. We are happy to discuss and adjust the schedule at the outset, and in future as tennis and pickleball needs change.

Proposal Sharing Schedule on Tennis Courts 3 & 4:

- Tennis Courts 1 & 2 are always available & dedicated for tennis.
- Tennis Courts 3 & 4 would be shared usage for tennis and pickleball play.
- Tennis Courts 3 & 4 would be lined for pickleball and use temporary nets.
- The following pilot schedule is recommended to accommodate the hours and days where the growing pickleball community has the most need for expanded play and additional courts:

	7AM	8AM	9AM	10AM	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM	10PM
Monday	TENNIS								PICKLEBALL							
Tuesday	TENNIS								PICKLEBALL							
Wednesday	PICKLEBALL								TENNIS							
Thursday	TENNIS								PICKLEBALL							
Friday	PICKLEBALL								TENNIS							
Saturday	PICKLEBALL								TENNIS							
Sunday	TENNIS								PICKLEBALL							

If the courts are not being used by the scheduled sport, they may be used for the non-scheduled sport & players. If a scheduled sport player shows up and wishes to play, the non-scheduled sport/player shall immediately, without question relinquish the court.

Budget

CHPB will pay for all the costs associated with the proposal, including purchasing nets, purchasing a storage box (if P&R does not have one available), and adding pickleball lines to the courts. They will also pay for fixing the cracks on all four tennis courts. They will also help support P&R running leagues and tournaments to generate revenue for the town.

Pickleball Revenue Impact (Conservative):

(Based on prior offerings with half the number of current players)

Event Type	# of Events	Participants	Cost per Ladder Participant	Per Event	Annual
Advanced Ladder	2	72	\$40.00	\$2,880.00	\$5,760.00
Intermediate Ladder	2	72	\$40.00	\$2,880.00	\$5,760.00
Morning Social Ladder	2	36	\$40.00	\$1,440.00	\$2880.00
Tournaments	3	125	\$35.00	\$12,500.00	\$13125.00
Clinics & Coaching*	6	16	\$35.00	\$560.00	\$3,360.00
Annual Parks and Rec Revenue Impact					\$30,885.00

Pickleball Revenue Impact Projection FULL SCHEDULE:

(Based on full schedule, current number of players, with P&R running events)

Event Type	# of Events	Participants	Cost per Ladder Participant	Per Ladder	Annual
Advanced Ladder	4	72	\$40.00	\$2,880.00	\$11,520.00
Intermediate Ladder	4	72	\$40.00	\$2,880.00	\$11,520.00
Morning Social Ladder	4	36	\$40.00	\$1,440.00	\$5,760.00
Tournaments	4	250	\$50.00	\$12,500.00	\$50,000.00
Clinics & Coaching*	12	16	\$35.00	\$560.00	\$6,720.00
Annual Parks and Rec Revenue Impact					\$85,520.00

