

Original Post to Oakland, NJ, You Know if You Grew Up in Oakland If... and Remembering Pleasureland Facebook Pages – 7/3/2013

Kevin Heffernan

I stand up and applaud the Oakland Mayor and Council for the acquisition of the former Pleasureland property and spectacular efforts of Mike Guadagnino for his leadership to transform the ruins of Pleasureland into a park in Oakland. However, I guess that some compliments come with a 'But' and this might not be an exception. My thought concerns the name of the hopefully new park, "Great Oak Park". Although it's a nice name, the park nonetheless would sit upon sacred historical Oakland soil, a place of the fondest memories for thousands and thousands over the years. So, here's a suggestion.....Why not simply name the new park Pleasureland Park? It would call it what it is, a park, while providing a historical recognition to what it was in the past. Any thoughts, comments or suggestions?

Net Results as of 7/4/2013

	<u>Like</u>	<u>Different Opinion</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Oakland, NJ	51	4	43
Remembering Pleasureland	7	1	9
You Know if You Grew Up..	<u>27</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15</u>
Totals	91	5	64
Percent	95%	5%	
Like Ratio	18:1		

Comment Detail

Harry Piekema Agree Kevin ,,,

Bill Metaxotos Pleasureland Park sounds about right being the neighborhood is pleasureland

Cindee Mullin Hurst it will always be Pleasureland Park to me there were great memory s there why change the Name

Cindee Mullin Hurst Lets try keeping some of the past . That place was a great time I think for a lot of us oldies

Kathy Westphal Errico Totally agree

Joe Moramarco Kevin it may be a good idea,but remember this encompasses both parks, Pleasureland & Muellers. It could be Pleasureland @ Great Oak Park . Most people who have lived or heard about Pleasureland, will always call it Pleasureland, so maybe a sign at the park entrance stating its original status would be a good Idea.

Kevin Heffernan OK...Why not call it Pleasureland & Mullers Park?

Cindee Mullin Hurst OK that sounds great Welcome to mullers & Pleasureland Park

Bob Morse The fixing of the damn in Pompton has made the Ramapo water front property for the most part in Oakland. During Sandy we lost 40+ homes off their foundation something that had never happened before in our history...and we now have some 50 some odd vacant homes on the south side. My only wish is that the Army Corp would have seen both sides of this and benefited both with balance...limit switches destroyed the south side of this town when common sense and the manual lowering of the dam prior to the storm would have saved every home in town. Way back when my mom was the secretary of the RMLCC in Oakland and my Dad and I would go down to Crystal Lake and lower the dam as soon as we got any reports of heavy rains. Such a simple thing to do and engineers made it so complicated it destroyed hundreds of people lives...I hope folks enjoy the new park...

Ruth Brock Agree cause we still call it Pleasureland

Rene' Meece Garvey I agree. Grew up there and would never call that land anything else.

Rick Mann Well the real bad flooding was due to the Suffern Dam breaking. The other towns past Oakland need to dredge and get the ACoE in there to do what they did for Oakland.

Debbie Sarcone **Joe Moramarco** - I like the sound of that. **Kevin Heffernan** - I believe they wanted to keep it (Great Oak) for the historical meaning from Native American history.

Cindee Mullin Hurst I have not been home in 33 years i have no idea of all the changes but people come first pleasureland has been sitting like that this long whats a few more years people need to come first I am very sorry to no this and my heart and prays will be with you all this makes no since a park before people

Cindee Mullin Hurst but i like my mullers pleasureland park i think of two thinks the water and the bar tho i was never old enough to go in i said when i turn 18 im going in there well i never got to go in there but i wont for get it

Bill Sisti I vote for Pleasureland Park, It lets people know what was there before and it has a sort of whimsical feel to it. Great Oak Park sounds a bit stuffy and not like a fun place to be. It also just flow off one tongue very smoothly.

Lisa Zocco Napolitano i hope you have success getting the name changed - of course it should be called Pleasureland!

Ryan Schwertfeger At the second town hall meeting about the proposed new park, Mike discussed some of the ideas floated for what the new park should be named and Pleasureland was one of the options. You can ask the Oakland TV committee for the recording of the town hall to see exactly what he said, but I believe Mike said something along the lines of "The era of Pleasureland represents a time that holds many fond memories for people but also reminds people of the tragic event that happened there", so to not constantly have people dwell on the shooting, they didn't want to name it Pleasureland

Cheryl Zeedyk Mizerak I totally agree with you Kevin. The whole idea is a park to remember a place everyone loved. A morbid mind will dwell on the shooting, but that was one bad event in a field of hundreds of good events. Those of us who were lucky enough to have been there knows what it really means.

Mike Guadagnino Thanks for the compliment. Ryan touches on some of it, but basically the property is 40 acres. Pleasureland is approximately only 1/3 of the entire property. We do plan

on keeping all the remnants that are still there including the foundations, floors, swings and the two pine trees. We also hope to have signs, painted in Pleasureland blue over each of the remnants identifying what they were as well as where they were from (Pleasureland). The name is always up for discussion, but it is named after the 250 year old Great White Oak Tree that exists on the property. We do hope to give the roads names such as Moramoraco Lane etc. There will be a lot of the PL history preserved as that is a big part of the process. We felt a new name means a new beginning for these ground that were once sacred native American land to the Pleasureland and Mueller's Park/FRG land. We need people with a sound knowledge of the history to get involved and help us out. Anyone interested in joining the effort please let me know. Enjoy your 4th!

Cheryl Zeedyk Mizerak I don't remember a 250 year old oak tree in Pleasureland. Wasn't that by the Academy in town? I lived in Pleasureland from 1950 to 1969but never heard of an old tree

Joe Moramarco Thanks Mike, have a Great 4th of July also. I hope more people come to the next meetings about the park, as we have many voices on FB.I did not see that many people at the last three meetings. Joe M.

Joe Moramarco The oak is on Mullers property, I did view it with the towm people on our walk through.

Cheryl Zeedyk Mizerak Thank you

Kevin Heffernan The Vox Populi overwhelmingly seems to want to name it Pleasureland Park or Pleasureland & Mullers Park. With all due respect to the Great White Oak tree and Native Americans, they have little or no bearing whatsoever with regard to the sentiment of the people expressed here, on the Pleasureland or or 'You know if you grew up in Oakland Facebook pages. Power to the People!

Mike Guadagnino **Kevin Heffernan** If you are around town at the rec field etc, grab me and say Hi.

Bill Metaxotos I still go with pleasureland park if there are streets then recognize the Indians and trees with street names and if they choose pleasureland name the main road mullers drive just a thought

Pete Emmons Even though I've been out of town for a while I agree, it should be called Pleasureland Park. But, asking this from 1400 miles away, I hear a lot of complaints about the taxes in town, yet now people want to build and maintain a 40 acre park. Not cheap, where does that money come from?

Harry Piekema Three guesses **Pete**

Pete Emmons First two don't count? Consider it rhetorical...

Kevin Heffernan Mike,
Please permit me to expand upon my initial thoughts for the post in addition to commenting upon related comments.

First, with regard to sentimentality towards Native Americans, the Dutch founders hated them. It's a documented fact and the Dutch fought and lost 2 wars against the Lenni Lenape Indians. And besides, half with a smile, no Native American ever strolled through Pleasureland. :)) Additionally, there haven't been any Indians in or around Oakland since 1758 when they were

shipped off to a reservation in the Pine Barrons. The reservation, ironically called Brotherton, was a very un-brotherly place.

Second, while many people are aware of Mullers and many remember it, everyone knows about Pleasureland. And thousands has very fond memories of it.

Third, the fact that Pleasureland comprises only 1/3 of the proposed park is, judgmentally, not a consideration as that entire area of town is simply known as Pleasureland - by all! Not many could tell you where Mullers was with precision.

Fourth, to avoid naming the park Pleasureland Park because of the tragedy there in 1984 having the potential to evoke bad memories may be a bit over the top. Yes, people remember it. But people remember far more the wonderful times, smells and events of Pleasureland and indeed treasure them. To have this as a reason to not name it Pleasureland Park is to also say that the bad guys won. Nope.

And finally, the proposed name, Pleasureland Park preserves an important aspect of Oakland history in a way that Great Oak Park, with all due respect, utterly fails to do. Further, the naming of paths and the keeping of foundations evocative of Pleasureland appears to be entirely too subtle.

To the extent that this posted question to name the proposed park Pleasureland Park has received such an overwhelming positive response, I truly think that the many strong voices here and on other Facebook pages ought to be heard. And I sincerely hope that you will listen to them.

Pete Emmons Kevin, just interjecting to set the record straight: The shootout occurred at FRG/Muller's, it never involved any part of Pleasureland except for victims who tore down the fence to get away from the gunfire. I was there, third cop on the scene. So that incident should have no bearing on naming the park Pleasureland, which I favor.

Bill Metaxotos I don't know why people keep getting the location of that shooting incident wrong it happened in Mullers and some people while running away ended up in Pleasureland a few also climbed over the fence at the bowling alley but no one ever says the shooting happened there

Kevin Heffernan Pete - I stand corrected. Thank you. But I do think that most everyone associates the shooting with Pleasureland. Just my opinion.

Bill Metaxotos ha Pete you beat me to it

Pete Emmons You're right Kevin, it's always associated with Pleasureland, that's why I attempted to set the record straight.

Bob Morse The shooting was at Muller's park guys...

Eddi Lyles I have been gone from Oakland for many, many years but it will always be Pleasureland to me. So many great memories for so many of not only present Oakland residents but former ones as well.

Bob Morse Muller's Park shootout[edit]

On August 4, 1985, a gun shootout occurred at the FRG Sports Complex[18] — formerly known

as Muller's Park — directly next to Oakland's former swimming park located along the Ramapo River called Pleasureland.[19] Some time around 4:30 p.m. gunfire between rival Jamaican gangs, who were bused-in from out of town, broke out resulting in two deaths and a number of injuries.[20] Before the incident, Pleasureland and Muller's Park were popular summer destinations that had since the 1950s and earlier (Muller's was built in 1935) attracted families from across the Tri-state area. Pleasureland remained open for a brief period after the shooting incident at FRG, but FRG/Muller's Park never reopened after that day.[21] While the shootout did not occur at Pleasureland, due to the park's popularity the events remain to this day known as the "Pleasureland Shootout" and "Pleasureland Massacre" among townies. Both properties currently remain abandoned, the pools and buildings having since been demolished and filled in. The properties still remain vacant.

Cindee Mullin Hurst No matter what you call it But for me i like the memory's of Pleasureland and i will always call it that the best days of my life was in that river Oakland was a great little get away

Michael Costello It's a little intimidating to voice my opinion in this forum because it seems to consist of mostly life long Oakland residents. I have been a resident for 12 years now and my children have gone through the Oakland school system with my youngest still in Hills, although my opinion seems to go against the majority, I decided to speak my mind anyway. The Pleasureland shooting happened in 1985, it is my understanding that the park closed soon after, so everyone who has moved into Oakland since that time like me, does not have memories of Pleasureland other than the story of the shooting. If you google Pleasureland, unfortunately the massacre is always at the top of the search.

I mean no disrespect for the long time residents of Oakland that have fond memories of Pleasureland, I credit you for making this great town what it is today, but with the naming of this future park I really do like what Mike G had to say about a new name signifying a new beginning. It just makes sense. If you take the personal memories out of the equation which is much easier for me obviously, Great Oak Park in my opinion is a perfect name. PLEASE do not take offense to this, but for anyone without those personal memories, Pleasureland(as a name) kind of sounds like an amusement park.

I like the significance of Great Oak Park, a mighty Oak Tree and our town of Oakland. Oak = Oakland.

I hope we can all come together on a decision not just using this Facebook forum as the final say. Whatever the outcome, I love this town and I am proud to be a resident. Happy 4th of July.

Bill Metaxotos And there it is ," no disrespect but", Pleasureland was never an amusement park, and it doesn't matter how many people get it wrong re. the shooting or how many times its repeated it is wrong. When something happens its history and there are facts involved so no disrespect but I prefer the truth. So anyway I no longer live in Oakland so I'm getting it I have my memories of a totally different Oakland so I wont take credit for whats there now.

Keith Dalton While all good points. I'm not sure when the last time anyone really took notice but there are some really magnificent Oak trees on that property so the names seems very appropriate to me. It will always be Pleasureland to the old locals that's one of those things that makes being a local cool. Just saying.

Dianne Seminaris Sounds like a plan

Roger M. Kirchner Agree. No matter what it's called everyone will always refer to it as Pleasureland. Grew up there, family lived there almost fifty years. I have travel all over this country and when I say I grew up in Oakland, Pleasureland always comes into the conversation...

Elizabeth Bombelyn I also agree.

Jodi Orton totally agree! It will never be anything other than Pleasureland.

Laura Schwacke Elko Pleasureland Park Has a nice ring to it. I would know exactly where to find it.

Vicki Rothhouse Rubenstein I loved going to Pleasureland. Sorry they never restored it to a town pool

Rita Elizabeth Altmann Kriss agree!

Bruce Berman I like it!

Jeanne Kirchner Gesicki Having grown up there and having my family live there since the early 1900's, I agree. Why change the name?

Lynn Autenrieth Petrucci Definitely... Pleasureland park!

Kathy Wilson Pleasure land it shall always be !

Jodi Orton kevin- how can we voice our views and suggestions to Mike and the council?

Lisa Taglieri Osborne I'm in. Pleasureland Park.

Jeanne Kirchner Gesicki Roger M. Kirchner...the Kirchners and relatives were there much longer than 50 years. When Mom, Grandma and Grandpa first started going there (before she even met Dad), in the thirties, there were only 600 residents in ALL of Oakland.

Aileen Stanton Lesko Same here...Pleasureland Park!

Dana Dolan As a nostalgic former denizen of Pleasureland, I can't imagine it anything but Pleasureland Park!

Mel Hopper I agree it should be called Pleasureland Park. !!!!!!!

Jane Jenner-Mckean Would be nice for the connection in the name. I was told they were acquiring the Mullers property. What are they doing with that parcel of land?

Ron Kirchner It will always be Pleasureland.

Stacy Levy Agree! And it would be a tremendous tribute to the families that ran it over the years (including mine). Stacy (Moramarco) Levy

Mike Guadagnino Hey Kevin, below is my post from Oakland, NJ Facebook page. Discussion is great and thank you for encouraging it!: Thanks for the compliment. Ryan touches on some of it, but basically the property is 40 acres. Pleasureland is approximately only 1/3 of the entire property. We do plan on keeping all the remnants that are still there including the foundations, floors, swings and the two pine trees. We also hope to have signs, painted in Pleasureland blue over each of the remnants identifying what they were as well as where they were from (Pleasureland). The name is always up for discussion, but it is named after the 250 year old Great White Oak Tree that exists on the property. We do hope to give the roads names such as Moramarco Lane etc. There will be a lot of the PL history preserved as that is a big part of the

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Bob Bembridge I agree. Great Oak Park is awful. Pleasureland Park is better.

Elaine Mandracchia Riley Everyone will just keep calling it Pleasureland so why not call it that, brings back great memories.

Elizabeth Bombelyn I agree! Thanks Kevin

Elaine Sorce Kevin, I couldnt agree more. Not mention the fact that the shooting in the 80s did not occur at Pleasureland but rather Mullers. The parks were adjacent and folks fled TO Pleasureland over the fence. It is, was, and always will be known as Pleasureland Park. To change the name makes no sense. Its calling an apple an orange and expecting people will just get used to it or come to know the apple as the orange in time. Not gonna happen. Just sayn

Elaine Sorce Maybe name an area of the park The Great Oak quarter within Pleasureland park or something like that

Genevieve Cannata Ugalde Kevin, you are so right. Makes perfect sense to recognize the historical significance of the property and people refer to that land as Pleasureland although the swim club no longer exists. I will also message that Oakland Facebook page. Thanks for the effort.

Joe Moramarco Hey Gen ,good to have you in on this too. As we grew up living & breathing Pleasureland , I can still see the sign at route 202,the big red arrow on the tree pointing to the park. Pleasureland is set in stone in my book.

Brian Long I like the name,everyone will still call it pleasureland anyway.