

Meeting Minutes

Plan Study Committee Meeting #3
JMT Project No. 22-02994-001

An in-person study committee was held at the Community Center to review the preliminary recommendations for improvements to the referenced project. The following committee members were in attendance:

Name	Organization	E-mail Address
Matt Farrell	Environmental Advisory Council	matthewthomasfarrell@gmail.com
Bill Gaboda	Resident	wgaboda@gmail.com
Laurie Grey	Resident (Rivergate)	llbccomcast.net
George Schlieben	YMS	president@ymssoccer.net
Matt Curtin	PAA	matthew.a.curtin@gmail.com
Stephen Edwards,	Resident	stephenedwards@gmail.com
Monica Tierney,	Director of Parks & Rec.	monicat@lmt.org
Dan McLoone,	LMT Planner	danm@lmt.org
Andrew Mears	JMT	amears@jmt.com
Ann Toole	Toole Recreation Planning	anntoole@comcast.net
Neil Beach	JMT	nbeach@jmt.com
Jim Majewski	LMT Community Development Dir	jimm@lmt.org
Colin Coyle	LMT Planning Commission	cwcoyle@gmail.com

The purpose of the meeting was to present the initial master plan recommendations and preliminary concepts for redevelopment of Macclesfield. The plans response to identified issues, concerns, and needs as identified throughout the planning process to date. Feedback is sought to further refine these concepts from the Master Plan Study Committee.

The following items were discussed:

1. Welcome and Introductions – A. Mears welcomed the Master Plan Study Committee (MPSC) and attendees introduced themselves.
2. A. Mears reviewed the meeting agenda.
3. A. Mears presented the information and initial findings of each of the agenda items as shown in the attached PowerPoint.
4. The following comments, clarifications, and suggestions were made during the committee discussions:
 - a. Turf field agreement and DCNR requirements
 - Changes to conform to DCNR requirements are currently under discussion.
 - DCNR wants the exclusive use clause in the agreement to be modified on use of the turf field.
 - b. Summary of Key Person Interviews and Focus Groups
 - Most people currently view the park as a sports complex.
 - More pavilions, places to sit, trail connections, and traffic remedies desired.
 - Concerns over where lighting is, where lighting could be.
 - Differing views on demographics and number of youths in the area.
 - The Pennsbury School District reports the number of youths as stable for the next 12 years. This includes children and youth that are in private schools.
 - Restrooms are currently inadequate.
 - Clean-up and traffic control for the tournament was better this year.
 - Changes to one park need to be considered and how they will impact all the others.
 - Soccer at the MS is informal play.
 - c. Preliminary Recommendations
 - Improve programming, update existing facilities, and provide overflow parking area at Macclesfield.
 - Partner with Pennsbury School District for better use and maintenance of underutilized fields and spaces.
 - Enhance Caiola, Stoddard and/or Fred Allen Complexes to include lights and turf existing fields.
 - Develop new facilities to address immediate and future unmet needs at other locations.
5. A. Mears reviewed each of the Concepts. The following were noted for each:
 - a. **Concept 1A** - reorganizes the entry way, drop off, parking and general vehicular circulation, and creates a community recreation hub to serve both all park users Improving MP.
 - Currently there are 15 active recreation fields in the park. This option eliminates 10 fields. one field is gained by converting an existing lighting field to a turf and adding lights.
 - Removes all three ball diamonds.
 - Takes circulation away from playing fields and greatly reduces pedestrian crossing of the parking areas.

- Discussion about use of existing lighting for parking areas and if that was adequate. If lighting shields are provided for fields, parking area lighting most likely will be required.
 - Creates new central area for community use including new playground, open lawn area, community pavilions, and new concession, restrooms and storage areas.
 - Vehicular circulation is two ways.
 - It is highly unlikely that a second entrance will be considered by PennDOT.
 - Existing buffers have large trees with no understory. Will need to determine if additional understory buffering is desired by adjacent neighbors.
 - A perimeter loop trail is provided to enhance waling opportunities and link each of the facilities.
 - Multi generation areas for teens and seniors will be incorporated in the community hub areas.
 - Meadow's area proposed for transition into the woodlands.
 - The proposed boardwalk system connects to towpath and creates a secondary loop trail.
 - L. Grey noted that the location of the senior area would be very disturbing to her.
- b. **Concept 1B** – contains all the elements of concept 1A with programming of youth soccer fields within the open area on the westernmost portion of the park.
- The area would include seven youth fields, and another restroom facility for senior and youth area.
 - J. Majewski asked how the restrooms would be built since most of the site is within a floodplain? He noted that the existing restrooms are raised up out of floodplain but there are issues with pumping. Building in the floodplain is problematic and it would have to be elevated and be accessible. We may not be able to get a permit for that.
 - M. Farrell question if the plan includes considerations for wildlife buffers? Tall grass meadow will reduce mowing and support wildlife. The meadows on the edges with the meadows as transition. Biodiversity is important and needs to be supported.
 - Accessibility from parking and restrooms is critical.
 - Can we solve the pedestrian and circulation problems, keep the fields.
 - L. Grey wanted to know which option addresses neighbor issues? Are there any traffic studies? We need to discourage the funky turning that goes on in the parking lots now with backing up and dropping off. Which facilities are lighted? The existing two football fields and two soccer fields will remain lit. This alternative remove lighting from the three baseball fields.
- c. **Concept 1C** – seeks to retain the existing ballfields and lights. However the northernmost diamond is reduced to a practice field with shortened outfield due to the proposed improved access drive proposed.
- J. Majewski questioned if the soccer field configuration for the smaller youth fields is this what YMS needed? He also wanted to know how the parking numbers were impacted?
 - N. Beach indicated that the field depicted were consistent with what YSM current needs. Parking counts will be verified as part of the development of the preferred concept plan.
 - L. Grey noted that she still feels it isa a sports complex.

- A. Mears pointed out that additional amenities are provided to accommodate seniors, teens, and others who might not otherwise use the park. The design also accommodates areas for increased programming for use other than sports. Pathways are defined and separate vehicular and pedestrian traffic, meadows are planted to increase biodiversity and increase buffers to adjacent residents. Meadows will keep people away from homes and prevent people from cutting through yards.
 - B. Gaboda noted that overflow parking is provided in alternative A while B and C did not, so traffic would remain the same in those two alternatives. N. Beach pointed out that both alternative A and B include provisions for overflow parking.
 - G. Schlieben asked if the goal of alternatives A and B was to add more sports, facilities, and amenities to the park? He thought this could be increasing traffic. N. Beach responded that no new additional fields were being added but additional recreation amenities for different users groups were proposed. G. Schlieben wanted to know if adding activities would require more parking? N. Beach responded that the preferred alternative will evaluate and address parking requirements needed to support the programming and facilities proposed.
 - C. Coyle said the existing playground is bad.
6. A. Mears reviewed Option 2 considerations for potential partnership with Pennsbury School District (PSD) for shared use facilities.
- a. Pennsbury MS Campus
 - We understand that only the 60 and 90' ball diamonds are currently utilized at the MS. MS does use the fields for practices in spring.
 - None of the fields are lit so fall baseball could not be accommodated.
 - M. Curtain suggested that PAA would consider making investment in some MS fields if shared use agreements can be worked out. This seems like a reasonable place for PAA look for additional field space.
 - A. Mears presented a high-level concept diagram for discussion purposes of what could be accommodated at the MS Campus. It was noted that the concept did not fully account for all the uses by the district as those were currently being investigated. Additionally, the concepts did not account for parking and stormwater management needs.
 - With a partnership, this could potentially be a solution to meeting needs for facilities.
 - M. Curtain asked if the cost of potential facility upgrades would be shared by partners? M. Tierney said that money is a concern. PSD is going through a transition so this would help accommodate facilities during their transition.
 - M. Tierney provided an example of Lower Merion's partnership to develop a turf field and how that could be a model providing a sample for use and cost sharing for maintenance and construction.
 - A. Mears reiterated that we need to have a better understanding the PSD use of MS. MS campus schools have their own football team. Once we know their needs and use of space, we can better develop this concept.
 - b. Edgewood Elementary – YMS uses the green and yellow fields shown in the concept. PAA uses all three fields existing ball diamonds. YMS has 15 small fields here and one regulation.
 - c. Afton and Quarry Hill – PAA currently uses these for practice. School wants to use the site for other uses than baseball. Full size field is currently used for overflow

parking. The four baseball fields fill up with water. They don't want to maintain these. Need info and agreement on how the fields are used here by the PSD.

7. A. Mears reviewed Option 3 to enhance Caiola, Stoddard, and or Fred Allen Field Complexes lights and turfing of existing fields.
 - a. The area between the woods is used for parking now.
 - b. There are no easy solution to improve the existing infrastructure here. M. Tierney noted potential neighborhood concerns with lighting that would have to be addressed. There are plenty of examples of recent installations where glare shields and lighting levels are not impactful to adjacent properties.
 - c. J. Majewski asked if there is a need to light softball fields? M. Curtain responded that lights important for 40-70 and 60-90 field. Portable mounds can be used on skinned infields to accommodate baseball and softball.
 - d. M. Curtain noted that finding places for the older kids is the immediate need for PAA. The have seen a resurgence in older kids playing again.
 - e. M. Tierney suggested we could consider lighting baseball fields at Edgewood. It is a better location without adjacent neighbors. PAA uses these fields for practice.
8. A. Mears reviewed Option 4 to consider developing new facilities to address immediate and future needs at the Snipes Tract. This recommendation was previously made as part of 2018 plan.
9. Discussion Summary: Are we solving the problems? A. Mears discussed the need to take a mutli-pronged approach to addressing the concerns at Macclesfield and meeting the need for more sports fields within the Township. The overall system must be considered.
 - a. The group is not sure if we solved the field issues but sees a transformation in alternative A and B to more of a community park.
 - b. In general, Alternative B was preferred.
 - c. Alternative B presents a burden on PAA as they will lose 3 lighted facilities that must be replaced. Although it is the worst alternative for PAA, they are willing to work towards a solution for the greater good of solving the issues at Macclesfield Park.
 - d. In looking at improvements at other locations, it is critical that issues and concerns are not being moved from one location to another.
 - e. A compromise is to look at where baseball can be safely accommodated. Adding a turf diamond field at Edgewood with lights and improving and adding fields at the MS seem to be viable alternatives for further evaluation.
 - f. Memorial Park cannot be considered for the addition of active facilities.
 - g. The value of having the community hub as shown in alternative A and B are tremendous. Everyone will want to play here.

The above represents a true and accurate account of the discussion during this meeting to the best of my knowledge. If there are any conflicts, misrepresentations, or omissions with the above statements, please contact the undersigned within ten (10) days of this date.



9.26.2023.

Andrew A. Mears

Date

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Attendees
Project File