

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD  
PARK & RECREATION BOARD  
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on September 8, 2009. Chairman Fritchey called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: David Fritchey, Chairman  
Henry Carpenter, Vice Chairman  
Patricia Bunn, Secretary  
David Gordon, Member  
Fran McDonald, Member

Others: Donna Liney, Recreation Director  
Pete Stainthorpe, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Andrew Newbon, Park & Rec Member  
Dennis Wysocki, Park & Rec Member

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. McDonald moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of May, 12, 2009 as written.

#### VETERAN COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

Ms. Kathy Kraeck, and Mr. Chris Desmond of the Veterans Committee were present with Mr. Brian Mann from the design team for the proposed Veterans Memorial. Ms. Kraeck reviewed the volunteers serving on their design team which includes a sculptor, architects, and a landscape architect who are donating their talents to help the Committee achieve their goals.

Ms. Kraeck stated the Veterans Committee is planning the third annual Veterans Parade to be held in November which will end at Veterans Square. She stated they have had ceremonies at the Park in the past and wanted to have a monument at the Park which would honor Veterans of the past, present, and future. She stated they also wanted to make use of the Park which is located in the center of the Township and could serve as a gateway to Edgewood Village once it is built. Ms. Kraeck stated they would like this park to be a public place where people can gather and feel it can also provide a place for small concerts/plays to be held.

Ms. Kraeck stated initially the design team created a plan for the entire Park; but the Board of Supervisors were concerned about the cost which was estimated to be in excess of \$1 million. She stated the Committee met again with the design team and decided to scale back what they wanted to do and focus on the monument portion of the Park recognizing that it would still be their overall goal to develop the Master Plan.

Mr. Mann showed the Master Plan which shows where they anticipate the monument to be located on the property. He noted the location of a large existing oak tree which has been looked at by an arborist who determined that it is in good condition; and it is a prime feature of their Plan. Mr. Mann showed one of the access points to the Park in the center which leads to the monument. He showed how they plan to make the line along Edgewood Road more formalized with a row of trees. He stated there would also be access to the site at the two corners on Edgewood Road. Mr. Mann showed the location of the existing parking lot where there are twenty-six parking spaces which they feel should be maintained. He stated they also feel they could add nine additional parking spaces. Mr. Mann showed an area on the right which currently has weeds and scrub trees and is a natural drainage area, and he stated they intend to clear out this area and restore it with more natural vegetation.

Mr. Mann showed the rear of the site where the existing CVS is visible. He stated in order to eliminate the view of the CVS, it is not sufficient to only plant trees; and they have proposed berming to create a hill in the back along this line. He stated in order to achieve this and handle drainage on the site, they propose to create a gentle slope to a low spot.

Mr. Mann stated there is currently an informal play component on the site, and they feel they could formalize this through the use of mounding of the earth and use of natural materials such as rocks and some wooden play structures. Ms. Bunn stated she would be concerned with children climbing on wood and rocks. Mr. Mann stated such play structures have been used for the last ten years and create a more natural, imaginative play area. Ms. Bunn suggested this be reviewed with the Township solicitor to make sure that they meet the safety requirements as this will be public property and the Township could have liability issues. Mr. Fritchey asked if there are any examples of these types of play materials being used in the area, and Mr. Mann agreed to provide information on this.

Mr. Mann stated currently the property is being used for the Farmers' Market, and he showed on the Plan the area which has been left open so that this use can continue.

Mr. McDonald stated they should make sure the area proposed for the play area will be safe for children given the proximity to the parking lot. Mr. Mann stated they will look into this, noting that they are still in the preliminary design stage.

Ms. Bunn asked if the presentation area is ADA accessible, and Mr. Mann stated they will design it to be ADA accessible.

Mr. Mann stated they feel the materials used should be natural, low maintenance, and highly durable, still being cost effective. He stated they also want there to be an educational component; and they are looking to have learning stops which would be an opportunity for educational, fun activities, such as rubbings, etc. Mr. Mann also noted the location of the proposed “story wall” in the rear adding that the details of the story have not yet been finalized. He stated they feel this area would serve as a retreat/gathering place.

There was discussion on lighting, and Mr. Mann stated the flagpole which will include the flag will be lit. They have also discussed other lighting and are working with the Historic Commission on this.

Mr. Gordon asked if they anticipate parking on the grass on the property for larger events; and Ms. Kraeck stated there are reciprocal agreements in place with Woodside Church, the Masonic Hall, and McCaffrey’s for parking. Mr. Desmond stated they propose to use construction materials for the walkways which can withstand vehicular traffic as there are vehicles associated with the farmers’ market since some of the vendors sell out of their vehicles. He stated while they would not advocate that these areas be considered a parking lot, if there was a need to park a vehicle as part of the Veteran’s Ceremony or the farmers markets, the ingresses/egresses could handle this kind of weight. Mr. Mann stated the walk to the monument is designed to be able to handle vehicles across it since the farmers market occurs on both sides of this area.

Mr. Mann noted there is a lot of work that needs to be done underground which while no one sees it, is costly. He stated the advantage of proceeding with the monument portion is that it is low impact on the site as it is in the center of the site and can be constructed quite readily.

There was further discussion on the “story wall” area. Mr. Mann stated this would be a granite obelisk and while the scale has not been determined, it may be approximately 20’. It is an area for retreat and contemplation.

Ms. Liney asked if they are planning permanent restroom facilities or would they be using a portable facility. Ms. Kraeck stated there is currently no water or electricity on the site. Ms. Liney stated they usually keep a portable facility for the Farmers’ Market. Ms. Bunn stated they would need electricity since they would need to have this for the lighting and in order to use a sound system for their ceremonies.

Mr. Desmond stated they are present tonight with a scaled presentation for the focal point in the center of the Park and in support of a Master Plan vision for the entire Park. He stated all of these details as to the playground fencing, height of the contemplative monument, etc. are part of a Master Plan vision and are not the initial objective of the Veterans' Committee. He stated they wanted to present the concept of the entire Park and would like to continue the vision of Edgewood Village as it becomes more defined. He stated the Veteran's Committee wants to focus on their initial goal of the flagpole and the monument.

Mr. Fritchey stated it appears to be a harmonious plan. He stated there must be some concept of stages of development for this proposal. He stated there are a number of plans for development of Parks in the Township that have laid dormant for a number of years as the Township does not have money available to complete development of all the Parks. He asked what they would propose to do as an initial stage, and he asked how much they feel this would cost. He also asked the status of their fundraising.

Mr. Kraeck stated they wanted the Park & Recreation Board to understand what they feel could be done with this space over time. She stated they are requesting initial approval for the flagpole and the surrounding area in the center which they feel is a realistic goal for their volunteer group. She stated she does not feel their volunteer group could raise enough funds for the entire park.

Mr. Mann showed the Plan for the area they wish to begin with which is made up of two walls which go from a low point of 12" up to a high point of 6'; and a low point of 24" up to a high point of 9'. He stated there is also an opportunity for donor pavers and within the wall a dedicated name wall and a civic statement wall. He noted the proposed plantings on the Plan. He stated the sculptor is working on sculptures of eagles ranging in size from relief as part of the wall going up to eagles in full flight at the highest point of the walls. Mr. Mann stated what they have proposed will be large enough to accommodate a color guard and a small musical component for various ceremonies.

Mr. Gordon asked about ongoing maintenance, and Mr. Mann stated it will require some maintenance, but they wanted to create it out of highly durable, natural, hard materials.

Mr. Desmond stated there would be the opportunity for community involvement in the maintenance adding that the VFW does have a Monument Committee that does maintenance at the Yardley monument. He stated they also get involved with area youth groups. He stated he feels this would be an opportunity for civic groups to be involved.

Mr. Mann stated the part of the project they would like to proceed with first is estimated to cost between \$250,000 and \$350,000. Mr. Carpenter asked about the sub-surface prep work along the front and the parking. Mr. Mann stated it could be \$300,000 to \$400,000 for site infrastructure for the other parts of the project; but they felt it was best to spend

the money initially on the monument/flagpole portion so that it is something that can be seen. Mr. Desmond stated they wanted to establish this center portion of the project which they feel will be an “announcement” that they are accomplishing something, and fundraising could continue from that point.

Ms. Bunn asked if they anticipate using any Township money, and Mr. Desmond stated their initial discussions with the Board of Supervisors was that it would not involve taxpayer money. Ms. Bunn asked if they will have to follow prevailing wage since this could double their costs. Ms. Kraeck stated they are aware of this and are discussing this with the Township. She stated they hope to take advantage of Veterans and other volunteer laborers in the Township to do the work. Ms. Bunn stated if the cost is over \$10,000, they would have to go out to public bid. Mr. Desmond stated they were considering breaking it out into different projects and using volunteer labor with professional help. Ms. Kraeck stated the parking lot is being paid for by one of the developers in Edgewood Village. She stated they do not feel their small group of volunteers would be able to raise all the money for the entire Park. She stated they would like to lay out the Master Plan for this Park in totality.

Mr. Fritchey asked the total price for the entire project, and Ms. Kraeck stated they estimate it to be between \$1 million to \$1.4 million assuming they had to pay prevailing wage. Mr. Mann stated the entire project could not be done by volunteers. He stated he has indicated that they should make sure that this is done right and they should not have macadam paths and concrete pavers, but should be done with real brick, granite, and stone so that it becomes an enduring symbol. He stated while this is expensive, the expense does pay off over time.

Mr. Desmond stated they took the feedback they got from the Board of Supervisors very seriously and decided to concentrate on the monument area at a standard they hope the rest of the Master Plan would then evolve from. They also wanted this to merge well with how Edgewood Village will evolve.

Ms. Bunn stated she feels this is an excellent design and she would not want to see this “piecemealed” in any way and feels it will honor the Veterans appropriately.

Mr. McDonald stated he agrees the design is beautiful and feels what they are proposing to do first is the right place to start.

Mr. Desmond stated they feel the beauty of this design is that they can do this portion without taxpayer burden and they could get this portion done and then stop for a while. He stated they could then go on to the next phase of funding working with the Township on this Master Plan to decide what is the next feature to consider.

Mr. Gordon stated the quality of work of this first piece will determine their ability to fundraise in the future.

Mr. Desmond stated the Veterans Commission is also interested in working with other groups who may have an interest in other areas so that if someone is interested in a playground, they could take charge of developing that component and do the fundraising for that portion. He stated there may also be a group of musicians or a toastmaster club who may want to take charge of developing the presentation area, and they would be in charge of fundraising and development of that area in keeping with the Master Plan.

Mr. Gordon asked the status of their fundraising efforts, and Mr. Desmond stated they are continuously doing fundraising. Ms. Kraeck stated their next big event is the Auction to be held on November 7 at Makefield Highlands with tickets being sold for \$35 and they are looking for items/services to auction off at that event. She stated many businesses in the area are their supporters, and there were 150 people in attendance at their kick-off event held at the Continental Tavern. She stated they have also had a flea market and a car show. She stated they are present at community events and have a number of items for sale. She stated the newspapers have provided them a lot of publicity.

Mr. Fritchey asked how soon they feel they could begin work on the first phase, and Ms. Kraeck stated they hope to have a groundbreaking ceremony this year following the Veterans Parade. She stated they are meeting with Mr. Fedorchak next week to discuss Grants. She stated showing that they have raised \$30,000 to \$50,000 shows that they are credible and have community support when applying for Grants. Mr. Desmond stated even the initial phase is stageable. He stated they would not need to wait until they have all the funds to build the entire first phase and they could focus on a portion such as the flagpole, and then radiate out from there.

Mr. Kraeck stated they have been meeting with the various stakeholders and their goal is to present the design to the Board of Supervisors in October; and they hope to have an unveiling of the plan at the Auction and the following day at the ceremony concluding the Veterans' Parade.

Mr. Carpenter moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to acknowledge receipt of the Plan which the Park & Recreation Board feels is a well thought out Plan. The Park & Recreation Board acknowledges receipt of the Master Plan and are in favor of proceeding with Phase I – the centerpiece.

## SUPERVISORS' REPORT

Mr. Stainthorpe stated there was a presentation to the Board of Supervisors by the independent auditor; and while the Township does have Budgetary challenges ahead, they are in good financial shape and are still within "safe harbor."

Mr. Stainthorpe stated a majority of the Board of Supervisors did direct the solicitor to draft an Ordinance requiring the Township to build to Silver LEED standards for any Township construction. Mr. Stainthorpe described the LEED standards which are guidelines to build sustainable, environmentally-friendly buildings. He stated a number of commercial developers are voluntarily building in this way.

Mr. Stainthorpe stated the Board is moving ahead with the potential sale of Elm Lowne. He stated they have not yet received an appraisal for the property. The Board has discussed a façade easement and ways to protect the property so that it would remain historic in nature. He stated the Township has had the property for ten years and has been unable to come up with any real public purpose. He stated the property costs the Township \$40,000 to \$60,000 in maintenance. He stated the Township paid just over \$700,000 for the property in 1998, and they still owe approximately \$400,000. He stated there has also been discussion as to what they could do with any proceeds after the debt is paid.

## RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Liney stated the Township has completed maintenance on the Revere Road tennis courts, installing bottom rail fencing along the entire complex. The Township also contracted with Kurts Kourts to crackfill and repaint the Schuyler tennis courts. Both projects are completed. She stated they will install bottom rail at the Schuyler Court as well. The courts will be reopened tomorrow.

Ms. Liney stated Fall Permits have been issued to the user groups, and the Township will be following up on required paperwork.

Ms. Liney stated the Pennsbury High School Varsity and JV are scheduled this Thursday for an evening game at Macclesfield Park Field C.

Ms. Liney stated the Township is preparing this week for the 9-11 remembrance ceremony at the Garden of Reflection in Memorial Park.

Ms. Liney stated the Community Pool ended another safe and successful season with a large crowd enjoying the complex at Community Pride Day.

On behalf of the Township, Ms. Liney thanked Park Board members Trish Bunn, Dave Gordon, Fran McDonald, Drew Newbon, and Dennis Wysocki for their volunteer help yesterday at Community Pride Day. She added this event continues to grow both in size and in community appreciation, and Park & Recreation is pleased to be a part of it.

Ms. Liney stated that in the next two weeks she will be submitting the first draft of the 2010 Operating Budgets for Park & Recreation and the Pool; and she should have a preliminary copy available for Park Board review in October.

Ms. Liney was thanked for all her work on Community Pride Day. Ms. Liney stated they have heard only positive feedback about this event.

Mr. Gordon stated he has received comments about the good appearance of the tennis courts.

Mr. Fritchey asked about Pool membership numbers this year, and Ms. Liney stated they were down approximately 80 families. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels part of this was probably due to the weather. Ms. Liney agreed and stated it was a short summer with School ending late in June and then starting early, and they did not get the heat wave they usually get in June which usually increases their memberships. She stated the economy probably also had an impact. She stated there was a fee increase so they are probably only \$10,000 under Budget.

Mr. Fritchey asked about the Golf Course, and Mr. Stainthorpe stated he feels they were impacted by the weather earlier, but August and September have been better. He stated they are doing well given the economy.

There being no further business, Mr. Carpenter moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary