

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – JUNE 14, 2011

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on June 14, 2011. Chairman Fritchey called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: David Fritchey, Chairman
Patricia Bunn, Secretary
Dave Gordon, Member
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Donna Liney, Park & Recreation Director
James Majewski, Township Engineer
Matt Maloney, Supervisor Liaison (joined meeting in progress)

Absent: Henry Carpenter, Park & Rec Vice Chairman
Fran McDonald, Park & Rec Member
Andrew Newbon, Park & Rec Member

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. Gordon seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of March 8, 2011 as written.

DISCUSSION AND MOTION ON REQUESTS BY GARDEN OF REFLECTION COMMITTEE

Ms. Ellen Saracini and Ms. Liuba Lashchyk were present. Ms. Saracini stated they are preparing for the 10th Anniversary of 9/11, and they are anticipating a large group of people to attend the remembrance ceremony. She stated they would like to discuss entranceway signage for Memorial Park. Ms. Saracini stated the original design contemplated entranceway signage. She stated Ms. Lashchyk has designed proposed entranceway signage to be a Bucks County style to announce Memorial Park and the Garden of Reflection. Ms. Lashchyk showed a picture of the proposed signs to be attached to a wall. She stated they feel the walls will enhance the Park.

Ms. Saracini stated they have been working on fundraising. She stated Mike Smerconish has offered to host a brunch at his home on Sunday, June 19 as a fundraiser. She stated they are also working on donations of materials for the wall.

Mr. Fritchey stated he understands that the signs will be on the principal entrance, and Ms. Saracini agreed. Mr. Fritchey asked how far off the road they will be, and Ms. Saracini stated she feels it will be approximately 30' to 50' back. Ms. Bunn stated there does not appear to be a sight triangle issue. Ms. Saracini stated the signs will be at the top of a three foot wall. She stated they would also like to eventually have solar lighting from underneath so that it can be seen at night.

Mr. Wysocki asked if there will be identical signage on each side, and Ms. Saracini stated they had considered this, and you need to have the same signs on each side as you can not see each side as you drive by.

Ms. Bunn stated she does not have a problem with the word "Memorial Park," and feels the Garden of Reflection is only a part of the entire Park. She stated the way the sign comes across is "Garden of Reflection at Memorial Park." She stated the way it reads currently it does not indicate that it is a park that includes activities other than the Garden of Reflection. She stated she would prefer that the signs state Memorial Park, and then a small sign coming in that says, "Garden of Reflection." Ms. Bunn stated she is concerned about setting precedence. Mr. Gordon asked about reversing the wording and have it read, "Memorial Park, Home of Garden of Reflection." He stated he does feel the Garden of Reflection is unique as it is the reason that many people come to Memorial Park. Mr. Fritchey stated he agrees that to the extent that people are coming to the Park from outside of the community, they are probably coming to see the Garden of Reflection; but over time he envisions a lot of community residents coming primarily for the Park uses including the Garden of Reflection.

Ms. Liney stated she agrees the existing sign needs to be replaced. She stated the Board of Supervisors do like to have "Lower Makefield Township" on all signage. Mr. Gordon stated he feels Ms. Bunn's point is that the first focus should be "Memorial Park," with a secondary focus to the "Garden of Reflection," which is part of Memorial Park. Mr. Fritchey stated there are signs on 332 indicating "2 miles to the Garden of Reflection," and he feels there should be something at the Park entrance that indicates it is the location of the Garden of Reflection. Ms. Bunn agreed. Ms. Saracini noted the "Memorial Park" lettering is larger than "Garden of Reflection." Ms. Bunn stated she feels they should put "Memorial Park" up where they are showing "Garden of Reflection," and "Garden of Reflection" should be where they are showing "Memorial Park."

Ms. Saracini noted the Garden of Reflection is the official State memorial for the Victims of 9/11 as well as the Bucks County Memorial; and she feels having the Garden's name on the sign is important. Ms. Bunn stated she would agree that "Garden of Reflection" should be on the entrance sign, but still feels the focal point is Memorial Park.

Ms. Saracini stated currently people looking for the Garden of Reflection are passing by the Park while driving along Woodside Road

Mr. Wysocki asked if they feel they need another sign further down the driveway for the "Garden of Reflection," and Ms. Saracini stated they do not feel this is necessary. She stated they are working hard at raising funds to pay for the sign they are proposing.

Mr. Fritchey stated he is in favor of the concept they are proposing and feels what they have shown is clean, elegant, and classic.

Ms. Bunn asked the estimated cost, and Ms. Saracini stated they have started fundraising and are looking for donations. She stated they estimate they will get \$10,000 from the Mike Smerconish event.

Mr. Maloney joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Gordon asked how long it will take for construction, and Ms. Saracini stated she feels it will be completed by the 9/11 Anniversary.

Ms. Bunn stated this would have to go out for public bid, but Ms. Saracini stated she did not feel it would because it is being done with donations. She stated they have done other work without going out to public bid. Ms. Bunn stated she felt if the cost would be over \$25,000, they would have to go out to public bid. Ms. Lashchyk stated the estimated cost is \$30,000 for the two walls, but Ms. Saracini stated they anticipate materials and labor will be donated.

Ms. Liney stated they are looking for a recommendation this evening from the Park & Recreation Board that they are in favor of signage at Memorial Park. She noted the Board of Supervisors is only meeting one time in July and one time in August. Ms. Saracini stated the scheduled meeting of July 20 would be too late, and they will have to present this to them at their meeting tomorrow evening.

Mr. Wysocki asked if the top of the wall will be flat, and Ms. Lashchyk stated this depends on the fundraising, and she does have different designs. Mr. Wysocki asked if they are concerned that someone could sit on the wall, but Ms. Saracini stated she does not feel people would do this. Ms. Bunn suggested putting something on the cap to avoid skateboarding.

Mr. Fritchey asked if one sign could state Memorial Park/Lower Makefield Township, and the other sign on the other side stated Garden of Reflection, Official 9/11 Memorial; and in this way, it would save money since there would be fewer letters than if they had all the wording on both signs. Ms. Bunn stated drivers would then not see everything from either direction. Mr. Fritchey stated with fewer words on each sign, they may be able to have larger letters which would make it more visible. Ms. Lashchuk stated they could propose both suggestions, and Mr. Fritchey stated the Board of Supervisors will make the final decision. Ms. Bunn asked if the Township could pay for the words “Memorial Park” and “Lower Makefield Township” on both walls since she does feel the Township has a responsibility to put up a sign at the Park.

Mr. Gordon moved and Ms. Bunn seconded to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Park & Recreation Board is in favor of the concept to be paid for with donations and moved forward expeditiously so that it is completed by 9/11/11. Park & Recreation recommends that “Lower Makefield Township” be added to the sign and “Memorial Park” be more prominently displayed than “Garden of Reflection.” Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Saracini congratulated the Township on securing the State Grant. She stated the number of visitors to the Garden of Reflection has increased; and as more is added to the Park, they feel more people will come to the Park.

Ms. Saracini stated they have been getting requests for more benches at the Park, and she asked if they would like the Committee to look for more donations for benches throughout the Park. Mr. Fritchey stated they would welcome this as this is something that they have had an interest in. He stated it should be coordinated through Ms. Liney so that there is consistency.

Ms. Saracini stated an organization known as the Trail Alliance has set up a link of the three crash sites through greenways, roadways, etc. Ms. Saracini stated she contacted them about the Garden of Reflection, and they have decided to include the Garden of Reflection on the Trail. She stated with the help of Steve Santarsiero and Senator McIlhenny a Resolution was passed for the 9/11 Trail including the Garden of Reflection. The trail will be advertised. She provided information on the Trail to the Park Board members this evening.

SUPERVISORS' LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Maloney stated the Township will be getting \$2 million in State funds, and the Township match has already been made. He stated in the case of the Parks facility it will be \$1 million of matched funds in the form of acquiring the Samost Tract. He stated they estimate it will cost \$650,000 for the improvements at the Samost facility which are basically the fields minus the tennis court plan. There was discussion on the road, and Mr. Majewski stated in the bid it was included as a paved road. Mr. Majewski stated he feels it may be advisable to sod the infield which would help get the fields in playable condition one year earlier than if they just plant grass. Ms. Bunn stated they will have to water it whether it is seed or sod. Mr. Maloney stated PAA is very interested in these fields, and he feels they would be willing to have volunteers help with watering. Mr. Majewski stated he estimated the cost for the fields to be \$550,000. Mr. Maloney stated they are also going to re-surface the tennis courts. Ms. Liney stated they deferred crack sealing the Community Park tennis and basketball courts, but did move forward with Heacock and Revere, and they will do crack filling at Schuyler July 1.

Mr. Majewski stated the cost for resurfacing the courts is approximately \$130,000 to \$140,000 depending on how much fencing needs to be replaced. Mr. Gordon suggested that they look at this on the Road Tour.

Mr. Majewski provided information this evening on the proposed ADA playground. This will require a permit from the Bucks County Conservation District, and this could take thirty to sixty days. He stated this could go out to bid in the fall with construction late fall/early spring.

Mr. Majewski stated Samost must go through the design and land development process, and the earliest they could go out to bid would be fall or winter for spring construction.

There was further discussion about the inclusive playground at Memorial Park. Mr. Majewski stated the budgeted amount for this was \$250,000. Mr. Majewski stated Ms. Liney has come up with a more inclusive playground with more ADA features. A design done by the playground manufacturer was provided this evening. It was noted that this design is slightly more expensive, and they were considering phasing in some of the features but doing all of the ground work so that it is ready; and when additional funds are available, they could add more features. Ms. Liney stated they also need feedback from the Disabled Persons Advisory Board.

Mr. Maloney stated it is the Board of Supervisors intent to act as quickly as possible with these projects. He stated with regard to Samost there has been agreement among all the different parties. He stated the Park Board should make their recommendations to the Board of Supervisors expeditiously so that the Board of Supervisors can consider any feedback at their July meeting particularly as it relates to Memorial Park. Mr. Gordon stated they could look at the proposed location for the playground at Memorial Park during the Road Tour. Ms. Liney stated this would also give the Disabled Persons Advisory Board time to provide their input.

Mr. Maloney stated that the other half of the Grant is for the Community Center. He stated this money will be matched with the money spent on the purchase of the Patterson Farm, and this is where the Community Center will be located. He stated they are considering a number of options including new construction and renovation.

Mr. Fritchey asked about the proposed Cruzan plan, and Mr. Maloney stated nothing further came out of this proposal.

Mr. Maloney stated the Community Center will cost considerably more than the \$1 million Grant so they need to discuss how they will finance the rest of the cost which could be as much as \$2 million. He stated a number of options on this are being explored. Mr. Majewski stated Mr. Fedorchak is going to get an architect involved who is familiar with restoration as they are considering using an existing structure on the Patterson Farm.

Mr. Gordon asked what they are considering for the Center, and Mr. Maloney stated the programming needs have been discussed with the Seniors and other user groups. He stated they want a large open multi-purpose space. He stated they have also discussed a stage and offices as well. Mr. Majewski stated the Seniors want a meeting room that they will have as their own so that they can use it for storage and lock it. Mr. Majewski stated a large kitchen is also part of the discussions. Mr. Maloney stated there has also been discussions about a technology room with a series of work stations for the Seniors and the community.

Mr. Majewski stated generally reconstruction costs more than new development, but they would be taking up additional space away from the farm if they build something completely new. Mr. Majewski stated the barn they are looking at is not used by any of the farmers. He stated there are approximately four other barn-like structures on the property.

Mr. Maloney stated they are getting closer to a new transfer methodology for the inter-fund transfers.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Liney expressed appreciation on behalf of Park & Recreation to Representative Santarsiero for his leadership and tenacity in obtaining the \$2 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Grant for Lower Makefield Township. She stated she feels she speaks for the community regarding the excitement about moving forward with projects that have been on the books for several years. She stated details will be presented tomorrow evening at the Board of Supervisors' meeting, and the Park Board is welcome to attend.

Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation is supporting a number of special events in the community in June. She stated the annual Farmers Market held its first Market Day Thursday, June 2. She stated this is the fifth year for the Market; and judging by the success of the past years, it continues to be a hub in the community. She stated Lower Makefield farms such as Guzikowski, Charlann Farms, Promised Land, Sterling, Shady Brook, as well as a number of returning area farms are again participating.

Ms. Liney stated the Veterans Committee hosted another successful fundraiser, a flea market, this past weekend at Veterans Square. She stated Veterans Committee members were pleased with the turnout, and an additional \$1,200 was raised for the monument.

Ms. Liney stated that this past weekend PAA hosted their first Hits for the Cure, as a fundraiser for the Jimmy V cancer research. \$8,500 was raised with participation by hundreds of children at the Stoddart Complex.

Ms. Liney stated the annual Art Coleman Fast Pitch Softball Tournament kicks off tomorrow at the Roelofs Complex. She stated this Tournament hosts 100 premiere softball teams from the United States and Canada. All Park Board members are welcome at the feature game scheduled for Thursday evening at 6:15 p.m. at the Roelofs Complex.

Ms. Liney stated PAA will be hosting District Playoffs at the Stoddart Complex following the Coleman Tournament, and the Park crew will reinstall the mounds for that play.

Ms. Liney stated Yardley Makefield Soccer will host a qualifying 3 v 3 soccer tournament at Macclesfield this weekend with approximately 70 teams participating. The Park remains open to the public and the user groups.

Ms. Liney congratulated the Lower Makefield Seniors Group who welcomed new officers for their organization today. Gail McPhaden is the new President with John Zack serving as the Vice President. The Seniors continue to offer a variety of activities to members, and look forward to moving into the new Senior/Community Center.

Ms. Liney stated the Community Pool had another successful opening weekend with 2500 members and guests enjoying the facilities. Residents continue to register, and it appears they are even with last year's membership numbers at this point.

Ms. Liney stated the Swim Team has a record high enrollment this year of 336 swimmers. She stated they are working with the Swim Team Board transitioning from the Pool membership paying a portion of Swim Team coaches' salaries to the Swim Team being totally responsibility for that expense.

Ms. Liney stated in July the Park Board conducts its Annual Road Tour of Township Park facilities. This Tour was highlighted by the Township insurer, Delaware Valley Insurance Trust, as a best practice for evaluating facilities, improving risk management, and demonstrating the value parks bring to the community. The tentative date for this would be Tuesday, July 12th at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Liney asked that she be advised if there is a specific location anyone would like to visit. It was suggested that the date of the Road Tour be changed to Tuesday, July 19th.

There was some discussion about lack of restroom facilities at fields on School District properties.

Mr. Maloney stated the EAC is working with Ms. Liney to promote recycling at the various Tournaments.

Mr. Majewski thanked the Park & Recreation Board for all the work done on planning the Parks. He stated when it came time to put together the Grant Application, it made the process much easier. Mr. Majewski was thanked by the Board for his work as well.

There being no further business, Mr. Gordon moved, Mr. Wysocki seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary

