

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 13, 2011

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on September 13, 2011. Vice Chairman Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: Henry Carpenter, Vice Chairman
Patricia Bunn, Secretary
Fran McDonald, Member
Andrew Newbon, Member
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Donna Liney, Park & Recreation Director
James Majewski, Township Engineer
Matt Maloney, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: David Fritchey, Park & Rec Board Chairman
Dave Gordon, Park & Rec Board Member

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Bunn moved, Mr. Wysocki seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the June 14, 2011 Minutes as written.

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY GRANT PROJECTS

Memorial Park Inclusive Playground

Ms. Liney stated the Township is currently reviewing equipment catalogues which were requested and received from six leading playground manufacturers regarding the planning of the inclusive playground at Memorial Park.

Ms. Liney stated they are working with the Disabled Persons Advisory Council and the Township engineer in this review. The Township engineer is putting together the dimensions of the area at Memorial Park they have targeted for the playground, and will forward this information to the individual manufacturers to assist in their developing and submitting a more detailed proposal. The Township engineer is arranging to remove some of the excess dirt mound in October, as timing wise, they did not want to impact the Park prior to the 9-11 events.

Ms. Liney stated moving forward they have several options to bid this project – as an all-inclusive with the contractor providing all labor, materials, and install, or they may choose to purchase select pieces under PA State Contract and contract for a professional installation.

Ms. Liney stated the Township anticipates the initial Phase I of the inclusive playground project to be in the \$200,000 range; and bids to be advertised in the spring, 2012, with groundbreaking in the early summer and needing a month or two to complete. It is possible moving forward to a second phase, they could secure private sponsors to support the purchase of particular pieces of play equipment. Ms. Liney stated the Disabled Persons Advisory Council has indicated they are optimistic the community would support this venture. Ms. Liney stated to this end, they are working on developing a Master Plan for the playground.

Mr. Majewski stated they are working with the Disabled Persons Advisory Council and the various manufacturers to come up with a lay out that works. He stated there are some space constraints in the Park; and he showed on the Plan where they are considering the playground could be located along with a shift in some existing parking.

Mr. Majewski noted on the Plan where the dirt pile is located, and he stated Toll Bros. may be able to use the dirt for one of their projects. Mr. Majewski stated they are trying to segregate different age groups in the playground.

Mr. Carpenter stated there had previously been concern expressed by the Memorial Committee that they wanted this to be a quiet, contemplative part of the Park; and he asked if the locations suggested would be appropriate. Mr. Majewski stated he feels the proposed locations are far enough removed that this should not be an issue.

Mr. Maloney noted the property is a Township property, and the Board of Supervisors will make the final decision on this. Ms. Bunn noted Ms. Saracini had previously indicated that she was not opposed to having a playground at the area being considered. Mr. Majewski stated until they make a decision on the playground equipment, they cannot really decide exactly where it should be placed.

There was discussion about using the existing berms, and Ms. Liney stated one of the themes being considered was “a secret garden,” which was something the Garden of Reflection Committee had indicated they were in favor of; and one of the manufacturers felt that he could make use of some of the existing berm to create that feel. Mr. Wysocki stated the berms may be able to act as a sound barrier as well. Mr. Majewski stated if they cannot get rid of all the dirt, it may be possible to make use of it for a berm. He stated they do not want to have the playground too far away from the restrooms.

Mr. Majewski stated in the next few months they hope to have the location resolved, after which they will prepared a Plan, and get approval from the Bucks County Conservation District. He stated they will then go out to bid as noted by Ms. Liney earlier this evening.

Samost Tract 70 and 90 Foot Ball Fields

Mr. Majewski stated they have done the soil testing, and the lay out is finalized. They will finish the Plans and get them to the Planning Commission by the end of this month. He stated the Planning Commission did see the Plan as a Sketch Plan, and they had some concerns about parking and also asked if there would be lights at the Park. Mr. Majewski stated currently there are no lights proposed for that Park.

Mr. Majewski stated the 90' field will be somewhat larger than the 90' fields at Macclesfield Park so that it could be used for the upper level American Legion teams, and the fences will be further out. Mr. Majewski stated the Plans are essentially the same as were seen previously, but they are trying to create some extra room between the fence and the parking lot.

Mr. Newbon asked the estimated date for construction, and Mr. Majewski stated they need approval from the Planning Commission, Bucks County Conservations, and the State for the NPDES Permit, and this could take approximately six months. He stated they estimate starting construction in the spring after going out to bid.

Mr. Majewski stated he understands that they want to play in the fall; but if they just seed the fields, there will not be much of a playable area so he would suggest that at least the infield and possibly the whole field be sodded. Mr. Majewski stated PAA also feels there should be irrigation, and they could add this as an alternate in the bid. He stated some Townships make use of a big water cannon that can be moved around to wet down the sod, and this would be much less expensive than a full irrigation system. Ms. Bunn stated if they did seed, it would need two growing seasons. Mr. Majewski stated he agrees, and they would not be able to play until the fall of 2013; but if they sod, they could play in 2012. Ms. Bunn stated if they did this, they would still have major repairs needed at the end of the season.

Ms. Bunn stated none of the other fields have irrigation, and she questions if it is worth over \$50,000 to install irrigation on two fields plus the cost of water. She stated the fields should be able to rest more but they cannot since they now have fall ball and spring soccer. She stated she does not feel they should irrigate these fields because of this overuse since there is sufficient rain in this region and she feels irrigation is a waste of money. Mr. Newbon stated he feels they need irrigation on the recreational fields.

Mr. Maloney stated he feels they could consider the cost/benefit of being able to make use of the fields

Mr. McDonald stated PAA may decide they want to raise funds for the irrigation. Mr. Majewski stated his preference would be use of a water cannon which could be moved to other locations. He stated typically they do not need it too much in the spring or fall. Ms. Bunn stated she would not have a problem with that type of system which would be much less costly. Mr. Majewski stated he does feel sod would be preferable, but they could still not use it until the following fall if it were installed in the spring. He stated they must first see how the costs come out before they decide what they can do.

Stoddart Improvements

Mr. Majewski stated water is always an issue particularly on Field 3. He stated they are all skinned-in field, but if they were to sod one of the infields, they would have a more playable surface. Ms. Liney stated they did discuss this with PAA, and they were divided on this issue whether they wanted to do this or not. Mr. Newbon stated the grass infield would help with the problem of standing water. Mr. Majewski noted on the Plan where they would like to install drains and inlets to help with the water problems as well as some minor grading. Ms. Liney agreed to discuss this issue with PAA.

Restoration of Community Park Tennis and Basketball Courts

Mr. Majewski stated this will go out to bid next week. He reviewed the work that will be done prior to repaving, and stated they will be installing new fencing. He stated the lighting will not have to be replaced.

Mr. Wysocki stated some quality courts have angled corners which make it easier to retrieve balls. Ms. Liney stated they have this at Core Creek, and Mr. Majewski agreed to look into this.

Senior/Community Center

Mr. Majewski stated there is a Committee working on this, and they have met one time and have discussed possible locations. Mr. Majewski stated he will meet with them again next Monday. Mr. Majewski stated the prior plan that was considered a number of years ago will need to be updated.

Ms. Bunn stated she is serving on this Committee, and they were going to look at different locations because they were not really clear on all the locations that were available to them to consider.

Mr. Maloney stated the Grant makes no condition as to where the Center must be located other than it must be located in the Township. He stated the Board of Supervisors has set the goal of the first meeting in December to have a proposed location from the Committee.

Mr. Newbon asked about the possible use of the Patterson Farm, and Ms. Bunn stated this is a possibility as well as a location in Edgewood Village. Mr. Majewski showed on the Plan a number of areas on the Patterson Farm which would be possible locations. He stated there had been discussions a number of years ago about having the Center at Memorial Park, but he feels that location would be too remote.

Mr. Newbon noted a property which had previously been a Church located on Big Oak Road which is for sale; and Mr. Maloney stated while this was discussed many years ago, the Township does not own that property, and the building is in very poor condition. Mr. Majewski stated there was extensive discussion about use of the Masonic Hall which would have been an excellent location, but they were unable to proceed with that location.

Mr. Carpenter stated previously there had been discussion by the various groups which were all insistent on having their own offices at the Community Center which is why the previous plan ended up as “grand” as it did. Ms. Bunn stated she advised the Committee that she feels they should get proposals from architects for a project of \$1 million and ask them how much they could get if it were a new building and how much they could get to restore the barn. She stated if it falls short of what they feel the building should be, they should be advised how much more they need or they would have to scale it back. She stated she does not want to get a Plan for a \$2.5 million building that they cannot afford to build.

Mr. Maloney stated unlike in the past, he feels parties on all sides are committed to doing this project and want to see it happen.

Mr. Wysocki stated to the extent that they can fit it within the Budget, the clubs do need private space but they would not need floor to ceiling walls separating them. He stated a common area could then be used for meetings.

Ms. Bunn stated one of the concerns with use of the barn was the second floor; and she stated they would not have to have a second floor, and it could remain open. She stated if they needed space, there is space out the back to put on an addition that would still be within character of the property. Mr. Maloney stated they could build a sub floor on the second floor and have it left open. Ms. Bunn stated they could use the second floor for storage which would not require an elevator as not everyone would have to access to storage.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Maloney stated at some point the Board of Supervisors will want to have a discussion with the Park & Recreation Board about negative reports they heard about events that occurred at the Pool this summer regarding the teenage staff, and the need for a firmer hand in the future. He stated he would like to put together a write up with Ms. Liney, and they can discuss this at the next meeting. He stated he feels they need to have older staff members in charge.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation was pleased and honored to support the Tenth Anniversary Remembrance events of the 9-11 tragedy this past weekend. Numerous local dignitaries, victim families, friends, and members of the community gathered throughout the weekend at Memorial Park for a candlelight vigil, various ceremonies, and to visit the Garden. All feedback regarding the activities from the community has been positive.

Ms. Liney stated the fall season is underway in the park system; and is always busy, with use by football, soccer, baseball, and tennis of Township recreational facilities. As in the past, three of the largest user groups have agreed to share time on Field H at Macclesfield in an effort to accommodate field needs. In order to minimize confusion in the parks, the Township requests the organizations adhere to their authorized fields and times.

Ms. Liney stated maintenance grooming and sanitizing service to Macclesfield Field C artificial turf is set for this Friday, 9/16. The Pennsbury High School boys and girls soccer teams will play on Field C next week, September 19 and 21.

Ms. Liney stated preparations are underway for the annual YMS Columbus Day Soccer Tournament held at Macclesfield Park and surrounding area locations. This year the Tournament is scheduled for October 7th through 9th with 300 teams registered to participate. Ms. Liney stated she will be meeting with the Tournament liaison this week to review increased recycling efforts and to insure, as in the past, everything goes smoothly.

Ms. Liney stated the Township has received a donation of a commercial bike rack for Macclesfield, scheduled for delivery September 23rd from the Bucks County Bicycle Company in Levittown. She stated this rack will be installed by the playground area on the grass.

Ms. Liney stated they have received an inquiry from a Pool member requesting the possibility of teen dances at the Pool. She stated the Pool does host special activities during the Pool season for members such as Family Fun Day, Dip N Dine, and water aerobics, and she will pass this onto the Pool Manager, Janet Smith, with the hope that we can add an activity targeting the teen members of the Pool.

Ms. Liney stated the Township will be meeting with Sandy Borowsky, the new Swim Team President this Friday to recap the 2011 season and begin plans for 2012 at the Pool. She stated the Swim Team will continue to fully fund the coach's salaries for their program, helping contain cost and provide savings to the Pool members.

Ms. Liney stated she is working on the Park & Recreation and Pool Preliminary drafts of the Operating Budgets for 2012. She stated at this point she does not anticipate any major changes from this year's Budget. She stated she should have more information on the Preliminary Budgets at the October meeting.

CHANGE OF OCTOBER MEETING DATE

Ms. Liney stated Mr. Fritchey has requested that the October meeting be changed to October 18, as he is unavailable on October 11 which was the scheduled date. This was acceptable to the other Board members.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Carpenter congratulated Ms. Liney and the Township for the work they did at Memorial Park. He stated the Township can be proud that this was seen on National television. Ms. Liney stated many people were involved in this.

Ms. Bunn stated the wall came out very nice, but she is concerned that as you drive up from either direction, you only see the end of the wall and this is where it will state “Garden of Reflection,” and she feels it should state “Memorial Park.” Mr. Maloney stated he felt they were going to see a final design first. Mr. Majewski stated they did submit a Plan that was reviewed by the Board of Supervisors, and the Board was in favor of it. Mr. Majewski stated they did add “Lower Makefield” to the wording on the wall. Mr. Maloney stated he agrees with Ms. Bunn that the focus of the wording should be Memorial Park as opposed to Garden of Reflection.

Ms. Liney stated only the wall has been installed, and they have not yet put up the wording. Mr. McDonald stated he understands that this has already been approved by the Board of Supervisors, and Ms. Bunn stated she feels they should state their objections before the wording is put up. Mr. Maloney stated this is the only entrance to this sixty acre Park in which the Memorial is located. Mr. Newbon stated he would have preferred “Memorial Park” and in smaller letters, “Home of the Garden of Reflection;” and Ms. Bunn stated this is what the Park & Recreation Board had discussed previously.

LEAGUE LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. McDonald stated YMS started a League for young people on the autism spectrum, and this Sunday they had fifteen young people play, and next week they expect to double that number. He stated those working with the children are YMS players. He stated they are calling the team the YMS Special Stars, and the YMS players are giving back to the community giving an opportunity to these young people who do not usually get a chance to play sports.

Mr. Newbon reported on the new officers for the Football organization. Mr. Newbon stated their numbers are down by approximately 100, going down to 400 players; and they do not know why there has been a decline. He stated the percentage of residents versus non-residents is up to 57% resident/43% non-residents. Mr. Newbon stated they did expand the age from 13 to 14, and they expect additional membership to come in after cuts from the Schools. Mr. Newbon stated they started to practice in August and had their first game this past weekend. Every team will play one game under the lights and every players has a starting position. Mr. Newbon stated Mr. Augustin stated they are very thankful for the fields they have been provided and appreciate being able to use Mac H.

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There being no further business, Ms. Bunn moved, Mr. Newbon seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary