

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD  
PARK & RECREATION BOARD  
MINUTES – MARCH 6, 2012

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on March 6, 2012. Chairman Fritchey called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: David Fritchey, Chairman  
Fran McDonald, Vice Chairman  
Patricia Bunn, Secretary  
Dave Gordon, Member  
Dave Malinowski, Member  
Andrew Newbon, Member  
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Donna Liney, Park & Recreation Director  
Mark Eisold, Township Engineer (joined meeting in progress)  
Kristin Tyler, Supervisor Liaison

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. Newbon seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of February 14, 2012 as corrected.

#### UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECT

Mr. McDonald stated he feels Ms. Bunn and the rest of the Committee has done a great job, but he was a little disheartened when he read the Seniors Newsletter. He stated he does not feel what they wrote was an accurate description as to how the Board of Supervisors meeting went or of what Ms. Bunn had been saying since the beginning of the project. Mr. McDonald stated it should be remembered that this matter was put on a Referendum twice, and it was voted down both times. Mr. McDonald stated the Park & Recreation Board has already indicated that they are in favor of a Community Center.

Ms. Bunn stated she provided the Board with an e-mail update following the Board of Supervisors meeting. She stated at this point the Committee has received no further direction from the Board of Supervisors. She stated after the Seniors Newsletter went out she spoke to Tony Bush as he was equally disappointed with the language in the Newsletter. She stated Mr. Bush sent an e-mail to the Board of Supervisors providing

feedback, and also asking for permission for the Committee to look at the needs of the building. She stated they had been shown a footprint of 12,500 square feet up to 14,000; and Ms. Bunn stated taking out land development costs which could be approximately \$200,000 depending on how much earth needs to be moved and the cost of utilities, this would only leave \$800,000 for building construction. She stated at least one of Supervisors had indicated they would not vote for any more money so they were trying to work with the \$1 million. Ms. Bunn stated she did some research, and in 2009 it cost \$186 a square foot for commercial construction and last year it was approximately \$125 although she is not sure that this really reflects using prevailing wage rates. She stated she therefore used \$150 per square foot which is only an estimate which means that they could afford to build a 5,300 square foot building. Ms. Bunn stated given those parameters, the Library site may be viable. She stated they had been shown a 7,500 square foot addition to the Library and adding 20 more parking spaces. She stated if this were cut down to 5,300 square feet, they could add more parking spaces. She stated she feels this needs to be studied further before they decide that this is not an option. Ms. Bunn stated before they make any decision to impact the recreation facilities, she feels this option deserves to be looked at. She stated they should also need to consider the needs for this building. She stated Mr. Bush had indicated that this was looked at seven years ago, and the needs of the Seniors have changed.

Mr. Newbon stated this is what they talked about previously as to the decision-making criteria, and he feels the first piece of that criteria would be that they have \$1 million.

Ms. Bunn stated Mr. Majewski had provided information on what other Centers had, and Ms. McPhaden and others had indicated that 10,000 square feet would not be big enough.

Mr. Fritchey stated the other fundamental question is whether it will be a Community Center or strictly a Senior Center. Ms. Tyler stated it will be a Community Center. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the Seniors feel it is going to be a Senior Center; and while it may be possible to build an adequate Senior Center that would have 5,300 square feet, he does not feel that size is sufficient for a Community Center. He stated there needs to be a coherent idea as to what they want to see in the building and determine if there is support to do this. He stated they have \$1 million that can be used, but if there is no willingness on the part of the Board of Supervisors to come up with additional money, he does not feel it will get built. Mr. Fritchey stated if it is going to be a Community Center it needs to be more than a meeting room where people come and play cards. He stated a Community Center would be a focal point of the community where people could gather for various activities, and he feels this would be more in the realm of a 10,000 to 15,000 square foot building.

Ms. Bunn stated she questions if they would want certain facilities available such as exercise equipment if they were not going to have someone there on staff to monitor people because of liability concerns. Mr. Fritchey stated he does feel they would have to have someone at the facility. Ms. Bunn stated they were not considering adding staff to maintain the building. She stated there is not a permanent coordinator proposed for the Center. Mr. Fritchey stated he does feel they will have to have someone manage the facility, and he agrees that this a cost to be considered. Ms. Bunn stated they need to decide if they are building a meeting space with some offices or are they including facilities such as exercise rooms. Mr. Fritchey stated if they are going to have a Community Center they should have an exercise room along with someone there who is trained. Ms. Bunn stated this goes to the question as to what is the purpose of the building; and until they solve this question, they cannot proceed. Mr. Fritchey this is why he indicated that they need to consider whether this is a Community Center or a Senior Center.

Mr. Wysocki asked the maximum space they could fit at the Library, and Ms. Bunn stated it is 7,500 square feet. Ms. Tyler stated she does feel the Library is a good location; however, it does preclude expansion and there would be issues to be dealt with between the Township and the County. Mr. Newbon discussed the possibility of starting with a Phase I of 7,500 square feet and they could then have a Phase II at a future date. Ms. Bunn stated they could make the foundation ready for a second floor and box out an area for an elevator. Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel adding the addition would effect the Library unless they were to ask them for some of their space.

Mr. Wysocki asked about the Agreement with the Library, and Ms. Tyler stated they are researching this now.

Mr. Greg Caiola asked whether there is a sufficient match to meet the Grant requirements using the Library site, and Ms. Bunn stated they have not discussed this as the Library site was not considered until the end of the process. Mr. Caiola stated years ago many people indicated they did not want something huge, but wanted something functional. He stated he feels this should be a Community/Senior Center. He stated they should show what they are able to get for the dollar amount they have to work with. He stated he does feel that some additional funds will have to be put in to add to the \$1 million they are getting. Mr. Caiola stated he has seen some of the Senior activities that take place currently; and while he agrees that they need more space, he questions if they need that much more space for their activities. He noted the Bucks County Performing Arts Center gets \$11,000 to \$12,000 a year from the Township; and if they want a space here as well, they should also become involved in this. He stated he does not want to miss the opportunity to get the \$1 million because they are not willing to add any additional money. Mr. Caiola stated he feels they should come up with a number of alternative plans with different sizes of buildings showing what they can get for each of these options and at what cost.

Mr. Newbon stated they need to find a location and determine what they are going to spend. Mr. McDonald stated they first need to know what they want, and the parameters need to be defined as to what they are trying to build – whether it is a Community Center a Senior Center or a combination. Mr. McDonald stated he is not sure that everyone is on board yet as to what is the criteria. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the Seniors are assuming they have a veto over where it will be located because they will be the principal users; but if it is a Community Center, it should be what is functional for the entire community and not just one constituency. Mr. Wysocki stated it is the Board of Supervisors that have to make this decision.

Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the Library may be a viable option since there is an existing building with existing utilities and parking. He stated the whole community also knows where it is. He stated the \$1 million would be used for modification as opposed to building from nothing so they can get a lot closer to having a usable facility.

Mr. Wysocki asked if the Park & Recreation Board could do anything to create the impetus to look at an addition to the Library more deeply.

Mr. Gordon stated he would also like to know if there is something they can do to have Samost taken out of consideration because they have a Master Plan for that location. Mr. Wysocki stated they did have a Motion to the Board of Supervisors to do that. Mr. McDonald stated Mr. Stainthorpe responded to this by indicating that they need to look at the Master Plan. Ms. Bunn stated she was unsure if he was referring to Snipes or Samost when he made this comment. Mr. Caiola stated he feels Mr. Stainthorpe was referring to Snipes although he is not positive. Mr. McDonald stated he does feel that YMS feels the need is still there for something at Snipes. Ms. Liney stated they are very crowded at Macclesfield.

Ms. Bunn stated where they were considering locating the Center at the Snipes Tract would not impact any of the ball fields.

Mr. Caiola stated it is good that the Township has no shortage of property, but they need to find the one that will not negatively impact other proposed plans especially the ones that the Park & Rec Board had put together for many years and are finally ready to move ahead with. He stated he feels the majority of the Board does not support the Center at Samost and would like to have another option.

Ms. Bunn asked about the possibility of using the existing tennis courts since they are building tennis courts at Samost. She stated while they just put money into the existing tennis courts, the Center will probably not be built for another three to five years. She stated this might involve some of the Township-owned property near the railroad tracks and some clearing may be necessary, but she feels there is ample space at that location. There was discussion about parking availability. Ms. Bunn stated this is an option.

Mr. Wysocki stated he is concerned that too much time is going to elapse, and they will lose the \$1 million. Ms. Tyler stated she feels they have approximately four years and four months to start breaking ground. Ms. Bunn stated she feels they will need at least eighteen months for approvals. Mr. Wysocki again asked if the Park & Rec Board can do anything to stimulate activity toward a solution. Ms. Tyler stated she feels the Community Center Committee needs to reconvene, and they need to communicate with the engineer and determine exactly what they can build so that they can then determine where it can be built. She feels they started backwards.

Ms. Bunn stated she is not sure if they first need direction from the Board of Supervisors or if the Committee just continue to meet. She stated they need clear direction.

Mr. Caiola stated he feels Ms. Tyler as the Park & Rec Board liaison can take this discussion to the Board of Supervisors during the Executive Session and indicate that the Park & Rec Board is looking to find out what the next step would be as they have a big stake in this.

Ms. Tyler stated she agrees and feels it would be a good time to consider this since there is a new engineer. There was discussion on what was envisioned for a Community Center, and Ms. Tyler stated she feels it means a large meeting room, a kitchen, and two offices at minimum. Mr. Gordon stated he feels that the large meeting room should have a stage as it opens it up to various types of entertainment.

Mr. McDonald asked if there has been any discussion about the upkeep and maintenance of such a facility, and Ms. Bunn stated there has not. She stated they have not had good direction on what the Committee was supposed to be doing. She stated she felt that they should have had an architect on board and looked at the old floor plans that were previously considered to see what could be done making it smaller or bigger. She stated she feels the Committee should be expanded, and Ms. Tyler stated she feels it needs to be re-formed. Ms. Bunn stated she feels there should be additional people included to make get more input from other groups in the community such as someone from the Performing Arts. Mr. Caiola stated the prime charge when the Committee was formed was to find a location, but they did discuss at that time potentially expand it to consider what the building would look like. Mr. Caiola stated they do have to find out from the Performing Arts if they want to be part of this. Mr. Caiola stated he does feel they now need more than five people, and he feels they should discuss this with the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel they can decide on the location until they take a step back and decide what the building will look like and who it will serve.

Mr. Wysocki stated he feels the initial Committee has already accomplished their purpose of giving the various properties to be considered and now there should be a new Committee which will have a different function. Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel a new Committee is necessary, but they could expand that Committee. Mr. Wysocki stated they could have a modified Committee to represent a comprehensive cross section of the community and with a new charter such as taking the input from the initial Committee on location and factor that into content, shape, size, architectural requirements, etc.

Mr. Fritchey stated he does not feel that the site selection is conclusive because there was a divided recommendation. Ms. Bunn agreed and added it is not really complete because there are some options they have not looked at yet. Mr. Wysocki stated they have done a lot of research, but Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel it is complete because they have not researched the Library as thoroughly as they did the other sites. She stated she feels there may also be a spot where the tennis courts are located. Mr. Wysocki stated he does feel the Library looks like a potentially viable spot. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the \$1 million will go farther if they start on an existing site.

Mr. Wysocki stated if there is a re-charter, it must be very clear what the charter of the new Committee is and they should factor in the input that was done by the first Committee. Mr. Newbon stated he feels they need to take it down to three sites, and Ms. Bunn stated she feels they do have it down to four but they have not fully explored the Library and possibly one other site.

Ms. Tyler agreed to bring this up with the Board of Supervisors and agrees that they need to re-purpose the Committee and move forward with more particulars and bring in the professionals. Ms. Bunn stated they do need an architect and engineer to tell them what is viable and provide some prices as to land development and building cost on each of the sites.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BOUCHER & JAMES, TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

Ms. Liney introduced Mr. Mark Eisold, the new Township engineer. Mr. Eisold stated he has been in contact with Mr. Majewski who has finalized the Plan for the Samost fields' project. He stated they will review them and incorporate any other ideas or comments necessary understanding there are specific areas they want to look at particularly with regard to drainage and backstops, etc. He stated he has gone through the information Ms. Liney provided. He stated he is not sure what the Township's procedure will be with regard to Land Development Plans. Ms. Bunn stated they did not waive Land Development, and they have to follow the process. Mr. Eisold stated he assumes they will then submit Plans, and they will be reviewed. Ms. Bunn asked if the Permits have been submitted or are they still at the Land Development stage, and Mr. Eisold stated he believes it is at the Land Development stage as he has not seen anything yet.

Mr. Fritchey stated they have been trying to get this project done for a while so there is a desire to move this forward as expeditiously as possible. Mr. Fritchey stated there has historically been difficulty with drainage of the fields in the area. He stated they have done some aeration which helps to a point. He stated Mr. Majewski also felt that laser grading would be a good solution. Mr. Fritchey stated some drains were put under some of the fields but it was suggested that the drains may have been crushed and were not installed properly. Mr. Fritchey stated in times of extreme rain it is not uncommon for the fields to be unplayable for three days which is a big problem. Mr. Fritchey stated he is a big proponent of underground drains assuming they can do it within a reasonable cost-effective fashion. Mr. Fritchey stated he does coach a softball team and in visiting Disney's Florida complex, they have a wonderful system on which the fields are playable within thirty minutes of a rainstorm. He stated he would like to get some idea as to what it would cost to do something similar in Lower Makefield so that they are not paying for remediation every year. Ms. Bunn noted it is difficult to compare facilities since Lower Makefield has a lot of clay which is very difficult to drain. Mr. Fritchey stated by going deeper, they may be able to effectuate a better solution.

Mr. Eisold stated they can research this and provide a range of costs for different options. Mr. Fritchey stated he would like to have the two new fields built correctly if they can do it at a reasonable price point.

Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel groundbreaking will take place for at least one year since they are only at the point Land Development. She stated she assumes the NPDES Permit has not been submitted, and this could take up to six months to obtain. She stated they also have to go out for bid. She stated she feels it will be two years before they are able to use the new fields. Mr. Eisold stated they will do whatever they can to expedite this. He stated Mr. Fedorchak has assured him that if they do not have the Plans in the next few days, he will contact Mr. Majewski. He stated they do have a good rapport with the Pennsylvania District and their offices are across the street from theirs.

Ms. Liney stated she had also advised Mr. Eisold that one of the things they were discussing including in the bid as an alternate was improvements for the middle field at Stoddart on a trial basis. She stated they had \$25,000 in the Grant that was targeted for Stoddart.

Ms. Bunn asked about the inclusive playground, and Ms. Liney asked about the status of the dirt pile. Mr. Eisold stated they have been in contact with Toll Bros. who has indicated that between the middle and end of March, they will begin to get the material out of there. Ms. Liney stated after that she feels Boucher & James will go in and do the dimensions.

Mr. Gordon asked about the status of the indoor batting facility; and Mr. Caiola stated they know where they want to put it and the cost, but there are questions about the monetary contribution and how much they have in hand. He stated he will discuss this with Mr. Birkhead to find out whether they need to do additional fundraising. He stated they know this will save them money because they will not have to go to other facilities, and they may also have the opportunity to rent it out to raise funds to help it pay for itself.

#### RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation will be busy in the next few weeks preparing the facilities for spring use by the community. She stated installation of the bases and mounds, mulching the playgrounds, adjusting timers and replacing lights, filling in divots, slit seeding the turf and turning the water on in the restrooms will all be completed in the next few weeks. The Park crew will also be readying the Pool complex for the season.

Ms. Liney stated the Park crew plans on activating the fountains at the Garden of Reflection mid-April.

Ms. Liney stated Park and Recreation continues to monitor the 2012 Operating Budget looking for creative ways to accomplish more with less. She stated following an earlier meeting this week with the Township Manager, it is already anticipated that there will be no tax increase in the 2013 Budget.

Ms. Liney stated the Pool Membership discount period ended Friday, March 2. She stated so far the numbers look good, and they appear to be ahead of past February. She stated they are aware of the fact that the cutoff date was March 2 this year, but they are cautiously optimistic with hope that this trend continues and their effort to increase memberships with the new programs is successful. She stated they will monitor the enrollment as they move forward.

Ms. Liney stated staff at the Pool has been identified and offer letters will be mailed. She stated work weekends should begin mid-April continuing every Saturday until the Pool opens on Saturday, May 26. She stated mandatory pre-season employee meetings will be scheduled with the Pool Manager to review the staff's job descriptions and the expectations of the Manager for the staff.

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There being no further business, Mr. Gordon moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary