

**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 20, 2023**

Members in Attendance

Stan Smith
Neal Johnson
Bob MacIntyre
Jim Seidler
Kirby Lentz
Mayur Patel
Wendy Steinbrunner

Members Absent

Sandy Mort-Backus
Alan Gallagher

Also in Attendance

Rachelle Scott, Staff Liaison
Amanda Corsnitz, CD Cheer
Courtney Heckman, CD Cheer
Chris DiSanto, Triple Crown Corp.

CALL TO ORDER

The Lower Paxton Township Parks and Recreation Board was called to order by Chairman Neal Johnson at 7:15 p.m. on the above date, in Meeting Room 174, at the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, PA.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 7, 2023 meeting. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and it was followed by a unanimous vote of approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

BLUE RIDGE PROPOSAL

Ms. Scott stated that Mr. Johnson and Mr. Smith were invited to a meeting with Triple Crown. Mr. Smith was the only PR representative to attend. Mr. Smith explained that the question that prompted the meeting was why hasn't work begun on designing the park. He noted that there was a small impasse where the Township can't develop a park on land it doesn't yet own, and the developer couldn't turn it over until they knew what would be done with the land, in order to complete their required improvements along the roadway.

About 6 months ago, Triple Crown had come before the Parks and Recreation Board to ask for approximately 11 acres back from the 32 acres that was to be dedicated for parkland, so they could build three more buildings for apartments. Chris DiSanto agreed noting that they

don't know exactly how much land they would need, but they are looking for 3 apartment buildings, with a mix of studio/1-bedroom/2-bedroom apartments, and approximately 39-46 units in each. The remainder would still be dedicated to the Township for parkland. He explained that the ordinance requires 10.6 acres, and they gave 32 acres with the original plan. The subdivision and land development plan has been recorded, so the developer is now obligated to give the 32 acres of land.

Mr. DiSanto stated that Triple Crown Corporation (TCC) gets questioned frequently about when the park that Ryan Homes promised its buyers would be installed. He speculated that this park would be a lower priority so he agreed to engage YSM to see what kind of concept they foresee for this area if the 7-10 acres was pulled out for building.

Mr. Patel asked why the Township hasn't done any planning for this 32-acre park. Ms. Scott explained that the 2023 Master Plan addressed most of the existing parks and proposed that a separate master plan be dedicated to Blue Ridge so it can be developed properly once it has been determined what land will actually be transferred, and once it has been legally transferred.

Mr. DiSanto stated that one result that came from the meeting is that Triple Crown will engage YSM to evaluate and create a concept plan for the remainder tract (parkland minus the 7-10 given back to TCC) and they would evaluate the cost, and see if they could either contribute to it or even install it, depending on the scope of the work. He suggested that if TCC built it, it could be completed quicker than if the Township does it, which would make the residents there happy.

Mr. MacIntyre stated that the discussion prior to development was to try to keep that area as open as possible and keeping the old cart paths as a start to walking paths throughout. At that time, the Board of Supervisors were in favor of that. Mr. Smith added that the Township SALDO requires parkland dedication or a fee in lieu of land dedication, and in this area, land is needed more than fees. The overall Park Master Plan lists a few amenities that could work nicely there but they are anecdotal not a plan for the property. Mr. MacIntyre emphasized that the walking trails are an important feature to keep here, and the typical sports fields and higher intensity uses shouldn't be at this park.

Mr. DiSanto was unclear as to the timeline or what the triggering factors are in the dedication process. He is here to find out if the Parks and Recreation Board is amenable to the concept, and if they are, then TCC can start engineering for the buildings and related improvements, and start the park planning at the same time.

Mr. Lentz asked about the engineers or planners, and Mr. DiSanto stated they would use their engineer for the residential development, YSM for park design, and then HRG/Township Engineer for oversight.

Mr. Lentz asked about a second means of access and Mr. DiSanto answered that they haven't contacted the neighboring property yet, waiting on a clearer picture here.

PR Board members reviewed the aerial map of the 32 acre tract. Ms. Scott noted that there is also a requirement that 15.5 acres of the property has to be suitable for active recreation. Ms. Smith added that the land more suitable for active ballfields is where the apartments would be, and the balance is more suitable for passive recreation. Mr. DiSanto showed where the flatter areas are, both the apartment area and otherwise. There will need to be a stream crossing to access the apartments from the site. The parkland is bordered by Forest Hills to the northeast, and Sportsmans Golf to the northwest. There would be fee-in-lieu of \$310,800 if the apartments were built.

Mr. Patel asked what the residents expect to be built there since they are pushing for the completion of the park. If the developer thinks its trails and disk golf, and the Township has no plan in place, there might be a lot of speculation and ideas going around.

Mr. Seidler asked the maximum acreage that TCC needs and Mr. DiSanto speculated 6-8, but definitely less than ten.

Mr. Seidler was happy to hear that the developer and the Supervisors are seeking input and sharing ideas. He would like to hear more about contributions towards the park. TCC would like to see what the concept is before it commits to a certain amount or a certain portion of the work.

Mr. Smith stated the land is more valuable to the Parks than the fee-in-lieu, so the willingness to contribute towards the installation of park amenities is important.

Mr. DiSanto questioned what the PRB would like to see installed or developed in this park. Mr. Smith referenced the chart of amenities in the Parks Master Plan which shows overall needs. Mr. DiSanto suggested pickleball seems to be needed in the Township. Mr. Seidler agreed pickleball might be a good choice, but would feel more comfortable if TCC could commit to some amount of contribution. Mr. MacIntyre didn't envision this to be a community park. Mr. Smith stated that the initial feeling was that TCC could comfortably put in the disc golf course, and connect the trails, outdoor exercise equipment, and age-segregated playground with seating. Mr. DiSanto agreed he was comfortable with at least the first two, but would look at cost of playgrounds. Mr. Seidler agreed noting that he would like to see more details of what

the developer is willing to offer. Mr. DiSanto stated he will work on the cost to install the anecdotal list of amenities in the master plan, and decide how much they are comfortable with. With that information he can return to the PRB in November to discuss prior to engaging YSM.

Mr. Smith reiterated that the Township is not in a position to engineer a park development plan on land that it does not own. By TCC providing more information, it allows this conversation to continue.

Mr. Patel noted that the developer must be pretty confident they can build the buildings and all related infrastructure and that this piece of land is suitable for that. Mr. DiSanto agreed since TCC installed much of the infrastructure for the development already, and noted they may have to do significant work to cross the creek, and there may be challenges with sewer grading and secondary emergency access.

CD RAMS YOUTH CHEER & FOOTBALL

Ms. Scott asked Football and Cheer to attend the meeting tonight. Amanda Corsnitz and Ms. Heckman were in attendance representing CD Rams Cheer. Ms. Scott explained that Cheer and Football had been one organization for many years. Football had always taken the lead, and the Township has primarily worked with Football for things like field and facility usage, and maintenance and improvements. This season, however, they have not been getting along, and split becoming two separate organizations. Ms. Scott will be drafting new agreements with all of the sports organizations that use the parks, but that process hasn't started yet. Without formal agreements she relies on past practice, which doesn't solve all of the issues either. She would like the Board to hear from both parties so they can get through the current season.

Ms. Scott explained that the current conflict is over the concession stand usage, and related issues. The ordinance is unclear, because it doesn't allow selling in the parks, but it allows selling of concessions if it supports a local nonprofit. Football won't allow cheer to use the concession stand but allowing sales to take place in other locations seems to be opening up the Township to a lot of problems.

Ms. Corsnitz explained that in the past, the two boards contributed volunteers and supplies to the concession stand, and Football agreed to give Cheer a certain percentage. At the end of the 2022 season, the Football leadership went through some changes and it took till July of this year to get a check for \$2,200. At the start of the 2023 season, the organizations formally split, Cheer kept the old tax id number and Football got a new one.

Ms. Corsnitz stated that they intended to share responsibilities and profits in the concession stand again, but the Township said they can't sublease the concession stand.

After many conversations and discussions, Ms. Scott allowed Cheer to operate a separate stand for the most recent game. Cheer was issued a single day permit to put up a canopy and sell snacks and apparel. Ms. Corsnitz stated that they did well with this sale, and would like to do the same thing for the last two home games of the season. Paying for things like uniforms for Cheer, uniforms/equipment for Football, line painting, ref fees, utilities, field maintenance, etc, are things that need to be worked out formally, but are currently creating friction.

Ms. Scott added that Football has been the point of contact for the Township. They pay the utilities for the concession stand, maintenance on the field, and concession stand. Football has expressed concerns about Cheer, to allow these two organizations to share space and funds and make their own rules wasn't going to work. Ms. Scott will work with them to create agreements with the Township properly, she will not permit them to make agreements with each other. In the meantime, they each are making moves without checking with the Township, and there is a balance that needs to be maintained at this park, with other sports such as baseball and softball.

The only exception that has been made to the rule prohibiting selling at the parks, has been through concession stands for the youth sports groups. Issuance of a permit for two more dates can be done to get through this season, but the bigger problems still need to be resolved.

Courtney mentioned that there may be different leadership after this season, so it may be possible for the groups to reconcile.

Mr. Smith cautioned that they Township shouldn't create a precedent that it cannot live with in other context. Erosion of the authority or strength of the ordinances could be at risk.

Mr. Patel questioned the subleasing issue. Ms. Scott explained that Football let another unrelated organization operate the concession stand, this took place without consulting the Township or providing insurance coverage or any other information. She added that if an organization, other than the one that has the agreement to operate the concession, is allowed to operate the concession stand, it has to be done through an agreement with the Township.

Mr. Patel stated that what was done for the one day permit is fine to do for two more games, and it is consistent with the ordinance. The Board members agreed.

PARK UPDATES

Brightbill

The playground construction has started and is going well.

Autumn Oaks

There has been no updates on the developer agreement. Mr. McNaughton's first reaction to the list of items to do lieu of electricity was that it was excessive and he would be back in touch.

Lingle Park

Construction on the permanent cricket pitch will begin October 31st.

Cameras in the Community Parks

Ms. Scott reported that she has been working with the provider and Public Works on the location of each cameras. They should be installed in the next 6-8 weeks. She will also be looking into policies to regulate viewing or and using footage obtained by the cameras.

Hodges Heights Park/Conway Tract

Ms. Scott explained she contracted with YSM to develop a master plan for the 8 acre parcel a mile down Conway Road from Hodges Heights Park. There will be a small subcommittee for this project, and she would like a volunteer from the Parks and Rec Board involved. The neighborhoods and HOAs will be invited to participate too.

Mr. MacIntyre suggested fill be placed at Hodges Heights Park and a concrete wall that can be used for chalk drawing. A sign could be at the top, with a ramp with seating and nice trees and plantings.

Forest Hills

Ms. Scott stated construction has been ongoing for the replacement of the tennis and basketball courts, and a small covered seating area.

Koons Pool

George Kunkle is retiring from the volunteer position of operations manager at the pool. They are looking for someone to take over for him and another person to be on their Board. They will take their concerns to the Board of Supervisors next month.

Yearly Business

2024 Budget, Board Terms, can be discussed at the next meeting.

ARTS COUNCIL REPORT

Mr. Smith stated that they have worked on a guiding document for the Arts Council, Ms. Scott will review it and then it will go to the Township Manager.

The Arts Council agreement with the Library is going really well displaying local artists' work.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

The CEC continues to work on the repurposing of their group to engage the residents. They also hope to expand their membership by including the Shade Tree Commission and the Historical Commission.

GREENWAY COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Seidler stated that the dedication of the Oak Park Trail will be on October 6 at 10:00 am.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no additional items to discuss.

VANDALISM AND OTHER POLICE REPORTS

No vandalism was reported this month.

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2023 at 7:15 pm. The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hiner, Recording Secretary