

Charlestown Township Parks and Recreation Board Minutes of October 16, 2014 - draft

The October meeting was held October 16, 2014 at the Great Valley Middle School, Room 147, 255 N. Phoenixville Pike, Malvern, PA.

Present: Chris Lawrence via phone, Chairman, Kevin Kuhn, Supervisor, Pat Dowd, Phoenixville Area Soccer Club, Karen Schlichter, Sue Staas, Marylou Forcine, Ester Underhill. Chuck McQuiston, James T. Quay, and Paul Hogan were absent.

Consultants: none

Staff: Tim Hubbard, Property & Safety Coordinator and Lisa Gardner, Recording Secretary.

Call to Order: 7:30 p.m.

Minutes

The September Minutes were distributed and approved.

Charlestown Day Review

Karen Schlichter - a written report to be given to the Board of Supervisors

- Successes
 - Charlestown Playhouse received \$9,100.
 - Had 40-45 vendors. Received positive feedback. Liked being grouped together.
 - Good number of runners for first time.
- Improvements for 2015 Charlestown Day
 - Charlestown Day event may need a rain date. 5k wouldn't be affected.
 - No pace car needed for 2015.
- Wiring
 - There were some potentially large problems foreseen by the electrician. Thankfully he showed up just in case on Saturday, and was there to take care of them.

Charlestown Park Improvements – JD Bravo

Mr. Robert Dettore of JD Bravo Company, Malvern, PA introduced his colleagues James Davie and Robert Gallant. Mr. Kuhn invited them to tonight's meeting, to give the P&R members an overview of the plethora of skills JD Bravo can add to a project like Charlestown Park. JD Bravo has already verified boundaries to match deeds and placed markers.

Mr. Dettore advised the members to see the approved plans as an overview or starting point. With the document and site research they have already performed, they should proceed from that point via a highly collaborative process. JD Bravo will review the plans and be a guide to steer Charlestown toward creating a list of prioritized objectives, with optimal timing, since time is the major cost. If Charlestown compresses the schedule, it can put the money saved into the improvements. After an initial review of Park maps and plans, Mr. Dettore said he would come up with a plan and schedule. Then to estimate costs, they will create a bid package.

The research uncovered many facilities previously unknown. The Charlestown Park Plan doesn't show all the land deeded to the Township. There is a 1.2 acre lot (in Schuylkill Township) that would help speed the construction phases by enabling modification of the park's vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The Township owns very little of the parking in the Park itself. The current plans for improvement by consultant Thomas Comitta show new parking added, but it is a challenge to get an orderly way to handle traffic during construction. This 1.2 developable acre is the advantage parking, and logistically benefits the flow of improvements. The lot holds 100-150 spots, and the Park needs 400. Currently, there are about 250. Also, the flexibility added with this lot opens up more preferable options in regards to land planning and zoning. Now it could be possible to expedite the approval processes.

Mr. Dettore distributed a flow chart portraying the *current phasing plan*, unadjusted. This project plan needs significantly more permitting due to earth disturbance and also more zoning and land planning. Bidding and construction, in this scenario, is 28 months.

However, things could change organizationally due to the extra land. In a revised plan, JD Bravo can begin phasing the work and start the initial phases of parking and pavilion work this spring, due to the new acre lot. These were not the first steps of the approved plan. But, this new proposition is bid friendly.

He advised finalizing a plan, and completing it in the shortest time, focusing on getting what you want the most, without inconveniencing users of the park. JD Bravo has developed a Summary Schedule that identifies the major components to be completed.

Mr. Kuhn said an even earlier version of the plan was a challenge due to parking. But, the new lot gives room to have pocket projects while also solving some of the parking issue. The amphitheater will probably not receive funding. Mr. Dettore added the fact that some of the park's grassy slopes would naturally make good seating for something stage-like.

Water from artesian wells, plus a 12" piped supply from the local water authority, is more than enough water. The old fire station, steam laundry, and 3 boiler houses were powered by the wells. The hydrant system is still active. Mr. Dettore said environmental reports say the water tends to flow north. This is away from any areas of suspected dumping and/or suspected carcinogens. Drawings suggest a ramp/mound for trucks to dump incinerator material. But, in later reports it appears in the same location as a type of therapy ski slope.

Mr. Dettore said there will be conversations to coordinate the club's use patterns. Pat asked if they should pay for needed clubhouse repairs this year or wait for construction. Mr. Kuhn said there would not be action this spring that would affect the club houses. First it needs to go through P&R, then to the Board of Supervisors, and they need to figure out who is responsible for paying, since the leagues are the users, not the Township. All this is beyond 2015. Mr. Dettore said this could be part of the info collected at the collaborative sessions.

Mr. Kuhn reminded the members there is a level of complexity due to the unknown. Surprises could be underground, like utilities, and then there is also a problem of paving over the unknown, or finding a location that was used for dumping. The site documentation is sketchy, dating back to 1945-48. Ground work will hopefully minimize the surprises.

Additional Member Comments

Chris asked about the timeline for the pavilion area. Does P&R need to increase their budget to cover some possible park emergency repairs? Mr. Kuhn said he hoped to remove the pavilions by spring. New pavilions, permits, Schuylkill approval, the bid package, were all some of the items coming up in the future.

- Karen thought of putting the vendors under the pavilion area, because they would like being under the same roof, instead of on the grass under their own umbrellas.
- Marylou would like a gazebo for weddings, etc.
- The old foundations of the hospital, and underground utilities, still need to be addressed.
- Gaining additional land from the Phoenixville Area School District is another variable.

Finally, Mr. Dettore suggested the members define their construction steps. Then they will conceptualize the remainder of the project and lay out a plan for all this. As Charlestown proceeds, surprises will come up, or scheduled items will jump ahead of each other for cost savings, etc. But, they will manage the logistics of the direction Charlestown takes on the improvements.

Trails Update

Sue Staas stated the Thompson trail is open. Jim Thompson did the signage. The only problem was a neighbor concerned about the trail not being defined behind her property. Sue is getting feedback from users (mostly from Tinker Hill Lane). Union Hill Road parking needs to be resolved, but HARB needs to save the ruin first.

Devault Trail Public Meeting #2 on October 20th, from 7-9 at GVMS cafeteria

They will be showing the alternative routes. There will be discussion to gain feedback.

2015 Budget planning

Sue handed out the updated budget from Linda. Chris asked members to consider anything that stands out. Current maintenance costs of 2014 are portrayed for 2015's budget. The members were fine with the budget as is.

New Board Member procedure

Chris said the reorg will be done by ordinance so members wishing to remain or join can do so when the ordinance is passed.

Park Captains

People, who live near the parks, can be volunteers to keep an eye-out for things like trash overflow or problems. Marylou and Karen volunteered to be co-captains for Charlestown Park. Then, someone can just call Tim, instead of him making continuous site visits. Sue Staas is Trail captain, but Chris would like a few for each.

Miscellaneous

Keep in mind anything that will be needed. Winter maintenance isn't performed on the trails for liability reasons.

An email regarding the clearing of brush in the Park, near a stream, was mentioned. Pat Dowd said it was well needed. The estimate is \$700 and the contractor has done a great job in the past, so Chris authorized the expenditure. Mrs. Csete is to give the go ahead.

Ester asked about a tree that was removed by the Roadmaster on the Jenkins property. Mr. Hubbard said it was probably damaged and removed for safety reasons.

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 20, 2014 7:30 p.m. at the Great Valley Middle School, Room 154, 255 North Phoenixville Pike, Malvern, PA.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa K. Gardner
Recording Secretary