

**Montgomery Township  
Park & Recreation Board  
Meeting Minutes for March 12, 2008**

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At 8:05p.m. Chairman Bill Maule called the meeting to order. David Keightly, Keith Johnson, Barry Weinstein, Kevin Costello (Public Works Director), Pam Gural-Bear (Assistant Township Manager) and Jeffrey McDonnell (Board of Supervisors' Liaison) were present.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

The February 13th Minutes were approved as submitted.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

It was noted that Bill Maule was missing the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park System (PRPS) awards banquet this evening where he would be awarded the prestigious Lay Honor Award for all of his years of volunteer service.

**OLD BUSINESS**

***Capital Projects/Five Year Capital Plan***

**Kevin Costello, Public Works Director**, reported that the soccer and baseball field maintenance would begin on April 1<sup>st</sup> and the soil erosion plan was being maintained. In addition the baseline fences were awarded. Spring Valley locks for the bathrooms were approved for purchase at the Board of Supervisors meeting on Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Rose Twig Baseball fields will be ready for play in another 1 to 1 ½ years – fall 2009 will be the earliest time to play on these fields. It was brought up to hydro seed the area versus regular seeding. Further discussion ensued over the seeding process. The best way to seed is to slit seed the field in two or four directions. Seeding can occur up to June 15.

Pond restoration quote will be reaffirmed by Kevin Costello. He will obtain solid cost estimates and start the permitting process now since that takes the longest. Kevin was asked about the clearing of the invasive plants and brush around the pond. The ground around the pond has been either too wet or too soft to bring in the equipment to clear the area.

### ***MTBSA Concession Stand & Broadcast Booth at Windlestrae Park***

**Anthony Ruggieri, MTBSA**, asked the Park Board for their thoughts regarding the MTBSA's proposed concession stand and press box. Park Board members asked who would own it as well as the building's cost to build and to maintain. The cost is unknown until a bid proposal goes out.

Discussion ensued regarding meshing to be placed on the fence behind the baseball/softball fields. They would act as a screen and be imprinted with the Township logo. Questions were raised regarding the impact on the material by the wind. It was suggested to have wind holes inserted. The meshing would remain up for the season – April to June – and would help to prevent people from standing behind the fence to watch the games. The cost is approximately \$3 a square foot. The size suggested for the logo would be 4x8 and the remainder of the mesh would be green with a list of sponsors printed on the mesh as well. The Park Board unanimously approved the use of the mesh screening behind the baseball fields. The MTBSA's batting cages were discussed and were offered to be sold back to the township for \$1. An agreement was discussed between the MTBSA and the Township in order to release the Township from any liability.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***Open Space***

### ***Acquisition of Athletic Fields at Lansdale Catholic H.S.***

Bill Maule stated that the Township has 1.5 million of available county open space funds to apply for by April 2009. 1.1 million of the total is being allocated to trail construction of the PECO Power Line trail. Therefore, an additional \$400,000 is still available for the Township to apply for. It has been proposed to close Lansdale Catholic and build two new schools by the year 2010.

Since the athletic fields at Lansdale Catholic are in Montgomery Township and the fields are on the Township's Open Space Plan, it is suggested that we contact the Archdiocese to let them know of our interest in the property. In addition, Pam Gural-Bear will contact Carl Saldutti, Park and Recreation Director in Lansdale Borough, to gauge the Borough's interest in obtaining the land? The area is 15 acres and could provide some recreational options for the Township. It was agreed that it was definitely worth looking into by the Township. It was also discussed to partner with the North Penn School District in pursuing the acquisition of the property. The Park Board agreed unanimously to support the Open Space Committee's recommendation of pursuing the Lansdale Catholic property.

In addition, the Board of Supervisors approved the Open Space Committee's recommendation to obtain an appraisal on the Hurd farm which is also on the Township's Open Space future acquisition list of properties.

**Jeffrey McDonnell, Board of Supervisors' Chairman**, stated that a significant capital project such as a pool, community center, open space or a library could be in the Township's future. He is a great proponent for open space preservation and has asked Mike Galla to cost out the proposed open space parcels on the acquisition list as well as possible ways to finance the various projects.

**Bill Maule** suggested that the Township make every effort to acquire the Zehr tract before it is developed. It is never a done deal until the construction starts.

The Park Board agreed to reevaluate the 5 year capital plan if it meant to buy open space for active recreation.

### ***Disc Golf Subcommittee's Alternative Plan***

**Bill Maule** opened the discussion regarding the disc golf course. Last year, the Board of Supervisors would not have spent \$20,000 if the proper steps were not taken to implement the course. The need was presented and took a very long time to actually come to fruition. With every park built, there is always someone who is not happy. It is a balancing act between activities.

Surveying all the residents to determine the demand for disc golf in the Township was discussed.

Neshaminy Falls residents would like a couple of holes near their homes in order to utilize for recreation.

### ***Alternative Disc Golf Course Proposal***

It was pointed out that Ray Barndt, Township Park Foreman, walked the proposed 9 hole course. Kevin Costello observed that only dead trees would be removed and no living trees would need to be removed. A temporary pedestrian bridge would be needed to cross the creek. (Please see the attached proposed alternative 9 hole course.) The alternative plan addresses the fact that a Senior Park was proposed for the Wiseman tract.

Several concerns were addressed including the following:

- Additional bridges needed
- Disc golfers cheated to play only 9 holes
- Ecologist's interpretation about actual impact – See attached letter

What benefit is the 9-hole course? Will not benefit anything. It is a waste of taxpayers' funds.

The goal is to take the course below 4500 feet in length and therefore, it would no longer be considered a championship course.

**Jerry Coleman's** recommendation is to choose one of several options:

- leave all 18 holes as is and monitor for one year
- existing viable 18 hole course was approved and installed
- alternative 18 hole disc golf course proposed by subcommittee on Feb 5, 2008
- preserve Rose Twig woods as passive open space and remain undeveloped

Disc golf is viable recreation for all people. One does not need to be athletic.

The GOAL of the Park Board and the Subcommittee is to create a shorter, more condensed course for recreational purposes.

Lawrence Caldwell asked could we develop a monitoring committee to monitor the wildlife, environment, etc to address the issues as they may arise and ensure the integrity of the park.

Ed Nawrocki stated that he and his son played disc golf. His son has a BMI of 90%.

Tim McCarthy stated there are numerous courses in the area and none compare to any other course like the one at Nockamixon State Park. Why would professional disc golfers come to Windlestrae when they have Nockamixon?

The Park Board unanimously voted against the proposed alternative 9 hole course. The subcommittee will reconvene on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup> to walk the course and design an alternative course design.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Dave Keightly proposed utilizing a work release program which would include drug court defendants and others with no violent tendencies to perform clean up activities in our parks. It was suggested that the Township check with our insurance carrier as to the liability involved.

It was suggested to schedule a trip to see the new team – the Iron Pigs play in the Lehigh Valley.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Maule adjourned the meeting at 11:30 p.m.

*The next Park and Recreation Board meeting will be on Wednesday, April 9th at 8 p.m. at the Township Building.*