

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION BOARD

January 14, 2014 Meeting minutes

Members present were Chairwoman Susan Thompson, Greg Churach, Dennis Elliott, and Nancy Toothaker. Commissioner liaison Herbert Miller, Jr. and Township Engineer Peter Eisenbrown were also present. Matt Dallas was absent. Commissioner Schreiber was in the audience near the end of the meeting

1. Call to Order

Chair Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. There was a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Reorganization of the Open Space & Recreation Board

A. Chair Thompson nominated Greg Churach to be installed as chairman. Dennis Elliott seconded the nomination. The motion passed: all aye votes

B. Chair Churach nominated Susan Thompson to be Vice Chair. Dennis Elliot nominated Nancy Toothaker, who declined. Mr. Elliot then seconded Ms. Thompson's nomination. Motion carried: all aye votes.

3. Approval of meeting minutes from November 13, 2013

Ms. Thompson moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Elliot seconded the motion. The motion was approved; all aye votes.

Chair Churach introduced the board.

4. Old Business

A. Sprogel's Run Trail

Engineer Eisenbrown distributed copies of a draft plan depicting the proposed Sprogel's Run Trail, sections 1 through 9, at the proposed development on West Moyer Road. Specific information pertaining to each section was also presented. Road crossings of Moyer (2 places) and Gilbertsville were discussed, as was the proposed route, some of which will cross private property. Easements will be required at these locations. The Engineer was given approval by the board to continue work on the plan, coordinating all through liaison Miller.

Much discussion ensued about naming this section of trail. It was unanimously decided it will be called the Prout Farm Loop Trail.

B. Hollenbach Park Expansion

Mr. Eisenbrown presented a draft plan consisting of phases 1 through 4 that would expand Hollenbach Park. Phase 1 is an existing multi-use field currently utilized by several entities, including the Pottsgrove School District.

Phase 2, which needs to be completed by April, is a proposed soccer field constructed with approximately 20,000 cubic yards of fill dirt being removed from the Coddington View development by Arcadia Development Corp. Mr. Elliot informed Mr. Eisenbrown that the field in phase 1 was constructed with rocky fill, and the change of seasons pushes stones to the surface. He requested that some type of fabric be incorporated in the design of the new field. Mr. Eisenbrown will advise costs, and whether Arcadia will be willing to provide in the scope of work.

Phase 3 is a proposed 80 space parking area, which is not necessary at this time, but may be in the future, depending on the timing of future field uses. It can be constructed with material available onsite.

Phase 4, future expansion, was dropped from the plan for now.

A motion made by Mr. Elliot, seconded by Ms. Thompson, to approve phases 1, 2, and 3 of the plan passed with all aye votes. Mr. Eisenbrown to expedite permitting work for phase 2.

Mr. Eisenbrown, Mr. Layne, and Mr. Miller met with representatives from the Pottsgrove School District onsite in 2012 to discuss the District's future field needs. As the District will be the primary user of the proposed new field, this board feels that some costs of maintenance should be borne by them. Items mentioned included grass mowing, litter control, and porta-pottie rentals. A motion was made by Ms. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Elliot, to contact the Pottsgrove School District regarding the aforementioned assistance. Mr. Eisenbrown will provide a list of "talking points" to assist with this endeavor. Mr. Churach to follow up.

C. Proposed ballpark at Hoffman Field

There was brief discussion on this item. Contact will be made with organizations that have previously expressed interest in utilizing Hoffman Field.

D. Update on DCNR grant for Hillsee Property.

UPT is approved for a \$146,000 grant from DCNR toward the purchase of the Hillsee Property. Former township manager Jack Layne received an e-mail stating DCNR is going to use the successful grant application in workshops throughout the state as an example of "how it is done". The grant is pending, and settlement on the property will occur soon. A sign will be installed.

E. Update on tree planting proposal

2 poplars, 2 pears, and 6 Douglass firs have been planted, staked, and mulched at Prout Farm Trail parking area. This item was coordinated through Mr. Miller, who was onsite. More tree planting projects are planned, with volunteer Chloe Klaus assisting Mr. Miller.

5. New Business

A. Community Day 2014

Ms. Thompson is planning Community Day 2014. It will be held October 4, 2014 from 11am to 3 pm. The absence of Hopewell Community Church was noted. We hope they will be able to participate this year.

B. Park monitoring

It was decided after some discussion that members of this board would monitor the various township parks for vandalism and litter, and report any problems to Chair Churach, who would then contact the appropriate party for action. The areas of responsibility are as follows:

Mr. Churach: Sussell Park

Ms. Thompson: Fox Hill Trail

Mrs. Toothaker and Mr. Elliot: Sunset Park

Mr. Dallas: Mocharniuk Meadows

Mr. Miller: Hollenbach Park

6. Reports

Chair Churach reported the following:

A. A doggie cleanup bag dispenser was added at Fox Run North Trailhead. It is mounted on the fence, and does not have a sign. We now have 3 locations for these dispensers: Hollenbach, Fox Run North, & Mocharniuck. All dispensers were filled, and we have 3200 spare bags. It was noted there are no dispensers at Sunset or Sussell. Ms. Thompson to follow up.

B. An “off the cuff” list of possible improvements has been generated, and was distributed, for our consideration. The recently passed Act 115 may allow us to fund some of these projects. This will be looked at by the Commissioners and the accountant

C. Mr. Churach encouraged members of the board to review the 2006 Open Space Plan available on the Township web site. There are many ideas listed there to allow for more public input in support of parks & recreation, and he would like board member input for discussion at the next meeting on any that members feel should be implemented. An example of public support received: the owner of Ringing Dale Christmas Tree Farm came to the tree recycling event on 1/11. He offered the SAVE Director locations for signage at his farm next year advertising the tree recycling event.

D. In the quest for new ideas, Chair Churach plans to attend Pros Board meetings in neighboring municipalities during the coming year, and will report at future meetings.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Executive Session.

There was no executive session

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm after a motion by Ms. Thompson, seconded by Mrs. Toothaker, passed with all aye votes.

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 11th, at 7:00 pm.