

**WHITPAIN TOWNSHIP PARK AND OPEN SPACE BOARD
MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Members Present (attendance indicated by an “X”):

	Marshall Bleefeld		Brian Heljenek – Alternate
X	Carol Christ		Robert Irvine
X	Charles Christine	X	Susan Mudambi
X	Chris Cimini - Alternate	X	Alex Simon - Alternate
X	Angela Dougherty	X	Nancy Thillet
X	John Elliott	X	Township Representatives: Kurt Baker, Courtney Meehan
X	Sandy Feltes		

This was a virtual Meeting.

Meeting called to order at 7:35 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Elliott took roll call.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES

After a review of the minutes from the January meeting, Mr. Christine moved to approve the minutes. His motion was seconded by Ms. Dougherty. The motion passed unanimously.

III. FINALIZE SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Subcommittees will establish mission, create goals along with a timeline with benchmarks, and have a staff liaison. These subcommittees of the Park and Open Space Board will include a committee chair and secretary.

Environmental Stewardship Program (Parks, Trails, and Open Space): Charles Christine, Chris Cimini, Sandy Feltes, Susan Mudambi.

Capital Projects: Marshall Bleefeld, Carol Christ, Nancy Thillet, John Elliott. This committee will oversee and prioritize improvement projects, annual budget development of new and ongoing projects, and oversight of plans for accessibility and inclusion. Mr. Baker also recommends this subcommittee review the current Park and Open Space Board mission statement, and the park ordinance and rules and regulations. In addition, this sub-committee can aide in projects and research opportunities for grant applications.

Comprehensive Plan Committee: Sandy Feltes, Angela Dougherty, Marshall Bleefeld.

Mermaid Lake MSDP: Sandy Feltes, Angela Dougherty.

Deer and Geese Management: Robert Irvine, Alex Simon, John Elliott. Mike Richino is staff liaison.

Liaison to Shade Tree Commission: Charles Christine, Susan Mudambi (alternate).

Mr. Christine will start attending the monthly Shade Tree Commission meetings and report back to the Park and Open Space Board. Mike Richino is staff liaison.

IV. DISCUSS PLANS FOR DEVELOPING “FRIENDS OF” GROUPS FOR SUBCOMMITTEES AS PART OF PLANNED COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Once established, the subcommittees will recruit residents to volunteer and serve on the committee. The goal is to have this completed by the end of the year or early 2022.

V. UPDATES

Mermaid Lake

Ms. Feltes provided an update for the Mermaid Lake Committee. The committee met on February 8 for a public meeting. The public expressed interest in having a trail connection, open space, and maintaining the swimming pool. The consultants confirmed the existing pool will need to be demolished.

Additional concepts discussed included: indoor and outdoor event space; an indoor recreation building; driving range; outdoor ice skating; fitness space; fishing; trails; pickleball; basketball; and a playground. Mr. Baker explained the limitations of the property due to the flood plain.

Centre Square Park Inclusive Playground Construction

Mr. Baker is working with the consultants to get the application to L & I for accessibility, and the application to the Montgomery County Conservation District submitted. Once approved, the Township will go out to bid on Phase 1A for removal of the dead trees and invasive plants. The Township will be working with the Shade Tree Commission to make the area more sustainable.

Phase 1A will include the clearing of the site and reforestation. The consultant also needs to complete the design work and request for proposals for the playground design, and construction work for the parking lot, trails, and restrooms.

The Township will be going out for proposals from consultants for Phase 2 which is the development and construction preparation and oversight of pods 2 and 4. The Township received a \$250,000 DCNR grant for this project and has four years to complete the work.

Shade Tree Commission

No updates.

Trails

The Township is submitting a grant application through Montgomery County (Montco 2040 grant program) for the PECO Line Trail project.

All other trail projects are ongoing.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Comprehensive Recreation Plan Update Meeting

Mr. Baker invited the Park and Open Space Board to the Comprehensive Plan Update meeting on February 25, at 7 pm. Ann Toole, of Toole Recreation will be presenting the draft plan. This plan will include the consultant's evaluations and recommendations for the department for the next ten years pertaining to recreation, parks, open space, and trails.

Board of Supervisor, Joyce Keller, provided an update on her efforts to pass a Natural Landscaping Ordinance. A requirement of passing the ordinance is to offer an educational component for residents. She is collaborating with the Penn State Extension Master Gardener's program to host these educational sessions. The Parks and Recreation Department will assist with promoting this program on the website and social media.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thillet
Secretary, Park and Open Space Board
Department

Courtney Meehan, CPRP
Program Coordinator, Parks and Recreation