

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

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AGENDA

Westtown Township Board of Supervisors Virtual Workshop Agenda

**Westtown Township Municipal Building
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown**

Monday, November 2, 2020

Start time 6:00 pm

- 1. Executive Session (6:00 – 6:30 pm)**
- 2. Master Park Plan Concept Plan Update**



Meeting Minutes

Westtown Township
Oakbourne Park Master Plan
 Master Plan Study Committee
 Study Committee Meeting # 4
 JMT Project No. 20-01283-001
 October 27, 2020

The Study Committee met virtually on October 27, 2020 for the above referenced project. The following committee members were in attendance via zoom virtual meeting:

Name	Organization	E-mail Address
Joe Stratton	Committee member	jbst Stratton@aol.com
Catherine Gin	Committee member	Catherine.gin@gmail.com
Julie Weidinger	Committee member	jmeos@comcast.net
Gary Bevilacqua	Committee member	coachbevilacqua@comcast.net
Tom Sennett	Committee member	tsennett@kunkleandsennett.com
Sharon Grubaugh	Committee member	Sharongrubaugh@verizon.net
Tom Bare	Committee member	tmbare@hotmail.com
Marshall Lerner	Committee member	marshall.lerner@gmail.com
Chris Limbach	Committee member	chrsglimbach@gmail.com
Mila Robinson	Township Project Manager	mrobinson@westtown.org
Andrew Mears	JMT	amears@jmt.com
Ann Toole	Toole Recreation Planning	anntoole@comcast.net

The purpose of the meeting was to primarily review the master plan recommendations. Additional agenda items discussed included:

- Public Meeting Recap
- Community Survey Update
- Vision & Goals – Country Estate
- Key Recommendations
- Active Recreation, Disc Golf & Dogpark
- Cope Tract
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Connectivity
- Mansion Hub
- Athletic Hub
- Pond Area
- Stormwater Management
- Story Trail
- Question + Answers
- Next Steps

The following items were discussed:

Community Survey

- Responses increased from 277 to 333 over the course of the meeting. We asked for help in pushing it out. The listserve went out today and no doubt generated the 50+ responses. Chris noted that people are very excited about the survey and the master plan. Tom Sennett indicated that reporting of the responses should be clearly within the parameters of the questions.
- Major survey findings included that the preservation of the historical heritage of the park is key. Desired improvements include the addition of restrooms, improvements to trails, a playground on the scale of great playgrounds in the area, and the addition of public recreation programs. The survey findings are shown in the Power Point presentation attached.

Master Plan Concept Presentation

- Andy presented the master plan concept. He provided the overview including values, vision, mission and goals. The slides included the big picture of the park, the Cope Tract, the Athletic Core, the Mansion area, the Playground, and addressing ADA issues. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached depicting each area. We described the potential of the playground and basketball court to further the story of the history and heritage of Oakbourne Park through the Country Estate Era, the national Playground Movement of the late 1800's/early 1900's that addressed public health and child safety and labor, and beloved children's literature of the era (Peter Pan, Wizard of OZ, Wind in the Willows among others).

Discussion

- Ann noted that the survey results indicated that residents would pay for increased programming. Although that was her interpretation, Tom Sennett wanted it to be clear that the community survey did not specifically ask that question. Marshall echoed Tom's concern.
- Chris likes the basketball court with the league and tournament ideas. The park is so full of history that even the basketball tournament can evoke the heritage of the time and the Township.
- Marshall indicated that he is interested in a dog park on the Cope Tract. The dog park generated a lively discussion pro and con with some committee members in favor and some not in favor. Andy recommended developing an overlay showing what the addition of features on the Cope tract means. All are in favor of pathways on the Cope tract. Mila raised concerns about the dog park being located by neighboring houses and the noise generated by the dogs disturbing neighbors.
- Gary presented information detailing the demise of concessions stands, the limited storage needs, and viewing preferences by spectators to be close to the fields. This information shows that the building needs are for restrooms only and a few 10 ft by 10 ft storage areas. The important things for the athletic core are ADA compliance, parking, paved trails and storm water management.
- Tom Sennett asked about parking capacity. Andy said that there were 140 spaces in the sports area and 90 in the mansion area. About 12 pull-off spaces are on the Cope tract. Committee members raised concerns about sufficient parking with the addition of programs and park improvements. Mila described Pam's permitting process to ensure limitations on events due to parking. Andy said that we wanted the park to accommodate as much use as possible including appropriate general park use when events are underway and should not just consider today's needs but future needs as the park becomes more utilized.
- Andy raised the question about moving the gardens adjacent to the mansion. Julie noted that the trees there provide too much shade for the garden. Additionally, Tom Sennett noted that the community garden is not as formal as the mansion and may not quite fit the character of the space. The kitchen garden would be in keeping with the mansion.
- Mila really likes the idea of using the carriage house as a restroom facility. Andy spoke with the architect currently working on the renovations to see if there were any immediate concerns with that and explained the larger context of the renovations in the big picture of the master plan.
- Julie suggested exploring the area behind water tower for parking. Andy said this is a great idea that he will explore as it might be viable. Committee members suggested cleaning up the rocks and sand pits.
- A sketch depicting the recommendations in the area of the pond will be developed. Andy will be looking at the pond and Mercer School House to include an ADA fishing pier and cleaning up the boardwalk area.
- Discussion about the Cope tract trails explored the concept of a bridge to cross the creek in the back and a boardwalk system. Andy stated that this would be a big project but that he has done

several projects on riparian buffers in which grants for stormwater management support the development of boardwalk systems. The streambank restoration project could be used as leverage for other funding opportunities for park improvements.

- Sharon stated that she preferred to see the Cope tract have more public use. Gary mentioned that he gave up on the Cope tract for sports when the Township was doing the Open Space, Recreation and Greenway Plan due to site topography and the amount of earthmoving required to develop fields. Tom Sennett said that topography could work for other purposes such as an amphitheater. Open trails through meadows here could help serve the people who are afraid to walk in the woods. Sharon mentioned her concern whether the crops are organic and the chemicals that are going into nearby stream. Joe confirmed that existing farming practices are not organic, but with limited use of pesticides.
- Andy clarified that the existing pavilion is proposed to be removed and two pavilions added: one for the playground area and one for the community garden area.
- Tom Bare liked the removal of the flagpole, the paths that are similar to the original paths, and the design for the clock garden that would accommodate a sundial. This is all consistent with the Historical Commission wishes and the sketch is similar to the original design in photos that the Commission has. Thomas will provide the pictures to the design team.
- Andy noted that the park is made up of many deeds and the chain of conveyance is not clear and all the easements and restrictions have not been marked. Deed research would be a project unto itself. Mila said that the Historical Commission has taken on the deeds as a project but that its completion may be after the master plan is done. Andy said that they have looked at the deeds enough to understand that the proposed recommendations are appropriate.
- Julie asked for consideration of planting a row of sunflowers as the first crop row at Cope tract to provide an interesting view from the mansion.
- Andy noted that he did not include considerations for disc golf due to the safety concerns. The flying discs are not compatible with other park uses.

Appreciation

- Tom Sennett, Marshall, and Chris all provided their appreciation for a job well done on the plan. The planning team was given a nebulous assignment and then went about not only building the park's skeleton but also putting the meat on its bones.

Next Steps

- Andy will explore the area behind the water tower for parking, modify the building concept, look at the pond area and Mercer School House, do an overlay concept for the Cope tract and show a paved connection from the pond area to the main paved trail loop. Andy and Ann will meet with the Board of Supervisors and prepare for the public meeting. Andy and Ann asked the group for more help in promoting the survey. By the time these meeting minutes were completed, the survey county was up to 345.

- **Although not mention in the meeting, committee members should review the background information previously provided on the draft values, vision, mission and goals. The design team would like to have comments by November 1, 2020.**

The above represents a true and accurate account of the discussion during this meeting to the best of my knowledge. If there are any conflicts, misrepresentations, or omissions with the above statements, please contact the undersigned within ten (10) days of this date.

Andrew A. Mears

Date

Copy:
Attendees
Project File
Attachment

DRAFT