

Members present for the meeting were Vice Chair Sue Thompson, Nancy Toothaker, Dennis Elliott and Commissioner Liaison Herbert Miller, Jr. Also present were Township Manager Carol R. Lewis, Planning & Zoning Administrator Michelle Reddick and Greater Pottstown Region Recreation and Parks Coordinator Justin Keller.

Call to Order – Vice Chair Sue Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance - The members, after a moment of silence, pledged allegiance to the flag.

Approval of Minutes - A motion by D. Elliott, seconded by S. Thompson to approve the minutes of July 8, 2014. Aye votes: Elliott and Thompson. N. Toothaker deferred as she did not have a chance to properly review the minutes. Motion carries.

Introduce new Greater Pottstown Region Recreation and Parks Coordinator – C. Lewis introduced Justin Keller who is the new Greater Pottstown Region Recreation and Parks Coordinator. J. Keller explained that he has been in this new position for only three weeks and the position is funded by a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for a five-year term. He further explained that he is recreation and parks coordinator for six municipalities which include the Borough of Pottstown, Lower Pottsgrove Township, Upper Pottsgrove Township, West Pottsgrove Township, North Coventry and Douglas/Berks Township. J. Keller noted that he is a landscape architect by trade and his main focus for the last 10 years has been on the public sector. He explained that he will be meeting with the different municipalities over the next several weeks to tour their open space and recreational facilities. In response to a question from S. Thompson, J. Keller explained that he is in charge of researching what grants are available for recreation and parks and how those grants fit in this area.

New Business

SAVE Alliance Arboretum Presentation –Students Matthew Bush, Brianna Costira, Andrew Heuer and Amanda Swoyer from Pottsgrove High School were in attendance to present the Master Plan for the Althouse Arboretum property. The Master Plan includes trails, raised gardens for the elderly and disabled, renovating the house to create a community resource center and office for the SAVE Alliance Foundation, building of a future classroom building and building a children’s natural forest playground. The goal is to make available many programs for regional students and community leaders which include group visits, summer camps, classroom visits and family events. Some of the upcoming family events include a community picnic on September 20th from 11 am to 2 pm and a Family Night Hike on October 17th from 6-9 pm. In addition, they plan to have community recycling days with the first one being a Christmas tree recycling which is scheduled for January 10, 2015. D. Elliott noted the raised gardens for the elderly and disabled is a brilliant idea and complimented the students and K. Hamilton for coming up with that idea. N. Toothaker complimented the students on their presentation and thanked them and K. Hamilton for their efforts on this project. Commissioner Miller suggested the students come up with a name for their group. J. Keller suggested the students visit Tyler Arboretum in Newtown Square to get some ideas for their children’s forest. N. Toothaker suggested that they contact the education director for Natural Lands Trust since she has a wealth of information with working on this type of project for children. C. Lewis noted that the PECO Green Region will be presenting the Township with the grant check at the Board of Commissioner’s meeting next Monday, June 15, 2014, and she invited K. Hamilton and the students to attend the meeting. In response to a question from C. Lewis, K. Hamilton advised that they need a recommendation for approval of the Master Plan. A motion by N. Toothaker, seconded by D. Elliott and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the Master Plan for

the Althouse Arboretum property. K. Hamilton also advised that they need a recommendation for approval of the grant submission for the children's forest. A motion by D. Elliott, seconded by N. Toothaker and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the grant submission for the children's forest. A motion by N. Toothaker, seconded by D. Elliott and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the Night Hike on October 17, 2014. K. Hamilton explained that they need to purchase stone for the parking lot but are awaiting grant funds to cover costs and questioned whether the Township would be willing to purchase the stone and then obtain reimbursement upon receipt of the grant. K. Hamilton further explained that if the project is completed now, it will be less costly. In response to a question from S. Thompson, the cost would be approximately \$5,000.00, and he is requesting \$2,000 from the Township. A motion by N. Toothaker, seconded by S. Thompson and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval to purchase the stone at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.00 with reimbursement from the SAVE Alliance Foundation subject to receipt of the grant. C. Lewis explained to members that the Township needs to have preliminary engineering done for trail connections from the Althouse Arboretum to existing Prout Farm Park and Sussell Park and additional trail connections in the Township, and the approximate cost to have this preliminary engineering is not to exceed \$10,000. In response to a question from N. Toothaker, C. Lewis explained that the Township does have the property and easements necessary for these trail connections. In response to a question from S. Thompson, C. Lewis advised that these connections would be for existing trails that are already in place. In response to a question from N. Toothaker, K. Hamilton advised that the main trail on the Althouse Arboretum property already exists and is completed which is where the connection would be made. S. Thompson noted that there is a water problem on Fox Hill Trail that should be addressed before we move forward with trail connections. J. Keller suggested that the Township Engineer should provide a scope of services. D. Elliott noted that he agreed with J. Keller. Commissioner Noll noted that if we are only talking about two trail connections to the Althouse Arboretum property, then the cost should be significantly less. In response to a question from N. Toothaker, C. Lewis advised that there is money in this year's budget to conduct a study for trail connections. C. Lewis advised that she could go back to the engineer and ask for an itemized list of costs involved for the study and what we will get from the study. Nancy Becker, 2038 Mimosa Lane, noted that the community is engaged and excited about this project and many volunteers were in attendance for the clean-up day. She suggested the Township move forward with these connections now while there are volunteers excited and engaged who would be willing to help with these trail connections. D. Elliott made a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the Township road crew complete the trail connection to Sussell Park, but the motion died for lack of a second. In response to a concern expressed by Commissioner Noll regarding the access road off Hanover Drive to the trail, C. Lewis noted there will be discussion concerning a sign for the access road later in the meeting.

Old Business

Community Day- S. Thompson noted they are working on obtaining additional funding for Community Day, and if received, will schedule pony rides. She further noted that Pastor Levengood from Hopewell Community Church has volunteers and projects lined up as they will be participating in our Community Day. C. Lewis noted that Jill Ludy will be getting volunteers for face painting. S. Thompson advised there will be a moon bounce and other participants include Kona Ice, Dallas Fries and the Upper Pottsgrove Fire Company.

Favorite Park Contest - S. Thompson advised that it was discussed to use the prize money from the contest for the pond at Sunset Park which will include tree planting, bank clearing and pond improvements. C. Lewis noted that the Township also applied for a grant through Pottstown Area Health and Wellness for an evaluation and survey of the pond; however, grant funding is not available yet so we may or may not get the funding. In response to a question from S. Thomspson, C. Lewis advised there is no time frame in which to use the prize

money, and we have not even received the money yet. Therefore, members agreed to table discussion on this matter.

Update on Sunset Park utilities cost/grant –C. Lewis noted members had previously discussed applying for a grant for electric and water for Sunset Park. The Chief is suggesting that a motion detector light be installed since we have been having issues with people loitering at the park after hours. This would be an added bonus to the grant application as it would benefit safety as well as recreation. S. Thompson recommended a motion activated solar light be purchased in the interim as they are not very expensive. A motion by N. Toothaker, seconded by D. Elliott and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners a solar spot light be installed at Sunset Park at a cost not to exceed \$500.00.

Create policy for memorial naming of Township properties – The members agreed to table this matter.

Shontz property – D. Elliott noted that the Township still needs to obtain an easement from the Shontz’s so that in the future we are able to connect to the amenities on their property which include a bird sanctuary and healing garden to our open space and trail system. He further noted that the plan is to link the trail system from Sussell Park to the healing garden, and there is also the possibility of a link to the Perkiomen Trail System to New Hanover. D. Elliott advised that he would like to approach the Shontz’s to discuss the request for an easement. A motion by D. Elliott, seconded by S. Thompson and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval to approach the Shontz’s for an easement on their property for the healing garden and trail system.

Trail signage about hours of the park and other signs – C. Lewis explained that we need to install a sign identifying an area for school bus parking at Hollenbach Park and provided a sample photo of the sign which reads “School Bus Parking – Two Spaces”. She further explained that we need to install a sign at the access drive off of Hanover Drive which reads “Notice – Private Residence Driveway – Entrance to Walking Trail – No Vehicles Beyond This Point – Park on the Street”. It was agreed to add the word “only” to the school bus parking sign. A motion by N. Toothaker, seconded by S. Thompson and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners they approve purchase of the signs for the access drive off Hanover Drive and for Hollenbach Park. S. Thompson expressed concern that there were several small children with helmets on the new field on Friday night. C. Lewis agreed to contact Pottsgrove Youth Football and see if it was them so she could notify them they are not to be on the new field.

Ball field use request – C. Lewis advised she received a request from the Chesmont Ball League to use Kulp field for nine (9) games to be played only on Sundays. C. Lewis provided a copy of the agreement the Township has with Pottsgrove Little League and advised we could use a similar agreement. Members agreed to approve use of Kulp field for the Chesmont Ball League.

Board Comment- Members had no comments.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Executive Session – There was no matters to discuss.

Adjournment – A motion by N. Toothaker, seconded by D. Elliott and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 pm.

Vice Chair Sue Thompson reopened the meeting at 9:06 pm as there was one other item for discussion.

Mid-Atlantic Toss Your Turkey 5K Run – S. Thompson explained that the Pottsgrove High School cross country team will be participating in the Mid-Atlantic Toss Your Turkey 5K run and Commissioner Schreiber has obtained a sponsor for the Board to have their name placed on the t-shirt the team will be wearing for the run. She further explained that Commissioner Schreiber wanted to do this as a thank you to the coaches and the team for supporting Sunset Park in the favorite park contest. The sponsor is paying the \$100.00 fee and wishes to remain anonymous. Members agreed to have “Upper Pottsgrove Open Space” placed on the t-shirts as the name of Upper Pottsgrove Open Space and Recreation Board is too long.

A motion by N. Toothaker, seconded by D. Elliott and unanimously carried to adjourn at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle L. Reddick, Planning & Zoning Administrator