

**Minutes of the Open Space Park and Recreation Board  
Upper Pottsgrove Township**

**October 8, 2019**

A meeting of the Open Space Park and Recreation Board was held on Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at the Upper Pottsgrove Administrative Office, 1409 Farmington Avenue, Pottstown, with Dennis Elliott, Greg Churach, Chuck Note and Sherry Paup present. Also present were Pottstown Regional Recreation Coordinator Michael Lane, County Planner John Miklos and Township Manager Michelle Reddick. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Elliott at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Those present pledged their allegiance to the flag.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – A motion by G. Churach and second by S. Paup to approve the minutes of June 11, 2019 as written. Aye votes: Churach, Paup and Elliott. Abstain: Note as he was not present at the meeting. Motion carried. Motion by C. Note, second by G. Churach and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of July 9, 2019 as written.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2020 DRAFT BUDGET** – M. Reddick provided members a copy of the draft budget for 2020. C. Note and G. Churach requested a better account of what the money is being utilized for that is transferred to the General Fund. Members reviewed the draft budget and suggested the possibility of paying for expenses out of this fund rather than the General Fund. Motion by C. Note, seconded by G. Churach and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that they leave the 25% of the EIT revenue in the Open Space Fund and pay expenses directly out of Open Space Fund. In response to a concern expressed by C. Note concerning projected EIT revenues, M. Reddick explained that she is waiting for estimates from Berkheimer so the figures may change.

**GREEN ALLIES** – Ken Hamilton was in attendance to provide an update on things happening at the Arboretum. He advised there have been over 14,000 visitors this year. He reported there were seven (7) special community programs which reached over 257 people. He reported they purchased stone to repair the parking area (township land), the driveway and the road (township property), and noted this is the third time this year they had to repair water damage to these areas. He reported they completed most of their harvest from the organic farm, and noted the farm is now open to local resident who wish to take any remaining vegetables for free. He further reported they harvested over 300 pounds of produce and will expand next year and create a local CSA. He reported the community farmers market continues to be successful with an average of 100-150 attendees each night. D. Elliott expressed concern with parking issues during the farmers market. K. Hamilton explained that there are no issues that he is aware of, and noted the parking lot never fills up during the farmers market. He advised upcoming activities for October include a community night hike on October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> which approximately 500-1,000 people will attend and a haunted woods with the Upper Pottsgrove Fire Company on October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. He also

advised there is a wedding, 6 school visits, 2 scout programs and 2 birthday parties scheduled in the month of October. He reported they received a Tree Vitalize grant to plant trees around the pond at Sussell Park. He reported the Sussell Park restoration will be starting and the plan for this month includes planting some native trees and shrubs in the wet areas on open land. He noted the pond has evidence of cultural eutrophication, meaning the quality of the ecosystem is being diminished every year. He believes this is mostly the result of runoff from the mowed area above the pond. He reported the second problem is excessive wetness of the land is preventing meaningful use of the park. He advised their solution is to create a forested riparian buffer along the pond's edge and upslope by planting native trees, shrubs, and perennials. He further advised access to the pond will be maintained through raised stone trails through the wet areas, and eventually, a boardwalk classroom and walkway along the edge of the pond to provide public access for fishing. He noted all this work will result in: (1) healthier pond ecosystem; (2) less damage to the park; (3) less mowing; (4) improved aesthetics of the park; and (5) better public access and use of the natural features.

**KUMMERER PARCEL** – Bo Erixson and Jon Benson were in attendance to present their proposed plans for an age qualified community on the Kummerer tract. D. Elliott asked about access to roads and flow of traffic. J. Benson advised the property is 59.8 acres which required 30 percent open space, and noted 44 percent is being provided for open space. He further advised there is a requirement for park/trails, and 5,000 feet of trails are being provided. He noted that he was asked to include a community trail and has done so even though it is not required. He advised the plan includes 2 pocket parks with trail connection to sidewalks. He noted there is also landscaping being provided along the perimeter, and they are protecting the riparian buffers. He further advised there is a 6 foot path on the west side of Kummerer Road from Pineford Road to the internal road. D. Elliott advised there was a meeting held with two members of the Open Space and Recreation Board, our Regional Recreation Coordinator Michael Lane and former Commissioner Herb Miller to discuss this project, and a report of concerns was provided to members. One of the issues raised is that the proposed Village Green, while larger than required, is partially located at a detention basin. It was asked whether it is possible to reconfigure several lots nears the community center to allow the Village Green to be placed in that area. The developer agreed to take a look and see if that works. Another issues involves the recommendation to change the tennis courts to pickle ball as tennis courts are falling out of favor. The developer agreed to consider this option. It was also recommended to provide uniform fencing along trails at the rear of properties and provide a connection to the proposed Upper West Trail. Mr. Benson noted that these will be provided. It was also recommended a dedicated site lighting plan be provided. Mr. Benson advised the proposed plans is for lights at intersections. It was further recommended changing the species of trees. It was also noted there are some major storm water issues. Mr. Benson advised the overall storm water design will be handled at final plan stage. C. Note noted there are lots of street trees on the south side of the property, but expressed concern there are less trees on the north, only every other lot. Michael Lane recommended changed the species of trees and adding the symbols for trees. In response to a concern expressed by D. Elliott, B. Erixson advised that basins can be located in open space. Mr. Lane noted that the village green does not meet the definition of a village green. He recommended shifting some lots, eliminating the bocce ball and then making a large village green near the community center. In response to a

question from G. Churach, J. Benson advised that rules concerning swing sets, trampolines and dogs will be included in the HOA documents. In response to a question from D. Elliott, Mr. Benson advised he does not know who qualifies someone to move into the community. D. Elliott referenced the letter from the Montgomery County Conservation District, and noted the revised plans submitted addressed the issues they raised. It was recommended to have fencing around the large detention basins. In response to a recommendation from C. Note, B. Erixson advised he will look for a 2 acre parcel in open space. Motion by C. Note, second by G. Churach and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the open space for this project with the changes discussed.

**OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE** – County Planner John Miklos provided a final version of Chapter 3 with graphics and text updates to Chapters 4 and 5. G. Churach recommended adding a disclaimer to the Open Space Plan Update. M. Lane recommended adding disc golf as an amenity to a park, and noted the project could be funded through a grant. He agreed that we must finish with the Open Space Plan Update and then look at individual parks and consider amenities for each.

**PARRC COMMITTEE UPDATES** – G. Churach reported the park evaluation report completed by the summer intern will be forthcoming. He further reported the trail sensor data was emailed by Mr. Lane. He also reported there is a proposal from North Coventry to promote parks by purchasing items to put on public relations campaign (i.e., banners, literature, tables and chairs). He advised that they learned National Honor Society members must volunteer for community projects, and it was suggested possibly utilizing them for some projects.

**INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND** – It was noted there is a strong interest in constructing an inclusive playground; however, it was agreed there is a need for a cooperative agreement. It was suggested this matter be placed on the agenda for next month for further discussion.

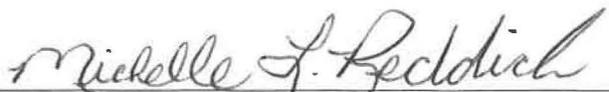
**VETERAN’S MEMORIAL** – There was no further update available.

**BOARD COMMENTS** – None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Motion by C. Note, second by S. Paup and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle L. Reddick, Township Manager