



Plymouth Township

Park, Recreation, and Shade Tree Advisory Board and PROS Plan Meeting

July 24, 2018 7:00 – 9:00 P.M.

Location: GPCC

Minutes

Participants

Barb Thompson, Chris Manero, Kim Pennington, Bryan Renneisen, Neil Clark, Jennifer Dow, Jason Sugalski, and Karen Franck

Planning Team: Tim Wilson and Ann Toole

1. Kim Pennington asked for approval of the May 22, 2018 meeting. Jason Sugalski motioned to approve them, seconded by Barb Thompson and all were in favor of approval.
2. The Board acknowledged Ann Toole and Tim Wilson, PROS consultants, as meeting participants.
3. Packet Materials – Highlights included: Silver Sneakers program is booking. Class registration is up. The closure of Curves may have helped to provide the spike. Summer camp is doing well.
4. Old Business:
 - GPCC Shut-Down Week is approaching. New roof top units are adjusting. Tasks will include: floors, locker rooms, LED replacement lights, window replacement, touch-up painting, and training with the Police Department.
 - Park Maintenance: Two rounds of graffiti were removed at JFK Park.
 - Harriet Wetherill Park: Last grant is almost finished. Pavilion rentals are doing well. Two camps are there for the first-time including Nature Pottery and Science Explorers.
 - Programming: Veterans Ceremony will be on 11/14/18 at 2:00. Light snacks will be available in GPCC. Other programs coming up will be tree lighting that will be like last years with some improvements including starting earlier, safety hazards at curbs need to be marked to prevent trip hazards, and adding a microphone. GPCC rentals will be limited that night to allow for parking. Karen will inform the Board of the starting time.
5. New Business:
 - In response to a woman's question about the bathrooms at Colwell Park, Karen indicated that the bathrooms are only open when an event or group rental is underway. Porta-Potties are in place when bathrooms are closed. EPVP calling tower is missing the rain pipe so a mud puddle is there now. Karen will report this to Rick to fix.
 - Chris Manero reported that Ann Sherrig from Hometown Heroes will make a presentation to the Township to see if this program could work here. At the last workshop, a person presented on the Manayunk Bike Race to resurrect it in Conshohocken, Ambler and Plymouth. The work at Macy's is underway. Six businesses will be coming in with stores and restaurants.
 - The Comprehensive Plan and PROS Plan Joint Public meeting will be on December 11 from 5:00 – 8:00 P.M. as an Open House.
 - The Lutheran Church across Jolly Road is for sale.
 - Tim Wilson asked about open space areas that were discussed in the Comp Plan meeting. Chris

responded that the Riverfront, the Country Club, Romano's were all discussed. Romano's could be mixed use. Pulte is the developer and requires a zoning change. It is now zoned Light Industrial.

- The next meeting will be August 21, moved up due to Shut-Down Week.
6. PROS Plan. Ann Toole and Tim Wilson gave a Power Point Presentation about the PROS Plan.
- Kim asked about how parkland standards are devised. Tim and Ann explained that they are based upon national standards that now recommend devising the level of service for each community based upon needs.
 - Brian asked about the Conservation Easement on HWP and if more parking can be added for special events.
 - Kim asked if there is an alternative to the wristbands at GPCC. Karen reported that this issue is being considered in long term planning , if possible.
 - HWP Park is being used for stormwater management for which the Township gets MS4 credits. Karen is seeking a grant from DCED for riparian stabilization that will count toward stormwater management. This is a valuable wining position to be in for the Township, HWP and the Parks and Recreation Department.
 - Kim talked about using non-violent offenders for park and recreation projects. She'd like to help with planning and carrying out such a program in the parks.
 - The Board members participated in a planning exercise on addressing parks and recreation needs and opportunities to be considered on the PROS Plan.

The first activity was to identify three to five things that they liked in the PowerPoint Presentation. The Board members provide the following responses:

- Conserving our current open space and maximizing usage
- Upgrading GPCC
- Creating a space like the one depicted in Louisiana
- Community involvement in planning and stewardship via a sense of ownership of the parks.
- 100 year plan on acquisition
- Improve the walking trails
- Love the water feature!

The second activity was to identify three to five things concerns they saw in the PowerPoint Presentation. The Board members provide the following responses:

- Fountains from a maintenance perspective
- Cost of improvements or developments (3)
- Developing passive parks i.e. keep them passive!
- Need to promote HWP
- Caution about banking too much on getting the country club property
- Limited parking at several parks
- Ability to keep up with maintenance

The third activity was to the single most important thing that they think we need to do in parks, recreation, open space and trails. The Board members provide the following responses:

- Keep our current open space open (2)

- Updating GPCC and expanding it
- Add Splash Park (20)
- Upgrade the parks and GPCC
- Add the concept from the PowerPoint presentation showing outdoor concerts and outdoor markets
- More use for Harriet Wetherill park
- Better walking trails
- Water feature is a good idea
- Put fitness in HWP
- Look ahead to possible locations for future uses
- Have more diversity at existing parks
- Expand use of some of the parks like JFK
- Figure out ways to brand each park
- Connect to other trails
- Add bike trails (2)
- Propose trail connections between parks

A major discussion piece was the GPCC park as the major successful park that is the “go-to” park in Plymouth Township. It is already packed with facilities that are well-used and beloved. There are limitations here including very limited parking. Securing land adjacent to GPCC over time is critically important to expand the campus of GPCC. Another point is that the other parks need to have the level of opportunities available in GPCC park in order to attract people. Figuring out how to move facilities around to all the parks would help to increase use of other parks and reduce the impact at GPCC park. For example, HWP could become an event space while remaining consistent with the conservation easement. That would enable removal of the amphitheater in GPCC park to put a more optimal and fitting one in HWP. That could free up room here for another facility. Consider branding the parks like GPCC being the health and fitness park. HWP as the nature and events park. EPVP as the sports park. And so on. These are all just ideas for discussion and exploration as we move forward with the planning process. Plymouth Township does not have a true community park which would be about 50 acres or more with a mix of active recreation and natural features and potential special uses. This poses limitation on the parks and recreation system such as limited parking for special events. Therefore, optimizing existing parks is critical.