



MEETING NOTES

Project:	East Fallowfield Township Open Space, Recreation & Environmental Resources Plan Update	Project No.:	23002.10
Location:	East Fallowfield Township Building 2264 Strasburg Rd, East Fallowfield, PA 19320	Meeting Date/ Time:	06/26/2023 7:00-9:00 PM
Re:	Public Meeting #1	Issue Date:	07/28/2023

ATTENDEES:

Scott Swichar, East Fallowfield Township

Denise Verderosa, East Fallowfield Township

Peter Simone, Simone Collins (SC)

Pankaj Jobanputra, SC

Michelle Armour, SC

Pat Stasio, CPRP (Certified Park and Recreation Professional) (subconsultant)

Kate Clark, Chester County Planning Commission

(Please see attached sign-in sheet)

MEETING SUMMARY:

PRESENTATION

Pete Simone (PS), Michelle Armour (MA) and Pankaj Jobanputra of Simone Collins (SC) and Pat Stasio, CPRP, led the group through a brief presentation which included the following elements:

- Open Space Committee
- Project Team & Experience

- Why Plan?
- Project Schedule and Scope
- Township Demographics
- Existing Data
- Return on Environment
- Township Tour
- Parks and Open Space Map
- Brainstorming
- Next Steps

NOTES:

- Comment: The population projection shows 28% - is that accurate?
 - Peter Simone (PS): That is data from DVRPC, not by SC, from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). We find that it is pretty close.
- Comment: The Return on Environment (ROE) study mentioned increased property values from walking trails – I think a walking trail through my property would decrease its value.
 - PS: What about walking trails near or outside of your property? We find that trails are the most controversial topic; I can think of only one project that we have done where there was no controversy. There are all kinds of trails: walking trails, trails on rights-of-way, sidewalks. This Township is not in a regional location, so you will get local people walking the trails here; it is not going to be regional.
- Comment: Regarding East Fallowfield Community Park: I have traveled a lot, I like the concept where there are a lot of trees, also colonnades (lines of trees). Strasburg has long areas of long grass; there could be trees here. I also would like fountains or a water feature; a few in different areas might be liked by people.
 - PS: Trees also have environmental benefits; you can add trees back to the landscape. They also reduce the effects of heat.
- Comment: Wo would pay for all this?
 - PS: Funding can come from several places. As we get into the plan, we will document sources – there is Township money, as well as sources for grants: DCNR, DCED, Federal and State sources. Our firm writes grants for clients; we got Chadds Ford \$3.5 million to build a trail. The funds are available for public recreation, and if your Township does not apply for

them, they will go somewhere else. We suggest to the Township that, if you are going to spend money, get it matched with a grant and double your money. Someone once paid for East Fallowfield Community Park – was that a good decision? Not for our firm to decide – this is up to the community.

- Comment: One main concern: I came down to the park and first saw the pond, I thought, “This is nice. Kids can enjoy fishing.” But over the years, this pond has gone from 6 feet of water to 2 feet – it needs to be dredged. I contacted a company to provide a proposal. It is of utmost importance to have this pond available for youth. As far as funding, there’s federal and state grants, and private grants like AFTCO (American Fishing Tackle Company), BASS (Bass Anglers Sportsman Society), sporting organizations that like to contribute as well.
- Comment: Can you do anything with easements?
 - PS: Our understanding is that when owners have an easement, they get a tax benefit in exchange for a promise not to develop the land. I do not believe any in the Township have granted public access, but we will ask.
- Comment: The brownfield site is very nice. Can anything be done with it?
 - PS: We think you can do something with it. We think it is covered and could have recreational use on top; we are investigating. We think it has great potential because it is a beautiful spot.
- Comment: I would prefer wood or mulch or gravel trails.
 - PS: Sometimes this approach is right; but to make them ADA accessible, as we propose trails, we have to balance those needs.
- Comment: Think it would be great if we put in more bike trails and coordinate with other municipalities to create longer trails.
 - PS: We will look at what your neighbors are doing. The challenges here are that, generally, cyclists who use Strava are experienced, and we want to accommodate inexperienced users, as well.
- Comment: What impact does designating a road as a trail have on the road?
 - PS: Generally, if there is a biker on road, it is the motorists’ responsibility to give them 4 feet of clearance when passing. The first method would be “Sharrows” (share the road). Then, if the road is wide enough, you may have an improved shoulder. The next step up would be a bike lane with a painted line. This is the progression and, if we design trails, they need to be based on safety standards.
 - Comment: My road (Misty Patch Rd) is used as a bike route – I see 10-20 bikers at a time. If this proposed Misty Patch Loop trail is put in, how would that impact this road?

- PS: I think the Misty Patch Loop trail was meant to be walking trail; we will look at it. The proposed trail loop has HOA lands around it, and it can be difficult to get HOAs to allow use of their land. A lot of this area is beautiful and heavily wooded, so it probably would not change anything; maybe some signage would be added to alert motorists to be careful.
- Comment: Youth organizations as partners, like AAU (Amateur Athletic Union). We do not have little league or other leagues – kids go everywhere but here.
 - PS: We will talk to local sports groups.
- Comment: As far as concepts are concerned, one park put in exercise equipment, checkerboard; could something like this be put into Community Park? Also, disc golf.
 - PS: Disc golf players are very dedicated.
- Comment: It would be great if we had pickleball courts.
 - PS: A major concern with pickleball is noise; we would have to locate courts away from residences.
- Comment: Designated places for bird watching – some spots could be more private for just that. We have 2 parcels that are not being used, so maybe they could be for that.
 - Comment: On that comment about bird watching, I was involved with the construction of Poole Wildlife Sanctuary. There are bird blinds set up, and they are very effective.
- Comment: As far as partners, there are a lot of breweries. They do nature stuff; maybe we could have a beer named for East Fallowfield, and the money could go to the park.
 - PS: Breweries and other local businesses could be listed as potential partners.
- Comment: More expansion of facilities in Community Park, working from the master plan.
 - PS: The master plan was never fully implemented; we will see what could be added. The Township has been trying to improve access across the bridges in the park.
- Comment: A small, natural amphitheater with a stage; we have slopes where people could sit.
 - SS: Concerts are currently held on the silo base.
- Comment: Would like to focus on Dennis Run waterways. It originates at the pond north of the police station, travels through East Fallowfield Park, then onto the east side of Buck Run Road Farm, crosses under Strasburg Rd, then

goes east under Youngsburg Rd, travels north of Beck Rd, then goes onto Beagle property, then goes into Modena, then into West Branch. I would like for the Township to own easements or land all along the creek. I also would like Township ordinance for protection of riparian buffer zones along Dennis Run. I would like to have ordinance for preservation of old pristine forest. At the Beagle Club, a year or two back, they timbered out pristine forest; that property also borders Modena. I would also like for the Township to acquire the Beagle Club and old Beck Farm to create a nature center.

- PS: We will look at Township ordinances to see if they can be improved.
- Comment: I think one challenge for the committee and public is that we have isolated possibilities; how can we interconnect these in some fashion? Anything that makes modular sense, and which takes advantage of ROWs?
 - PS: Connecting the new Township building and school site to the park should be easy. What about the Beagle Club? Along Dennis Run could make sense, but easements would have to be purchased. There is always negotiation for easements.
- Comment: HOAs clustered in the eastern quadrant – there is already opportunity here, with a mass of people that need to be served. On West Chester Rd, the latest development is Ridge Crest; you interconnect to Brinton Station development and get people opportunities to get to Thorndale train station.
 - PS: This is a possibility, if you can make easements public and connect from one HOA to another – there is a process of education that needs to happen.
- Comment: W. Chester Rd – Caln has Hills of Thorndale Woods in the land development (LD) process.
- Comment: There is an access road between Brook Crossing and Branford Village. Also, there are flat areas in the park that could be used for pickleball or tennis courts and a pool, also walking paths. The access road ends before you get to walking path – retaining wall there.
 - Comment: You can hike around there.
 - PS: Maybe part of phase 2 of the park master plan.
- Comment: The East Fallowfield website needs to be updated.
 - PS: We will get the maps and presentation up on the website.
- Comment: I would like someone to look into how Sadsbury acquired Sadsbury Preserve. Maybe Natural Lands owns it. For parking, off of Old Wilmington Rd is an area where you can park your car. Also, I do not like mechanical or motorized trails, want to maintain the rural character of the Township as much as possible.

- PS: Conservancies can also be partners.
- Comment: I know there is an equestrian community, and we have talked about the non-motorized biking community; what about ATVs? Some are enthusiastic about it.
 - PS: The ATV community is unique; you probably do not have areas that are appropriate, unless it is private land.
- Comment: The piece of land we own above Modena, on Goosetown Rd – There is a house for sale there, and 2 houses in front on Mortonville Rd. Also, if we can get access to Mortonville, we can access the brownfield site along the Creek. If you can connect the forested area to the brownfield, you can get canoe access.
- Comment: Regarding the Goosetown Rd. property – In steep areas, you see mountain bikes.
 - PS: The site is probably not big enough for mountain bikes; you need parking. This might be a place for bird watching. It will be difficult to use this site without making any changes.
- Comment: Parkesburg Train Station is close – right off Strasburg Rd. The line goes to NYC (same line as Coatesville Station).
- Comment: It might be beneficial to advertise that the opinion survey is open until February
 - Comment: We should post the link on Facebook as well.
 - Scott Swichar: To SC – please send the link and QR codes.

Brainstorming:

- Facts:
 - Who pays for this?
 - Bicyclists ride Misty Patch Rd.
 - No Little League/sports leagues in EFT
 - Concerts at Community Park are held on the silo base by the upper field.
 - W. Chester Rd. property – Caln Twp has the Hills of Thorndale Woods land development in process
 - Parkesburg train station is close (connection to NYC)
 - Area breweries do nature-related events
 - Trees have been removed from pristine forest
 - Existing access in-between Brook Crossing and Bradford Village
- Concepts:

- Trails do not add value
- More trees (colonnades)
- Fountains in Community Park
- Meditative, peaceful park
- Maintenance of pond
 - Pond funding:
 - Federal
 - State – PFBC (PA Fish and Boat Commission)
 - Private – BASS, AFTCO
 - Various fishing equipment manufacturers and tourney sponsors
- Mulch/woodchip trails
- Use of the brownfield site
- Public access to land easements
- Bike trails – coordinate with other Townships
- Recreation for seniors
- Exercise equipment at park
- Checkerboards
- Disc golf
- Pickleball
- Bird watching – designated space
- Bird blinds
- Area breweries – beer named after East Fallowfield – proceeds to Community Park
- Expansion of facilities from the East Fallowfield Park Master Plan
- Natural amphitheater
- Dennis Run – acquire land/easements
- Improve ordinance for buffer/riparian zone protections along Dennis Run
- Improved protections for pristine forest
- Acquire Beagle Club and Old Beck Farm to create a nature center
- HOA land as an opportunity to connect between communities (and to train station in Thorndale)

- Make connections between destinations
- Pickleball/tennis/pool at Community Park
- Mountain biking facilities in steep topography? (Re: Goosetown Rd parcel)
- Provide Park access through access road between Brook Crossing and Bradford Village (to discourage people from cutting through residents' back yards)
- Sadsbury Preserve – how was it acquired?
- Maintain the passive/rural atmosphere of the Township
- ATV facilities (is there a desire for them?)
- Acquire the three properties currently for sale adjacent to the Goosetown Rd property to provide access into the site
- Connect the Goosetown Rd property to the Brownfield – canoe trail opportunity
- Partners:
 - Sports organizations
 - Youth organizations
 - Conservancies
 - Federal
 - State
 - Private
 - Fishing equipment manufacturers / tourney sponsors

Next Steps:

- Upcoming Meetings
 - Public Meeting #2: Thursday, September 28th, 2023 @ 7:00-9:00PM
 - Public Meeting #3: Thursday, February 29th, 2024 @ 7:00-9:00PM
 - Public Meeting #4: Thursday, May 30th, 2024 @ 7:00-9:00PM

- Attendees

- Please take and share the **Opinion Survey** with friends and organizations:



<https://qrco.de/EastFallowfieldRecPlan-Survey>

- Please provide feedback on the **WikiMap** and share with friends and organizations:



<https://qrco.de/EastFallowfieldRecPlan-Wikimap>

- Simone Collins
 - Continue analysis
 - Preliminary connections
 - Walking radius mapping
 - Community and industry (NRPA) benchmarking
 - Administration/maintenance policies review
 - Recreational programming review

This report represents the Professional's summation of the proceedings and is not a transcript. Unless written notice of any correction or clarification is received by the Professional within ten days of issue, the report shall be considered factually correct and shall become part of the official project record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Armour", written in a cursive style.

Michelle Armour
SIMONE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

East Fallowfield Township

Open Space, Recreation & Environmental Resources Plan Update

Public Meeting #1 - June 26, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Name	Email
JOSEPH MENTO <i>JMA</i>	
Sharon Scott	
<i>Krista Weiss</i>	
MIKE CAHILL	
Kate Clark (CCPC)	
Teri & Jerry Dickinson	
Clare Small/Mc Eroy	
Joe McCoemick	
Nina Petro	
<i>Jean McGinnis</i>	
Brian Corling	
Simpa Corrao	
Nicholas Taylor	
Mike Domboski	