



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:	09/07/2023 7:00-9:00 PM
Re:	Committee Meeting #3	Issue Date:	10/30/2023

ATTENDEES:

Scott Swichar, East Fallowfield Township
Peter Simone, Simone Collins (SC)
Pankaj Jobanputra, SC
Michelle Armour, SC
Kate Clark, Chester County Planning Commission
(Please see attached sign-in sheet)

MEETING SUMMARY:

PRESENTATION

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

- Introduction
- Mission Statement, Goals & Objectives – Draft
- Public Participation Update
- Benchmarking
- Park Service Areas / Gaps

- Potential Open Space & Rec Expansion / Acquisition
- Conceptual Trail Connections
- Review of Master Plan for Community Park
- Next Steps

NOTES:

Public Participation; Public Opinion Survey Results; Community Benchmarking

- Committee Member (CM): The parcels adjacent to the Goosetown Rd. parcel have been sold.
- CM: Where is Old Beck Farm?
 - Simone Collins (SC): Adjacent to the Beagle Club? **SC to confirm.**
- CM: It is surprising to see that such a large portion of survey respondents are residents of 0-5 years.
- CM: Kerr Park has active recreation – sports fields, etc.
- CM: HOA trails vs. public trails – do people (the public) use trails on HOA land? Are they policed? Are HOAs amenable to trail connections?
 - SC: Typically, not amenable, but it is our due diligence to ask.
- CM: Are the people moving into the Township younger?
 - SC: **SC to analyze the survey results to break down the demographics.**
- CM: Are we, as the committee, along with township officials, to be careful planners to provide for the needs for the future population of the township?
 - SC: Yes. SC will provide information and recommendations, but the committee will make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors who make the final decisions.
- CM: Do you have unit pricing on sports fields and courts?
 - SC: We can provide that information but would advise not considering costs at this point. The reason for creating this plan is to use it as a basis for applying for grants.
- CM: Did you look at the Ray Ott plans for Community Park?
 - SC: Yes, we will get to that (in presentation).

Park Service Areas/Gaps; Potential Open Space & Rec Expansion/Acquisition

- CM: Why is the bottom half of the Township considered “low need” (per the DCNR 10-minute Walk Access map)?
 - SC: The DCNR tool takes into account factors other than literal distance from parks and recreation facilities, such as population density and distance via walkable routes.
- CM: Regarding the park service gaps – the one in the northeast along West Chester Rd is so small, it seems almost pointless.
 - SC: **Possible for SC to remove that one.**
- CM: On the map indicating possible open space parcels for acquisition/conservation, if there are duplicate open space properties from official map, it may take wind out of the sails.
 - SC: **SC to mark which parcels came from the official map.**
- CM: What criteria do you use to determine suitability for possible acquisition?
 - We will go over that shortly (in presentation).
- CM: The open space criteria does not take into account the fact that the brownfield is a brownfield.

- SC: This is true. However, many parks have been placed over capped brownfields. **SC to continue attempts to obtain more information on the brownfield site.**
- CM: Are most of the criteria based on topography?
 - SC: Not just topography – size, proximity to communities, etc.
- CM: There was not much controversy over parcels marked on the official map; more so on proposed locations for pumping stations.
- CM: Doesn't the presence of prime agricultural soil preclude development of a site?
 - PS: Not necessarily. For example, in the process of park development, DCNR will ask if there are prime agricultural soils present on site; this does not exclude the ability to develop. Also, if there is a situation in the future where the soil is needed for agricultural use, park improvements are often relatively easily reverted to this use.

Conceptual Trail Connections

- CM: Do e-bikes need to be registered?
 - SC: e-bikes do not need to be registered
- CM: Is it worth talking to PECO about trails – no?
 - SC: Correct, they have reversed policies (and are not allowing trail development under their lines). *(UPDATE: There is a new process for applicants to follow to develop trails along PECO rights-of-way.)*
- SC: Regarding bike/pedestrian improvements along Strasburg Rd. – likely, the best we can hope for is that the Township can work with PennDOT to widen the shoulders. PennDOT can do this through its “betterment program”. Road condition would likely not be appropriate for children or inexperienced cyclists to ride bicycles.
- SC: For Route 82, a side path would be the ideal solution, parallel to the road. This would require acquisition of additional right-of-way.
- CM: For on-road bike trails, is there a required speed limit?
 - SC: Not necessarily; if the Township wanted to pursue this on Strasburg Rd., it may be possible to have signs – “Bikes may use full lane”
- CM: Can roads be closed at certain times for bicycling?
 - SC: Sometimes they can be; for example, MLK Drive in Philadelphia is closed to vehicular traffic on the weekends.
- SC: For the rail trail concept, there may be 30 property owners who would need to provide an easement.
- CM: If sharrows are used, does there have to be painted lanes?
 - SC: Not a dedicated lane; it is a symbol painted in the lane of traffic.
- SC: Some of the trail routes on this map will likely be eliminated as we go along in this process.
- CM: Do HOAs have to take care of sidewalks?
 - CM: Homeowners must maintain them. Sometimes, when there are sidewalks in common areas, the HOA will just hire a company to do all sidewalks in the development.
- SC: For on-road routes, we will be within existing easements; it is a complex process that takes time.
- CM: When you improve the shoulder, you will have to do both sides.
 - PS: In a perfect world, yes, you would do both sides. If there is a situation where there is only room to widen the road on one side, the roadway may be realigned to create a wider shoulder on both sides.

- CM: Is it a law that bicyclists must travel in the direction of traffic?
 - SC: Yes.
- CM: There is a housing development in Caln near W. Chester Pike; that would be a great connection.
 - PS: It is much easier to put trails in during development vs. after. The Township, or SC (as the consultant) can talk to the Township Manager in Caln about it. **SC to follow up with East Fallowfield Township regarding this matter.**
- SC: We also show a bike route along Youngsburg Rd. Also, we will also extend a green off-road trail line on the trail map along 82 into Coatesville (to indicate an off-road route). **SC to make edits to the plan.**

East Fallowfield Township Community Park Master Plan

- CM: (In Community Park) there is an overflow parking lot – currently a gravel lot.
- CM: Regarding the large stones between the open play field walking loop and Buck Run Rd. – those rocks are pretty recent; is that for stormwater management (SWM)?
 - SC/Scott Swichar: Unsure. **SC to follow up.**
- CM: People take grass clippings and branches and throw them down by the paved ditch (along the gravel access road between Brook Crossing and Branford Village). Also, the path gets pretty wet.
- CM: I do not know what our consensus would be for clearing trees along western edge of Community Park (to develop park facilities in that location per the Park Master Plan).
 - SC: Remember that this plan was done 20 years ago. There is probably more forest there now than at the time, but we should focus on other facilities. If you want to pursue facilities (such as a tennis court, pickleball, playground, etc.), this is the best place to do it since the Township controls it. You might lose trees, but you can also plant them. Also, stormwater regulations are more stringent than they were at the time of the Park Master Plan.
 - CM: In a previous Township meeting, someone was questioned on the development of their property, regarding how many trees they were taking down and planning to replace, and whether these would be indigenous species.
 - SC: The Township can decide to follow these standards or waive them.
 - CM: That area of the woods is relatively new growth and consists mostly of scrub trees.
 - SC: If you are not going to put in additional facilities that the community desires here, where will you put them? Keep an open mind as to what you want to see implemented.
- SC: Frisbee golf could be a possible recreational activity in the meadow; it is very popular and low maintenance. This could go along the meadow and into the woods. Another possibility for this area is a dog park.
- Scott Swichar: The bridge to connect the 2 parts of Community Park needs to be handicapped accessible.
 - CM: The previous Park and Rec Board got a grant for the bridge, however, the high construction costs has stalled the project.
- SC: This park can be more developed with facilities that can serve the community.
- CM: The police building could become a pub or meeting house.
- CM: The building used to be a Pen and Ink Club (there is a book of pen and ink drawings that illustrates historic pubs in the area – they ran all along Strasburg Road).
- SC: At the police station, there is a parking lot; you are accessing an existing space. This is a sustainable way to introduce something new; maybe you have some other type of activity there.

- SC: At public meeting, SC will just propose these as ideas to develop the plan and get some reactions from the public.
- SC: In the meadow, maybe we incorporate a pollinator garden with a great mix of natives. We can also show a trail along the road near the meadow on the trails plan; this would be a paved side path that parallels the road. **SC to incorporate suggestions.**
- CM: Is a rugby field smaller than football? There (used to be) a rugby team in the Township.
 - SC: Believe it is larger than a football field. **SC to confirm.**
- SC: **SC to send the committee this presentation**; please give us your comments. We will present something similar at the public meeting. These are suggestions, food for thought. SC will show the plan and how it can be adapted to accommodate desired facilities. **SC to draw the master plan more succinctly.**

General Comments/Questions

- CM: Regarding the presentation/mapping graphics – from where we are sitting, I cannot see any landmarks. Maybe make the maps larger. Also, may I suggest using a laser pointer?
 - SC: **SC to use “zoomed in” plans and images and call out landmarks on the map with labels to orient participants for the public meeting presentation.**
- CM: Project your voices please.
 - SC: **SC to bring a speaker and microphones to the public meeting.**

Next Steps:

- Upcoming Meetings
 - Public Meeting #2: Thursday, September 28, 2023 @ 7:00-9:00PM
 - Committee Meeting #4: Thursday, October 26, 2023 @ 7:00-9:00PM
- Committee
 - Provide feedback to SC on items in the Committee Meeting #3 presentation.
 - Public Meetings Schedule Flyer – distribute digital and printed copies
 - Online Public Participation Postcard – distribute digital and printed copies (Public Opinion Survey and Wikimap QR codes)
 - Share and collect printed copies/submissions for the Public Opinion Survey.
- Simone Collins
 - Continue analysis
 - Administration/maintenance policies review
 - Recreational programming review
 - Refine Trails Plan
 - Prepare for next Public Meeting
 - Conduct Focus Group Meetings

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". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Michelle Armour
SIMONE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

East Fallowfield Township Open Space, Recreation & Environmental Resources Plan Update

Committee Meeting #3 - September 7, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Committee	Role	Email
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wilson T. Lambert Chairman Board of Supervisors	wlambert@eastfallowfield.org
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mike Domboski Chairman Planning Commission	mike.domboski@comcast.net
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Teri Dickinson Chairman Park & Recreation Committee	tad411@comcast.net
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