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MEETING NOTES

Project:	Middletown Township (Bucks) Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways Trails Plan-Study	Project No.:	24028.10
Location:	Middletown Township 3 Municipal Way, Langhorne, PA	Meeting Date/ Time:	03/27/2025 7:00pm
Re:	Public Meeting #2	Issue Date:	April 8, 2025

ATTENDEES:

Simone Collins

William Collins (WC)

Toby Levin (TL)

Derek Dureka (DD)

Township Representatives

Paul Kopera-MT P&R Director

Patrick Graham-MT Asst. P&R Director

Nicole Tener-Program Specialist (P&R)

Joanne Morelli-Program Specialist (P&R)

Public Attendance

(See attached attendance sheet)

NOTES:

A. Introductions & Project Schedule

1. Paul Kopera (PK) welcomed and thanked the participants for attending. He introduced Toby Levin (TL)-project manager from Simone Collins Landscape Architecture. TL introduced the other SC team members: William Collins (WC); Derek Dureka, CPRP and Anita Nardone, PE (AN) as the consultants for

- the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways, Trails Plan study (CPROSGT) for Middletown Township.
2. Project team contact information, schedule and agenda included on the meeting handout.

B. Presentation

1. TL and DD gave a presentation of the study as shown below and emphasized that the purpose of this second public meeting was to summarize important analysis and public participation comments that have led to some general, initial concepts for the draft plan. Most importantly, this meetings seeks any and all input from attendees about their desires, stories, needs and comments on the overall conditions and programming in MT parks.

a. Schedule

- TL noted that the project will continue to seek public participation through the public opinion survey, two additional committee meetings and two more public presentations.
- Final plan expected in mid-August 2025.
- Study will extend through late summer (August) of 2025; all material related to the study will be posted to the Township website under the P&R page.

b. Public Participation

- Public Meeting #1 (January 2025)
Key Takeaways included:
 - i. Importance of connectivity of neighborhoods and parks. Priorities should be getting folks to Core Creek Park, Middletown Community Park and from the eastern to the western portions of the Township
 - ii. Restrooms needed
 - iii. Access to natural areas; open space a high priority
 - iv. Playgrounds need to be upgraded
 - v. Other amenities should be considered: turf fields; lit fields; public pool; additional pickleball courts; amphitheater
- Key Person Interviews (14 Planned; 5 completed)
- Public Opinion Survey
 - i. 1,094 responses as of March 27th!!

- ii. A summary of responses to eleven (11) questions was given. (See PM2 presentation posted to MT website.)

c. *Analysis (used to support Initial Concepts)*

- Several slides were presented to quantify and distinguish between total 'open space' controlled and within the Township borders and 'parks' that are considered 'open space' as well.
- Total parks and open space=997 acres
- Total MT parks=187 acres
- Existing Trails: Concentrated within Core Creek Park; some along the Neshaminy Creek
- Sidewalks: Concentrated within Levittown or newer developments in the north
- Wetlands: Located near to Neshaminy, Mill Creek and Queen Anne Creek

d. *Initial Concepts*

1. *Open Space: Improve access to and within certain open spaces*

- Celebrate open spaces as 'preserves'
- 'V': Mill Creek Preserve + Queen Anne Preserve
- Langhorne Spring Water Preserve and Neshaminy Preserve

2. *Improved pedestrian/bicycle connections to MT parks*

- West: Det. Christopher Jones Park, Simmons Park, Firefighters Park
- North: Core Creek Park, Middletown Community Park, Styers Orchard
- South: Forsythia Crossing Park, Veterans Memorial Park, Cobalt Ridge Park, Upper Orchard Park

3. *Park Facility Improvements*

- Clean/Safe/Ready to Use
- Consistent capital funding and implementation
- Succession planning and updated fee schedules

4. *Programming*

- Strategic and measured growth of programming

C. Breakout Groups

Both in-person attendees and online attendees were asked to consider the following four (4) questions in three (3) breakout groups within the meeting hall...and by typing responses for the online attendees.

Focused Questions:

1. *Which Township or County Park would you most like to access by bike or walking? (Can you do so now?)*
2. *What would be your 'Generational Project'...large scale, money-is-no-object, dream project?*
3. *What top three (3) MT parks require major capital improvements? (bathrooms, playground equipment; parking improvements; drainage improvements)*
4. *What is your assessment of recreational programming?*

D. Breakout Discussion Summaries (by Focus Questions)

1. *Which Township or County Park would you most like to access by bike or walking? (Can you do so now?) (And other destinations of choice)*

- Core Creek (several mentions; including online group)
- Middletown Community (Senior) Center
- Middletown Community Park
- Styers Orchard
- Shady Brook to Core Creek
- Veterans Park
- Newtown Rail Trail
- Brownsville Road Bridge
- Levittown connections to other neighborhoods (the Quincy Hollow bridge is appreciated)
- Highland Park trail to Veterans Memorial Park
- Connection to Newtown Rail Trail
- Related to connections: Please maintain street shoulders!
- Connections to Langhorne Borough
- Are there trails along Neshaminy Creek that can be accessed by bike or walking? (Online group)

2. *What would be your 'Generational Project'...large scale, money-is-no-object, dream project?*

- Pedestrian tunnel at Woodbourne
- Oxford Valley Mall Re-Development: An indoor/ outdoor walking track and bike-related amenity; perhaps a public-private partnership?
- Bird Sanctuary for viewing
- Removal of invasive vegetation in major parks
- An **amphitheater**. Located at Mall? Styers? Like Thiokol Lower Bucks Gov't Center-several comments on this. Consider ways to produce income for MT. Noted that it was part of MCP over 40 years ago.
- All trail connections shown on MMIP
- Phase 2 of the Skate Park
- Get under I295!
- From Woodbourne to Community Park: Sidewalk connections
- Walk from Core Creek to the Delaware River using Mill Creek Greenway
- Core Creek Trail around Lake Luxembourg
- Destination Playgrounds: e.g. Kids Castle
- ATV Tracks
- Campgrounds (look at Mercer County Park campsite for feasibility)
- Public Pool/ Splash Pads
- Year-round restrooms
- More pickleball courts with lighting; pickleball courts closer to Community Park
- Bring back 4th of July Parade
- Link NSD properties to Core Creek
- Water quality monitoring: Neshaminy Watershed Association as partner; Consider something like the Silver Lake Nature Center
- Complete the Circuit Trails
- Disc Golf Course
- Pearl S. Buck ES Site: Keep as a public space
- Outdoor Classrooms: Provide education on native species/ invasive species
- Turf Field complex
- Trail connections to/through Mill Creek Greenway

- Kickwalls: old-school, low-tech style
- Cornhole courts added to parks.
- Additional recreational programming space (indoor facility; another building)

3. *What top three (3) MT parks require major capital improvements? (bathrooms, playground equipment; parking improvements; drainage improvements)*

- Trails and bridges in Crossing Hollow to **Forsythia Crossing Park**
- **Middletown Community Park**: Phase 2-Skate Park 
- Pickleball courts closer to **Middletown Community Park**
- **Middletown Community Park**: more basketball and updated play equipment; connections to Township Line Road
- More parking at **Middletown Community Park** during events
- All Parks: more trees and education about trees and routine tree maintenance
- **Veterans Park** needs a crosswalk
- **Middletown Community Center**: ADA accessible bathrooms
- Personal safety improvements e.g protection from stray balls
- **Simmons Park**:  Consistent walking surface (part gravel); broken play equipment
- **Firefighters Park**: Better parking, water fountain, restrooms
- **Twin Oaks Park**: field improvements, playground improvements, provide paved path around the park
- Overall---better lighting at parks.
- Core Creek, Forsythia and Firefighters---top 3 parks requiring improvements (online group)

4. *What is your assessment of recreational programming?*

- Overall, the diversity and amount of programs is great!
- Pickleball: Important to keep some courts open for drop-in use; new player drop-ins
- Discussion: Is there room for 'non-athletic group organized' casual athletics to be practiced on MT park facilities? Do we always need to have a 'competitive' aspect to sports?
- Chess clubs
- Photography
- Merge LAA, MAA and Hulmeville for better utilization of facilities.

- Merge or be more inclusive; or formalize use agreements
- Drawing/Cartooning
- Country line dancing
- Consider offering programs at different times than neighboring communities
- Overall, arts/sports programming for kids is plentiful. Would like to see more variety of classes for children (e.g kids events; classes; clubs focusing on nature; guided walks) (Online group)
- Overall---people pleased with programming opportunities; busy lives impede participation!

5. Other Discussion Items

- Developer representing Farms Edge development near Shady Brook is interested in assisting the Township in acquiring a 9.28 parcel near Farms Edge and a PECO right-of-way as open space. \$1.5M appraisal value.

E. Next Steps

1. Continue public opinion survey
2. Complete key person interviews
3. Formalize CPROSGT Plan 'visions' with Committee
4. Continue analysis of administration/programming/site conditions/ inventory
5. Develop initial concepts into recommendations

Next Public Meeting (PM#3): May 15th

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,

SIMONE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



Anita Nardone, PE
Project Manager