

MEETING LOCATION: VIA ZOOM

SUMMARY MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Taylor called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Members present were Ms. Cindy Solic, Mr. Rich Koch, Mr. Barry Bram and Mr. Ken Hickman. Members of the public present were Ms. Erin McGann, Mr. Stephen Garcia and Ms. Lee McGann. Staff member present was Ms. Susan Wheeler, Public Works Project Manager. Mr. Steve Casson, Director of Public Works was absent.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to accept the March Recreation Advisory Committee minutes was made by Mr. Bram and seconded by Mr. Hickman.

3. GREEN HOLLOW PARK PICKLE BALL COURTS

Ms. Erin McGann and Mr. Stephen Garcia reside on Park Forest Avenue next to Green Hollow Park and have ongoing concerns about the noise levels generated by the sport and the number of vehicles that park on the street.

Ms. McGann addressed the Committee regarding her concerns. Ms. McGann and Mr. Garcia moved into their home in 2018 with the expectation of living in a quiet neighborhood next to a quiet park. The renovation of the tennis courts to pickleball occurred late in 2019 and the nature of Green Hollow Park changed due to the active play on the pickleball courts and overall increased use of the park. Ms. McGann stated that pickleball is loud and does not serve the local neighbors and that players drive from elsewhere and park on the streets and block driveways.

Ms. McGann and Mr. Garcia said they feel that Patton Township is in violation of its own Noise Ordinance. The noise created by both the sound of the pickleball balls being hit by the pickleball paddles and, the noise from enthusiastic shouting and laughing are in violation of Chapter 105-4, Unreasonable Noise. Based on this alone, they feel that the pickleball courts should be removed.

Other issue/opinions they raised included:

- Parking on Park Forest Avenue makes the street unsafe for pedestrians crossing.
- Pickleball is decreasing the property values of adjacent homes.
- The money spent to renovate the tennis courts to pickleball was taxpayer's money spent towards creating noise violations.
- Both Ms. McGann and Mr. Garcia work from home and have done so since before the Covid pandemic and will continue to do so in the future.

They requested that the pickleball courts be removed and either converted back to tennis courts, or that the asphalt surface be changed to poured-in-place safety surface like Bernel Road Park and children's play equipment be installed. Ms. McGann noted that it would make a huge difference if the pickleball noise was sporadic and not constant.

The Committee responded by saying they understood their concerns and would like to seek solutions. They asked Staff if the Noise Ordinance could be reviewed and if noise level data could be collected to see if the noise levels are excessive. Also, it was suggested that limiting the hours of play be explored so the pickleball facility is not used all the time.

Ms. Wheeler made note that she would share this information with Mr. Doug Erickson, the Township Manager to gain insight on the noise ordinance. Discussions on limiting the use of the facility would include a policy shift in public park usage and this discussion would have to include the Patton Township Board of Supervisors and Centre Region Parks and Recreation (CRPR), the agency that manages the park facilities.

4. GREEN HOLLOW ADA PATH DESIGN

Ms. Wheeler shared the draft ADA accessible path plan with the Committee. YSM Landscape Architects has completed the survey of the park and preliminary design of the path. YSM will provide a probable cost estimate and the path construction will be split into two (2) phases due to cost. Phase 1 (path from Park Forest Avenue to the drinking fountain) will be constructed in 2021 and Phase 2 (inner loop with paths that lead to park amenities) will be constructed in 2022.

Mr. Garcia, the resident who requested the ADA accessible path, said he thought the plan was appropriate. He asked if the length of the inner loop section (Phase 2) was known. Ms. Wheeler said she would ask the length and also ask YSM to modify the design slightly if necessary to have the looped path length be an easily marked distance. The Committee agreed.

5. CENTRE REGION SILVER BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

CentreBike has provided Patton Township with two (2) Bicycle Friendly Community signs that will be erected in the Township. Two signs were provided to each Centre Region municipality.

Ms. Wheeler proposed that one sign be installed on Waddle Road just before Colonnade Boulevard and one sign be installed on Gray's Woods Boulevard just past the entrance into Geisinger clinic. They can be installed on existing signposts. The Committee agreed.

6. CENTRE REGION BICYCLE FACILITIES MAP

Ms. Trish Meek, Senior Planner at the Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA) updates the regional bicycle facilities map each year. The Committee members were provided with the 2021 map.

7. MAY IS NATIONAL BIKE MONTH

May is National Bike Month. As a reminder, the May 18, 2021 RAC meeting will be a "Patton Township Bike Chat".

The Chat will begin at 5:30 pm and will be led by Ms. Trish Meek of CRPA. This virtual event will be promoted by Patton Township staff via social media and email distribution lists.

8. BERNEL ROAD PARK PHASE 2B – DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DCNR) GRANT

The grant submission has been made for Bernel Road Park Phase 2B. Successful awards will be announced in the fall of 2021.

**9. VALLEY VISTA SHARED USE PATH TO TUDEK PARK BIKE PATH CONNECTOR
ROUTE PROPOSAL**

A Connector Route traversing along Devonshire Drive (and Park lane and Aaron Drive) to connect the Valley Vista Shared Use Path to the Bike Path in Tudek Park in Ferguson Township was identified on the regional bicycle facility map.

Ms. Wheeler proposed to Ferguson Township that this connector be identified and it will cross the township boundary.

The Ferguson Township Parks and Recreation Committee met on Thursday, March 18, 2021 to discuss the proposed project. They asked Ferguson Township Staff for additional information before a decision will be reached.

10. VALLEY VISTA SHARED USE PATH UPDATE

The Contractor CH+D will be finishing up the punch list items in early May.

11. TREE PENNSYLVANIA GRANT PROGRAM

The grant submission was successful and fifteen (15) trees were awarded to the Township. The trees were planted linearly in Bernel Road Park in the disc golf area, between fairways number 4 and 16.

12. REGIONAL PARKS ISSUES UPDATE

Ms.Solic provided the following update:

- Whitehall Road Park – Suggested modifications currently include reducing the number of play fields from 6 to 4, eliminating the turf field, reducing parking and adding restrooms. The ADA accessible playground will remain and part of the walking path system. The possible refinancing options are still being discussed.
- The Summer 2021 Active Guide is available and registrations opened on April 19.
- The Active Adult Center has re-opened on a limited basis.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Solic made a motion to adjourn at 7:10 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hickman.

The May 18, 2021 meeting will be the Bike Chat class to be led by Ms. Trish Meek of the Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA). The class will begin at 5:30 pm and be held via zoom.