

WILKINS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

PUBLIC HEARING, MONDAY JUNE 14, 2010

The Public Hearing – Lions Park Master Site Plan – was brought to order at 6:40 PM by President Sylvia J. Martinelli. A quorum was present as follows:

Mrs. Martinelli		Ms. Fialla
Mr. Padula	Mr. Costa	Mr. Szoko

Mr. Jim Feath and Mr. Jim Watenpool of HRG, Inc. presented the Lions Park Master Plan. This plan was developed over a years' time by a committee comprised of Township residents. The Plan was funded by a grant through CDBG Year 35.

The objectives of the master plan included evaluating the best use for the park; encouraging smart growth through a wise decision making process; encouraging development based on an evaluation of community needs; working with the natural processes and features of the site and developing a long-range plan for future development of the park (including costs, phasing and funding mechanisms).

A Community Needs Assessment survey was mailed to 810 homes in the Township. Of the surveys mailed, 140 were completed and returned and 62 were returned by the Post Office. The completion rate was 18.71% and was considered successful. The top ten facilities requested were: (1) walking trails, (2) nature trails, (3) bike trails, (4) hiking trails, (5) restrooms/dog park, (6) playground, (7) picnic shelter, (8) picnic areas/tables/ice skating, (9) deck hockey/tennis, (10) gardens.

Based upon the survey, the committee began looking at alternative site plans and finally agreed on one plan which incorporates a number of the top requested facilities – such as walking/hiking trails, a rain garden, a dog park, pavilions and restroom facilities, an amphitheater, an all purpose field, and a deck hockey court.

The final plan was then broken down into three phases. The total costs for each phase are: Phase 1 - \$402,470; Phase 2 - \$590,955 and Phase 3 - \$212,466. Mr. Waterpool addressed ways that the Township could reduce those costs through the use of available resources such as Boy Scouts to build the walking trails, public works labor instead of contracted labor, volunteer services, grants and donations.

Commissioner Fialla questioned whether the ball park would be eliminated in Phase 1 or Phase 2. The ball park would be eliminated in Phase 2, once the all-purpose field was completed in Phase 1.

Commissioner Szoko questioned whether or not it was better to apply for grant funding for all three phases at once, or individually and questioned the increased day-to-day operational costs if the improvements were made to the park. Mr. Feath explained that typically, DCNR likes to see one project through completion prior to funding a new project (or phase). He recommended that the Township seek grant funds for each phase and allow each phase to take about 3 years to completion. Mr. Feath estimated increased day-to-day operational costs to be no more than 10% of current operational costs.

Mr. James Dick of Elizabeth Street questioned whether or not the estimated construction costs included the cost of inflation. Mr. Feath stated that the construction estimates do include the cost of inflation.

Mr. Erik Lawson of Penhurst Drive questioned whether the Master Site Plan anticipated the acquisition of any additional land. Mr. Feath stated that although the committee initially looked at the possibility of acquiring additional land, due to the steepness of the land behind the residential lots on Rita, they decided not to move in that direction.

(169-10) MOVED FIALLA-PADULA to adjourn. The Public Hearing was adjourned at 7:15 PM. The motion was adopted by unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Bradley
Secretary