



MEETING NOTES

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| Project: | Towamencin Veterans Memorial Park Master Plan | Project No.: | 20003.10 |
| Location: | Towamencin Township Bldg Meeting Room 1090 Troxel Road Lansdale, PA | Meeting Date/Time: | 03.28.2022 7pm |
| Re: | Committee Meeting #3 | Issue Date: | 04.07.2022 |

ATTENDEES:

See Sign-in Sheet

GENERAL NOTES:

INTRODUCTION

- Pete Simone (PS) initiated the presentation summarizing the process to-date. Intent of the meeting is to show the refinements to the initial concept plans presented at the December 2021 meeting and get direction from the Committee on which concept to adopt as the 'draft' plan. Further refinements expected based on BoS presentation, public meeting and final committee meeting (CM4).

SCHEDULE

- PS reviewed the remaining schedule of meetings. Township Meeting Room has been 'booked' for the originally scheduled Public Meeting #3 on April 20th. Based on availability and agreement by the Committee---Wednesday May 4th has been substituted as the Public Meeting #3 date. (Anita to verify with Colleen and Don at the Township.)

REVIEW OF DRAFT PARK MISSION STATEMENT

- Anita Nardone (AN) requested that the Committee establish a final 'mission statement' for the park. Committee agreed that the 'draft' statement would now become the 'final' mission statement.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY – RESULTS TO DATE

AN reviewed the status of the survey. To-date—there have been 109 responses (10 more than the 12/01/2022 Committee meeting).

All ten (10) additional response follow the similar trends of the previous responses.

AN reminded the Committee that the survey is set to be closed on March 31st. Lauren questioned whether there was value to extending the date. AN noted that the date had been established based on the dates where the draft plan will need to be developed. PS added that there does not appear to be an expectation that there would be 'different' results if more responses were received.

Survey will be closed on March 31st.

REVIEW OF CONCEPTS 1-3 (PRESENTED IN DECEMBER 2021)

AN reviewed the three (3) plans originally presented to the Committee and used as a basis for the key person interviews (KPIs).

SUMMARY OF KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS (KPIs)

AN reported that Simone Collins (SC) conducted eleven (10 KPIs with a total of 17 persons). 82% of the KPIs were Towamencin residents. Nine (9) different Township staff positions, Township Committees, communities and organizations were represented.

The interviews covered three (3) areas. Key responses in the three areas were presented and follow:

1. Themes

- The importance of *Tennis Lukens Cemetery* as a focal point of the Park
- Make the Park personal; instill Towamencin-centric concepts/ flavor.
- Emphasize peace; beauty; restorative/ healing power of natural settings, where memories can be shared
- Focus on the adult demographic
- Emphasize the 'humanity' of those who serve; 'why' they serve; war is not to be celebrated.

2. Important Park Elements

- Safe vehicular and pedestrian access
- Beautiful gardens and water features
- ADA Accessibility + Benches + Shade
- 'Looped' walking trails
- Five branches of the service should be represented
- Park layout should consider security issues and emergency access

3. Concept Preferences

- Concept 1: Liked ordered 'grid'; 4 distinct areas; concern about parking near cemetery; equal popularity with Concept 2
- Concept 2: Liked the oval shape; unimpeded open area; full looped walking trail; parking too far away; equal popularity with Concept 1
- Concept 3: Liked amphitheater—what will it be used for?; closer parking to loop system; most liked (approx. 50%).

Joe Meehan (JM) noted that these were good themes/ concepts gathered in the interviews and would like to build on them going forward.

CONCEPT PLAN REFINEMENTS

AN reviewed how the 'refinements' to the plans were developed. Three elements influenced the refinements:

- Comments received from Committee, survey respondents and KPIs
- Access issues
- Initial Consideration of project phasing and construction sequencing.

Important components of refined plans:

- Separation of loop walking trail to formal lawn trail
- More realistic sizes/ scale
- Initial material suggestions: agrarian/ rural design character
- Both plans can accommodate Allentown Rd. or Reinert Rd. access & parking

PRESENTATION OF CONCEPT 4 & 5 / VISUAL EXAMPLES OF CONCEPTS

Michelle Armour (MA) presented Concept 4. Highlights included:

- Access from Allentown Road
- Parking pulled away from cemetery.
- Amphitheater at high point of site with path to cemetery area (section view presented; high-point of amphitheater approx. 6' higher than the natural high-point of the site.)
- Distinct plaza areas (both through and around central loop)
- Reforestation; meadow areas

Six branches of the military represented in the plazas as three pairs---two branches sharing a 'space/plaza'.

Concept 5. Highlights include:

- Access from Reinert Road; parking inside site
- Amphitheater (less formal layout) moved slightly NE to align with entrance from shopping center
- Park entrance from parking area 'pronounced' with trellised/shade/ potential water feature

Play areas included in both plans though a concept of incorporating simple, landform based play areas through out the park and trails also exist.

DISCUSSION OF CONCEPT REFINEMENTS\

1. Flag: Laureen noted that US flag should be placed at high point of the site. (Height, location TBD)
2. Security Concerns
 - Carter (CL) brought up concern about sight lines as a security concern. Trees block sight lines; police visuals.
 - Bob DiDomizio (BD) echoed concerns about trees; preferred more meadow. Noted that site is 'cut-off' from other areas.
 - General discussion/ comments about feeling 'secure' in a rural park setting; Police should be able to ride through the park as well as observe from parking area; SC noted that lighting was brought up by Tim Troxel ---a future discussion by the Committee.
 - PS noted that ---while security is an important concern---planning concepts should balance security with designing for the beauty of the Park
 - MA/ PS noted that clear sight lines can potentially be kept below the canopy of the trees by keeping understory plantings low. JM noted that maintenance of the understory is an important item and noted walking experiences in Fischer's Park.
3. Reforestation/ Phasing

- In the discussion of reforestation, PS noted that first phase of park construction would be grading for SWM and meadow planting; tree planting to follow. Conversion from a 'farmed' condition to a 'reforested' condition improves ability to meet SW regs for permitting. Species, quantity TBD and can be considered with security concerns.
4. Pedestrian Access from Shopping Center
 - JM noted that the pedestrian access through the PSDC shopping center has been discussed since last fall; however doesn't it pose security issues as well? Steep grades either side; heavily vegetated with trees, etc. Maybe an alternate/emergency vehicle entrance to the Park. Does it make sense to pursue? Other committee members voiced concerns about unattractive; rear-loading area being conducive as an entrance.
 - PS---agreement on concerns. As the area is SWM for the PSDC parcel and possibly affected by the development of apartments---a final 'layout' of the entrance may be impacted already. Our access will be dependent on the future design of these neighbors. Will need to work with PSDC (who has previously agreed to allow overflow parking and a ped entrance to the Park.)
 5. Direction from Committee on Concept? (AN urged comments on 'mix/match' ideas)
 - Unanimous support of Concept 5. Preferred access is Reinert Road.
 6. Other comments:
 - Some concerns about the cost/maintenance concerns associated with a water features as depicted in the images
 - Not much initial interest in artistic sculpture images
 - Discussion on the 'pair' grouping of military service. **IMPORTANT:** Marines are a part of the Navy. What would the 'pairings' be?

NEXT STEPS

- Confirm with Township that the Public Meeting #3 will be re-scheduled to Wednesday May 4th – 7pm.
- Continue discussions with Clemens Corporation on Reinert Rd. Access.\BoS Presentation: April 27th.

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