

---

## MEETING NOTES

---

Project:	Towamencin Veterans Memorial Park Master Plan	Project No.:	20003.10
Location:	Towmanencin Township Bldg Meeting Room 1090 Troxel Road Lansdale, PA	Meeting Date/Time:	05.04.2022 7pm
Re:	Public Meeting #3	Issue Date:	05.12.2022

---

### ATTENDEES:

See attached Sign-in Sheet

### GENERAL NOTES:

#### INTRODUCTION

- Anita Nardone (AN) of Simone Collins (SC) welcomed both in-person (16 attendees) and virtual attendees (1 attendee) to the meeting, introduced Staff Landscape Architect Michelle Armour (MA) to the group, and reviewed the proposed agenda for the evening:
  - a. Schedule of the Master Plan Study
  - b. Master Plan Scope / Process
  - c. Veterans Memorial Park Mission Statement
  - d. Public Opinion Survey-Results to date
  - e. Review of Preliminary Concepts and Plan Refinements
  - f. Precedent Images & Potential Park Components
  - g. Draft Master Plan
  - h. Preliminary Phasing Plan & Costs
  - i. Review of Future Meetings

#### SCHEDULE OF MASTER PLAN STUDY

- AN presented an overall timeline of the process. The Master Plan process will conclude in July 2022. Future work for the project entails future funding, final design, and construction. We are currently in the fifth of six steps within the Master Plan process--- draft master plan.

#### SITE ANALYSIS

- AN presented site analysis, including:
  - a. Existing Conditions – Composite Analysis

- b. Scale Comparison Diagram
- AN reviewed the context of where the Park site exists in relation to its neighbors: Clemens Corporation, PSDC (Shopping Center), North Penn Water Authority

### **PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY**

- AN presented a summary of the Public Opinion Survey responses to date, including:
  - a. Recreational habits and activities of respondents
  - b. Desired elements for Veterans Memorial Park
  - c. Additional Thoughts/Comments/Suggestions

### **PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS**

- AN reviewed three (3) Preliminary Concepts and three Concept Plan Refinements for Veterans Memorial Park, along with precedent images as examples of what conceptual elements might look like. These elements include:
  - a. site access
  - b. vehicular access/parking areas
  - c. pedestrian/multi-modal circulation
  - d. major and minor “plazas”
  - e. restrooms/pavilion
  - f. entry trellis/pergola
  - g. amphitheater
  - h. earthwork mounds
  - i. play area
  - j. lawn/open field
  - k. meadow/stormwater management
  - l. trees
- AN updated attendees on conversations with neighbors regarding access. Attempts at Conversations began early with Clemens regarding the possibility of both pedestrian and vehicular access through their properties. Clemens has recently expressed a preference for site vehicular and pedestrian access to the park from the Tomlinson Road property (Country View Estates-CFC; approx. 15 acres).

### **DRAFT MASTER PLAN**

- MA presented the draft master plan for Veterans Memorial Park. This plan incorporates public and committee feedback on the previous concepts into a more refined and detailed plan. The most significant change to the plan in this iteration is the placement of vehicular site access and, therefore, the parking area and park entrance at the southern end of the site, coming from Tomlinson Road.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

1. Q: Is the stream on the site coming from/under Tomlinson Road?  
AN: Yes
2. K: Regarding the Allentown Road access – that curve is dangerous. Is a pedestrian sidewalk along that curve to connect to neighbors along Allentown Road being considered? I live right

next door to the park.

AN: Yes, pedestrian access is always critical to any park. Allentown Road is a State Route, so the Township has a permit to access the site through the gravel access road that currently exists. The current access location has challenges: site lines associated with its location on a curve, traffic volume, and drainage from the shopping center runs along the side of the park property and goes under the road, so there are several complicated issues there. Access remains a critical issue for the park.

3. JB: Regarding the public opinion survey - I volunteer with other parks and historic sites' living history displays. The 13% opposition to historic/military interactive displays is a red flag – can you share what kind of input drove that?

AN: There was a general sentiment (especially in the key person interviews) that people do not want to celebrate war – veterans and nonveterans alike – and that veterans memorials can be found across the country, but that the desire is for this park to reflect Towamencin and veterans of Towamencin. Also, this 13% can be seen from the perspective that only 13% of 109 survey respondents opposed military displays. To clarify, not every respondent answered every question, so this does not mean that 87% of respondents answered in favor of displays.

4. JB: Gardens require maintenance from skilled labor; what will that cost?

AN: The final report will contain our recommendations and estimates on what it will cost the Township to take care of that, as well as other elements of the park. Certainly, a plan for maintenance is important to the success of any plantings going into the future.

5. Q: Regarding Tomlinson Road access drive – there is a big gully next to the residential property on Tomlinson.

MA: Yes, this is why this conceptual layout pulls the access drive closer to the property line on the south side. Ideally, this layout would not be close to the adjacent residence, and we will need to look at property setbacks, but we did see that much of the Tomlinson frontage is wooded that that there appears to be a swale or gully there.

AN: Also note that, while Clemens has not shared with us what they plan to do with this property going forward, they did indicate that this (Tomlinson Road) is their preference for Park site access.

6. K: With access from Tomlinson, will there still be access from the shopping center?

AN: Yes – the details have yet to be worked out, but Nicoletti has indicated that they would like to work with the Township on pedestrian access (no vehicular access).

7. DW: Clemens has said they want no vehicular access from Reinert Road – how about pedestrian access?

AN: Possibly.

DW: No.

K: It seems to me that the people who live closest to the park will not have pedestrian access.

DW: You need to change that plan – no vehicular or pedestrian access from Reinert Road.

8. DW: I live on Reinert Road for 50 years, and my family lives in the properties along Reinert – I didn't hear about this until someone called me and told me that they want to build a road and parking lot in my back yard. I'm a stockholder and Clemens family member so I called and told them I don't want this in my back yard. Also, this is one of if not the last corn field in Towamencin – it still produces and feeds people. There is a lot of wildlife there - I'd like to see this site stay as natural as possible. There is another farm that was taken, and a sign was put

up on Allentown Road “meadow restoration – no pedestrian access”. I used to fish there. They didn’t do anything and now it’s a forest. I’d like to see this site remain as natural as possible.

AN: That is the intent. There is an existing buffer that will remain. The idea of reforestation is to revegetate other areas.

JB: I think his point is that he wants it to remain as is.

9. JB: I live nearby on the Tennis property – except for one person who stopped by to tell me about it, I haven’t heard of this project. What kind of outreach has been done?

AN: There have been opportunities to participate in public meetings and public opinion survey, which have been posted to the Township website.

JB: This seems significantly developed and you haven’t talked to people who live next door, priorities may be different. When presented with a package, the inclination to pick it apart is less.

AN: When the master plan is completed, the Township to decide how they want to go forward with communication.

10. JS: Township employees are learning how to maintain rain gardens – they require maintenance.

11. JS: It is my hope that any paving done in this park is permeable to further mitigate stormwater issues. I am sad to lose the corn field; but to have forest and stormwater mitigation, make sure also to have permeable paved surfaces. Pervious isn’t always ADA accessible. Coming from a relative of many veterans, and as a veteran and wife of a man who uses a wheelchair – there needs to be hard, paved, accessible surfaces.

AN: Yes, absolutely this is a priority. Maintenance of walkways is also easier with paved surfaces, and these decisions will affect cost.

12. Q: Was #12 on the draft plan supposed to be emergency access? It needs to be.

A: It depends on whether this route can be 12’ and structurally able to support an emergency vehicle. There is the option to use the existing access drive on Allentown.

Q: Not an ambulance – a rescue vehicle weighs 47,000 lbs.

13. FS: Every drawing has a connection across the existing land bridge from the shopping center – where the back of buildings and loading docks are. Can the access from the shopping center be moved up to where the open grassy area is instead of the back of buildings?

AN: Not likely – Nicoletti will likely want to develop that area.

14. Q: I live on Reinert Road, and I do like this plan better than the concept with Reinert Road access. Reinert Road has become a cut-through for SKF employees and Amazon drivers.

15. CL: No reforestation. This is not an arboretum – too expensive, and not enough visibility. Can’t look through a forest. Fischers Park is an example of a park with trees but still good visibility through/under them. Lansdale Park has trees but still good visibility. Safety first. Need visibility for park visitors and police.

MA: One form of security is high community use – “eyes on the park”

AN+MA: Reforestation would be a decades long process that the Township would have control over – species selection and placement, pruning, loose plant structure, etc. Keeping height/structure of plantings above and below eye level. Perhaps for next committee meeting we will present images to demonstrate visually how a reforested site could look; plant structure (“whips” in 10 years etc.)

Q: At #1 – the existing forest – you can't walk through that. Will the existing woods be cleared out?

AN: No, that will not be touched.

16. JB: Idea – leave an area open for tree plantings in honor of veterans/family members. Can help to fund the Park. With guidelines that it be in honor of a veteran.

MA: Great idea! Community investment/ownership of the Park. Also, community members can “adopt a tree” – be responsible for tending to one specific tree in the park. Tending to trees/gardens can be very therapeutic.

17. CL: Are improvements planned for the cemetery?

AN: Towamencin History Plaza can educate visitors about the military/ general history of Towamencin and it overlooks the cemetery. Educational signage can be incorporated.

CL: The History Plaza with educational signage is a great idea!

18. CL: As Towamencin owners can we make improvements to the cemetery?

Q: Towamencin owns it because it was an abandoned cemetery and the Township took responsibility for it. Improvements would need to consider the era in which it was created to be historically accurate.

19. Q: Is there any thought about planning about repairing tombstones?

AN: Area within the cemetery is not part of this study – perhaps a walkway around the outside of the cemetery. The amount of access allowed to the cemetery is up to the Township.

RM: There is a proposal for historic restoration of this cemetery and the Holiday Inn cemetery. Historic preservation would be next step.

20. BD: Please keep in mind that rescue vehicles need to get across the site – designated route that ideally gives access to most of the site or at least from one end of the site to the other.

MA: Would the “major walkways” suffice?

BD: I was thinking the perimeter loop, especially along the right side of the site – shortest distance from one end to the other and least obtrusive on the other areas of the park.

BD: The problem with Allentown access is that the existing access road is way too steep for a rescue vehicle to enter – the road would need to be “beefed up”. Access from the shopping center is more ideal – more level and straighter. Vehicle is 47K lbs. NOTE: Two vehicular access points will be required for the site.

21. JB: How much of a reach is it for the sewer lines to the restroom?

MA: There is a sewer easement along the Allentown Road side at the North Penn property – we will be looking at Tomlinson Road, which may make more sense.

BD/RM: There should be access to water and sewer from the shopping center (and planned residential development.)

22. Comment: Funding sources – Pennsylvania Historical Society, genealogy organizations.

23. BD: This was an encampment – historical significance. I think Washington planned to use this area because it is on higher ground.

24. JB: Regarding education – interaction with a live historical docent can be more impactful than a sign or plaque.

25. CL: We will need safety fencing around the stream to keep people from falling in.

AN: That is not necessarily the case.

Comment: That stream is dry 90% of the year.

26. Q: 20 car parking lot – who came up with the number? Will probably not be big enough for large events like reenactments, but enough for day-to-day use.  
JB: Reenactors can unload in parking lot and then go to park in the shopping center  
Comment: If the park mission is to provide a reflective space, maybe 20 is the right number.
27. BD: Palmerton PA – recommendation for park ideas.
28. Online Comment: (S): I am an Army Vet and a Scouter and a member of the American Legion.  
Thank you for your great work.

## **NEXT STEPS**

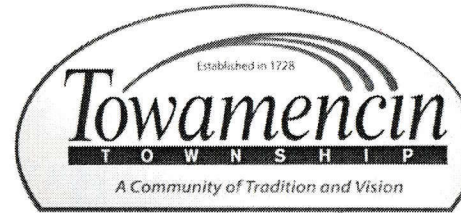
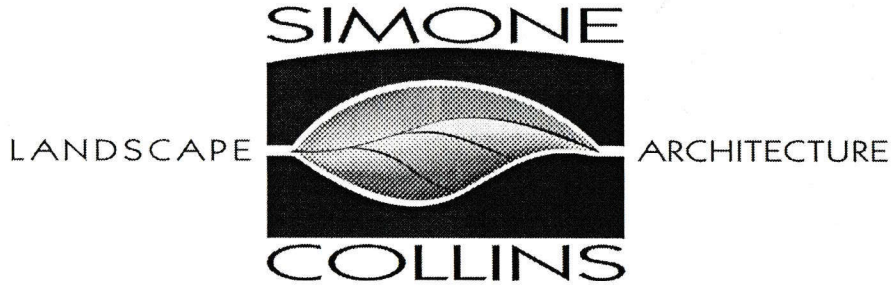
- SC to refinement the plan based on public and committee input
- SC to prepare a poster for Towamencin Community Day 2022 – May 21, 2022
- Plan refinements to be discussed at Committee Meeting #4 on May 23, 2022
- Final master plan to be presented at Public Meeting #4 on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022
- All meetings and updates will be posted to the Township website.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anita Nardone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anita Nardone, PE



VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK-PUBLIC MEETING #3 SIGN IN SHEET

May 4, 2022

NAME	EMAIL
Carter LeBrocq	
Jackie Strohlen	Strohlein24@comcast.net
Frank Strohlen	
DAVE LITTLE	DLITTLE@msn.com
*DAVE WOELKERS	DWELK20@GMAIL.COM
Gordon Bell	CAPT BELL@COMCAST.NET
Jim Burrill	JAMES C BURRILL@GMAIL.COM
Bob DiDomizio	radengnaer@yaho.com
RICH MARINO	rmarino@towamencin.org
MICHAEL LEWIS	majorgolfer@comcast.net
Ann Sheasley	sheasleya@yahoo.com
Steve Snyder ✓	jsnyder@towamencin.org → neighbor
Jim Bault	eng. bruce@gmail.org
Michele ROSS	rossma0487@gmail.com
NANCY BECKER	njbeckerrad12@comcast.com
Karen?	(neighbor-pool prop; Mentown Rd
ONLINE ATTENDEE: Stacy?	