



Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of the June 09, 2025 Meeting

In Attendance:

Dr. Richard Costlow, Vice Chairperson
Nancy Becker
Michon Blake
Robert DeHaven
Todd Fisher

Joe Rumsey
Dan Vaitis
Katy Cleary — Township Events Coordinator
Kristen Warner — Board of Supervisors Liaison

Excused:

Joseph Meehan, Chairperson

Dave Sponseller

Other Attendees:

Brian Gibson
Paul Andrews
Casey Hanning
Dennis McGeehan

John French
Bruce Bailey
Stephanie German
Todd Montgomery

MEETING FORMALITIES

In accordance with the agenda and in the absence of the Chairperson Meehan, Dr. Costlow, the Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. All present participated in the pledge of allegiance. The 09JUN2025 meeting of the OPEN SPACE AND PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING began and minutes of the meeting are reported here.

OPENING COMMENTS

Dr. Costlow noted that he will record the audio of the meeting for his convenience in preparing the minutes. He met with David Kraynik, the Township Manager, on June 4th who provided an update on items of interest to the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSPAC). Dr. Costlow will report on the topics as the agenda items arise during the meeting goes.

APPROVAL OF OSPAC MINUTES – RE: Meeting of May 12, 2025

There were no additions, deletions or corrections to the previously-issued draft minutes of the May 12, 2025 meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was voiced by Ms. Becker and seconded by Mr. Vaitis. A quorum of Committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion; the May 12, 2025 minutes are approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were several members of the public attending. Two topics were raised: (1) playing courts at Valley View Way, (2) preservation of ecologically sensitive habitat on Walton Farm and Freddy Hill Farm properties.

Valley View Way Park — The attendees collectively raised the issue of re-paving the court surfaces of the two basketball courts at Valley View Way Park. They also requested a curb cutout at the end of the cul-

de-sac to give bike riders direct access to the trail. Presently, riders use residents' driveways, a practice the residents would like to discourage.

Mr. Gibson (Valley View Way resident) complimented Towamencin Public Works [TTPW] for grass cutting, providing basketball nets and also for the new walking trail. The concern voiced was the courts' playing surfaces are in poor condition. He indicated the courts get regular, but not extensive, use and that residents have asked, on several occasions previously, for Towamencin Township to re-pave the courts, but have received no response. Recently, in May, Dr. Costlow spoke with two of the homeowners who live closest to the courts. They and others would like to retain one court for basketball and create a pickleball court on the other court. A petition to Towamencin Township to do this is being circulated in the neighborhood; it was reportedly well-received. The homeowners collectively created a pickleball court using driveway sealer on the surface and painting the court lines [those who use it bring their own portable net and equipment].

The residents are aware of the noise concern with pickleball, but it is not objectionable according to the homeowners living closest to the courts nor for several OSPAC members; it's less noisy than the adjacent turnpike. One resident felt a fully functional pickleball court might encourage off-hours neighborhood traffic by visiting non-township-resident players. There was a compromise consensus that a level court, with a correctly lined and playable surface, open to residents who bring their own portable net and equipment, would be a satisfactory solution.

Their collective neighborhood request was to entirely re-pave both courts or at a minimum resurface both with an appropriate surface coating, and to paint lines on the courts for the respective sports, basketball and pickleball. Signage restricting play to residents was also a stated preference.

A short discussion ensued about the installation of a curb cutout at the end of the cul-de-sac to give bike riders access to the trail without riding up residents' driveways. The existing ADA accessible ramp on the corner is not satisfactory for deterring the bike activity. OSPAC indicated they would bring this to the attention of Towamencin Township.

Walton and Freddy Hill — A resident, Casey Hanning, expressed concern for the importance of the ecological value of the grassland habitat that has supplanted the unused pastures in these locations. He has counted over 30 species of birds, various frogs, turtles and other fauna. He wants to prioritize grassland preservation equally or higher than tree planting. He also cited Article 1, section 27 of the PA State Constitution which enshrines environmental rights as an intrinsic human right.

No further public comments.

OLD BUSINESS and Updates provided by Dr. Costlow

Towamencin Day 2025 Debrief

Fond memories and compliments to Towamencin Township for all aspects of the festival. We had another discussion of parking and the several options: parking on Kriebel Road [~50 spaces]; expand parking on the South side of Kriebel Road [~25 additional spaces], and one new one, valet parking.

Grist Mill Park Improvements

The contractor has made progress despite rain. The rubberized playground paving is installed. Estimate of completion is approximately 70%. Completion is projected for June/July.

Green Lane Road Park Soccer Field

Site grading of the sub-surface by Public Works is complete despite the weather; grass is planted outside the pitch; sand installation on the small field is done; topsoil/amendment and seed are expected the week of 02JUN. The same progression is planned for the large field beginning the week of 09JUN. The "soil amendment" by Land Tec Enterprises will occur after grading. The projected finish for this project is 2-3 weeks, then the field will rest for two years. There is no stated proposal yet for keeping foot or other traffic off the fields. The OSPAC suggestions were signage, a temporary fence [orange plastic type], or a contractor-installed temporary wire fence. OSPAC did not know if fines could be levied for incursions. No suggestions were tabled to improve parking, an additional issue that needs to be resolved.

Pickleball Courts At Butch Clemens Park-

No change since last meeting; grants submitted; no response from DCNR or DCED

DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) [\$533,973 request]

DCED Greenways Trails & Recreation Program (GTRP) [\$250,000 request]

Connector Path from Grist Mill Drive to Grist Mill Park Grant Application

No change since last meeting; grants submitted; no response from DCED

DCED Greenway Trails & Recreation Program (GTRP) [\$159,012 request]

Planting Trees in 2025 and Tree Bank Update

There are several additional tree planting in locations to be determined in 2025 and the budget for 2026 is currently \$25,000 .

The action point by Dr. Costlow to get information for the OSPAC related to creating a shared drive in the digital cloud to compile and share relevant information is still in progress.

Veterans Memorial Park Engineering Plans

A brief multi-faceted discussion occurred regarding a previous proposal by PSDC (Mark Nicoletti). The OSPAC is unaware of an agreement between PSDC and the Township for any action. The proposed exchange of land owned by PSDC adjacent to Tomlinson Road for land owned by the Township is potentially problematic because the Township land is currently preserved open space. Further investigation is required. The details of any proposal and accompanying reviews by the Township, the Planning Commission, or the Solicitor need to be clarified before any further action can be considered.

Geocaching

There is an agreement among John French, a geocaching advocate and Township resident, and the OSPAC, the Township Manager, the Chief of police and the Township Director of Administration to present a proposal on the proposed geocaching process to the Board of Supervisors. Dave Kraynik said he has not received a proposal to put on the agenda. He would like that as soon as possible.

The OSPAC will deliver the final proposal and request time on the June 25th agenda for presentation of the proposal by Mr. French and the OSPAC to the Board of Supervisors. Subsequently the BOS will decide to allow or not allow geocaching in the Township parks.

NEW BUSINESS

America 250 Committee, OSPAC Representative

The celebration will move forward with Ms. Blake as the OSPAC representative for planning and activities.

Tree plan for Walton & Freddy Hill Farms

Should OSPAC try to cooperate with the Environmental Advisory Committee and make suggestions on what species of tree and where to plant trees, or what type of non-passive activities could be encouraged? The Township has a list of acceptable tree species and is supportive of a Towamencin Township tree plan as well as non-passive activities [cornhole, concrete ping pong tables, etc.].

The consensus was: (a) Towamencin Township could exert control via ordinance, e.g. if you cut down a tree you must plant a replacement and (b) Towamencin Township cannot dictate tree planting locations or activity types. Suggestions from OSPAC should go through the Planning Commission and particular tree species suggestions would likely be acceptable; suggestions on activity type may be less well received.

OSPAC 2026 Budget preliminary discussions

The OSPAC did not have the list of capital projects we prioritized in 2024. We did note that several 2025 projects in the Towamencin Township Capital Projects for Parks are funded to continue into 2026. Dr. Costlow took the action to make the full prioritized list available to the committee for a detailed discussion next month.

There being no other new business topics or discussions, Dr. Costlow entertained a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was voiced by Ms. Becker and seconded by Mr. Rumsey.

A quorum of Committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion; the June 09, 2025 meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Dr. Richard D. Costlow
Vice Chairperson, Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee

The next Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting is on July 14, 2025