



Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of the August 11, 2025 Meeting

In Attendance:

Joseph Meehan, Chair
Dr. Richard Costlow, Vice Chair
Nancy Becker
Michon Blake

Robert DeHaven
Todd Fisher
Katie Cleary — Township Events Coordinator

Excused:

Dave Sponseller
Joe Rumsey

Dan Vaitis
Kristen Warner — Board of Supervisors Liaison

Other Attendees:

John French

MEETING FORMALITIES {Agenda Items 1 and 2}

In accordance with the agenda the Chairperson, Mr. Meehan, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. All present participated in the pledge of allegiance. The 11AUG2025 meeting of the OPEN SPACE AND PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING began and minutes of the meeting are reported here.

OPENING COMMENTS {Agenda Item 3}

Mr. Meehan noted that Dr. Costlow will record the audio of the meeting for his convenience in preparing the minutes. Mr. David Kraynik, the Township Manager, met with Mr. Meehan on August 7th and provided an update on items of interest to the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSPAC). Discussion was deferred on the topics to the agenda items as they arose during the meeting.

Mr. Meehan announced that Mr. Vaitis will resign from the OSPAC; Ms. Warner was recently notified. The Committee was unanimous in its appreciation to Dan for his efforts over the years he served. His departure creates an open position, and the Township Board of Supervisors will seek to fill the position in accordance with established procedures.

APPROVAL OF OSPAC MINUTES – RE: Meeting of July 14, 2025 {Agenda Item 4}

There were proposed corrections, additions and deletions to the draft minutes. All suggested changes were approved. The corrections will be made and appear in the issued minutes of the July 14, 2025 meeting. A motion to approve the corrected minutes was voiced by Mr. DeHaven and seconded by Ms. Becker. A quorum of Committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion; the 14JUL2025 minutes were approved as corrected.

PUBLIC COMMENTS {Agenda Item 5}

There were no members of the public attending who wished to make comments. Committee comments were deferred to the agenda items.

OLD BUSINESS - updates provided by Mr. Meehan are incorporated {Agenda Item 6}**Capital Budget Requests for 2026 to Towamencin Township**

There were eight (8) capital projects considered for inclusion in the proposed 2026 capital budget for parks. OSPAC determined all 8 were appropriate for capital requests. The projects are:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ❖ Complete Kriebel Road Trail Phase III | ❖ Replace the roof of the Beck's Pavilion in Fischer's Park |
| ❖ Build pickleball courts at Butch Clemens Park | ❖ Install way-finding signs in Fischer's Park |
| ❖ Continue the tree planting program | ❖ Create playable surfaces on the courts at Valley View Way Cul-de-sac for basketball and pickleball |
| ❖ Expand parking at Green Lane Park | |
| ❖ Complete connecting trail from the Trumbauer Trail to Spring Valley Road | |

Additional information on each project is included below in the Updates section of the Minutes.

PROJECT UPDATES**Grist Mill Park Recreational Improvements**

Progress was slowed dramatically by protracted rainy Spring weather. Poor drainage continues to be problematic to get the basketball courts completed, however dry weather has allowed the ground to get firm.

Summary Notes:

- ❖ Paving of courts may occur week of 11AUG or 18AUG, weather permitting.
- ❖ Tree planting will get done soon in the spaces allotted.
- ❖ Each post for a playground cover requires a 6-foot clearance, making installation at this location unfeasible.
- ❖ An in-ground electrical junction box is not at grade. This will be investigated by the Township and a solution proposed. An electrical inspection is needed before final acceptance.
- ❖ The supply chain difficulty for delivery of the proposed pre-fabricated pavilion to the site has not been resolved. halted this phase completely. Remedies are being pursued, however a significant delay in project completion is anticipated (estimates are one to several months).
- ❖ Restroom access will be set for daylight and evening hours to accommodate TYA schedule as well as playground use.
- ❖ Decisions on opening the playground and the play equipment without the pavilion will be deferred until a timeline for the pavilion is established.
- ❖ Kids have been entering the construction area and using the playground equipment. The Contractor has posted a sign to "keep off" the playground equipment.

Grist Mill Park Infrastructure Improvements

Work funded by the \$250K grant from the *Montgomery County 2040 Program* for refurbishment of the drainage retention basins in Grist Mill Park will proceed to the contracting stage then implementation.

Green Lane Road Park Soccer Field

Site grading, topsoil/amendment and seeding by Land Tec Enterprises are **substantially** complete. The clarification on the \$1,050,000 total cost estimate for the project was deferred to September. Mr. Meehan will review again with Mr. Kraynik.

The fence protecting the installed fields was erected. **The OSPAC recommends signs be installed in addition.**

There are several problems remaining with this project:

Additional parking is needed. **The proposal offered by the Township** to remove three mature trees and move the east side fence toward Green Lane Road to create an additional row of parking **was not accepted**. Existing parking habits are not controlled and TYA should be encouraged to monitor parking behaviors to facilitate maximal use of the space available.

OSPAC concluded:

- ❖ An on-site visit to refine the additional parking proposal will occur 14AUG
- ❖ a paved surface is not required
- ❖ no trees should be felled regardless of the parking plan adopted; **KEEP ALL EXISTING TREES**
- ❖ better signage needs to be erected to prevent both vehicle and pedestrian access to the fields during the growth and stabilization phase of the turf on the pitch
- ❖ runoff control is essential
- ❖ parking on existing grass needs to be discouraged except for special circumstances
- ❖ turf growth on the new soccer fields is sparse and weed-infested over both playing surfaces; additional irrigation is unlikely to remedy this
- ❖ the grading of the playing surfaces is not satisfactory (dips, settling, etc.).

Given the low probability of success in creating good turf at this stage of the project, measures need to be taken to re-initiate growth and ensure the requirements specified in the construction contract are met.

Planting Trees in 2025 and 2026

There are several additional tree planting locations to be determined in 2025 and the budget for 2026 is currently \$25,000. The recommendations to plant trees along Kriebel Road, in Green Lane Park, and Fire House Park were accepted. These are in addition to the locations yet to be designated elsewhere for 2025/2026.

A proposal to plant trees in Bustard Road Park, near Field B1, to replace those removed was accepted and will be added to the list of tree planting locations to be considered..

Geocaching

The guidelines for geocaching in Towamencin were announced and are posted on the Township website. The OSPAC thanks John French, a geocaching advocate and Township resident, for his contributions which made this possible. The OSPAC, the Township Manger, the Chief of police and the Township Director of Administration are aware of the guidelines.

America 250 Committee

Ms. Blake reported that the committee meetings are occurring monthly. The BOS approved 25JUN2026 as the date for the celebration in Fischer's Park. At a recent meeting she learned that the Township will receive a plaque commemorating General Washington's encampment here. The plaque will be placed on Tomlinson Road, however timing on the plaque delivery may or may not coincide with the 250 celebration. The next meeting is 15SEP25 and subsequent meetings will be on the third Monday of each month.

OSPAC Email and Cloud Storage of Documents

The Google account (15GB of digital storage) has been created. OSPAC members were sent the hyperlink to the shared drive and all have editor-level access to facilitate information sharing among OSPAC members, the account email is [Towamencin.OSPAC@Gmail.com].

Suggestions were made regarding naming conventions for files and folders. A "Read me" file on the "OSPAC Drive" will document the suggestions. The drive will be populated as time allows and needs arise. Any suggestions should be directed to Dr. Costlow for implementation.

UPDATES TO GRANT APPLICATIONS**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 APR2025 request]

DCED Greenways Trails & Recreation Program (GTRP) [\$250,000 MAY2025 request]

Part of the proposed budget for 2026 will be to apply for a \$60,000 grant to upgrade the current concept plan to a full engineering design for the site.

Grist Mill Park Connector Path from Grist Mill Drive to the Park

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

DCED Greenway Trails & Recreation Program (GTRP) [\$159,012 APR2025 request]

Kriebel Road Trail Phase III

The \$250K grant request under the *Montgomery County 2040 Program* for this trail extension was not funded. The Township WILL re-apply for an identical grant in 2026, possibly using a different consultant to write the grant. This Kriebel Road Trail III [KRT3] extension will run from the terminus of the current trail near the Towamencin Municipal Authority, across Bustard Road, and connect to the existing trail in Fischer Park.

Veterans Memorial Park Engineering Plans

No change in status was communicated regarding the proposal by PSDC (Mark Nicoletti) for an exchange of land owned by PSDC adjacent to Tomlinson Road for land owned by the Township. The impediment of the Township land being preserved open space still exists.

Complete the Trumbauer Trail to Spring Valley Road connector

This item appears here to reflect the OSPAC discussion of the project for the 2026 capital budget. A proposal to fund the construction of the connector was entered as a 2026 capital budget request. The Spring Valley neighborhood accommodations on sight lines from the trail to the houses will be part of the plan.

CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS AND DISCUSSION

Some of the OSPAC initial budget proposals were also Public Works proposals. The OSPAC list will eliminate its duplicate requests to the BOS. Mr. Meehan will revise all the OSPAC proposals and re-submit all of the revised proposals to the OSPAC members; they will be posted on the OSPAC Drive in the Plans and Budgets folder. The list is here:

Additional parking at Green Lane Park

Connector from KRT to Spring Valley Road

Rehab one court at Valley View Way

Veterans Memorial Park engineering

Signs in Fishers Park

Replace the roof of the Beck's Pavilion and Way-finding Signs in Fischer's Park

Several replacements, refurbishments and upgrades are needed in Fischer Park. Replacement of the Beck Pavilion roof was the primary project proposed. Public Works Department has this project as a Budget Request for 2026; the OSPAC will take it off its 2026 Request List.

Way-finding signs and position markers on the trails are also to be requested in addition to the existing trail description sign. A survey of all the existing signs was suggested with an eye to replacing faded or otherwise unreadable signs.

Demolishing and replacing the Stable Pavilion and additional parking options were discussed but no recommendations were adopted.

OSPAC concluded:

- ❖ replacement of the Beck Pavilion roof is needed. PW will take the lead on this.
- ❖ installation of way-finding signs and position markers improve park safety and speed emergency response time; they should be installed

Refurbish Courts on Valley View Way Cul-de-sac

This item appears here to reflect the OSPAC perception of the project as it was debated within the discussion of the 2026 capital budget. The Valley View Way neighborhood indicated in the June OSPAC meeting that these courts were in major disrepair. They asked that the hard-surface courts at the cul-de-sac be resurfaced or refurbished at minimal cost to create playable surfaces on the courts; one for basketball and one for pickleball. The latter surface should be appropriately lined for pickleball. Resident users would need to provide their own net. This was judged to be an adequate disincentive to non-residents utilizing the court. In the 2026 budget, the OSPAC will propose rehabilitation of the courts.

An extensive and wide-ranging discussion on paved playing surfaces for residents' recreation ensued. The consensus was that options for Valley View Way courts, Heebner Park and other surfaces should be considered to repurpose these surfaces to match Township residents' desires.

NEW BUSINESS - {Agenda Item 7}

Towamencin Newsletter Article – Topic will be geocaching. John French agreed to draft an article for review by OSPAC. Due date is August 22, 2025.

Open Space – The Montgomery County “MontCo Forever Green” initiative has grants available for purchase of open space. The OSPAC is looking for land that might qualify.

The OSPAC discussed the Rosemore Park Gardens plot. It is 12 acres, owned by the Developer since 1973 and currently farmed under an agreement with the Township. The address is PO Box 303 Kulpville, PA (the Township's PO Box). No real estate taxes are levied on the property; it is zoned by Montgomery County as “E-exempt local municipality”, but R175 according to Towamencin zoning maps and the land is assessed at \$33,000. It is located near the power lines behind Parkview Drive. OSPAC concluded that more details are needed about the parcel, its history, and its current status before a grant application could be considered.

Fischer's Park related issues – There will be maintenance to the paved walking path in the park to remediate areas which flooded [work by TT PW]. Trail scouring and loss of gravel will be repaired and a suggestion was made to inspect/repair these gravel section after every significant rainfall event. A more effective and permanent solution to the wash-outs is desired but none are being discussed currently.

Bocce courts – Cross-court traffic and damage are still occurring. Suggestions were made for additional signage which faces the adjacent pavilion, a folding sign to sit on the walkway between the courts, and/or some type of barrier or fence. Also, a note could be added to the pavilion rental contract to keep off the bocce courts unless the game of bocce is being played.

Open Space in Township Developments –After reviewing the development plans, it was the consensus of the OSPAC that the Open Space designated in the Walton Farm and Freddy Hill developments was not open space usable for recreation as intended by the Township's ordinances. Large portions of the Open Space shown on the plans are designated on the plans as Storm Water Management (SWM) areas (basins). The facts support this conclusion. There are 62.6 acres of open space claimed for Walton Farm with 27 SWM areas; only a small fraction of the open space is contiguous space large enough to be used for recreation, e.g. playgrounds or athletic fields. The number of passive SWM areas suggests that multiple flood-prone areas exist. A similar situation exists for the Freddy Hill Farm development proposal. OSPAC suggests that the Planning and Zoning Board require developers of these parcels to provide an assessment of contiguous open space and involve the OSPAC in the creation of those spaces for specific purposes to meet the needs of the Township.

Traffic in and Around Township Developments - It was the consensus of the OSPAC that the proposed road and traffic patterns designated for the Walton Farm and Freddy Hill developments are not adequate to handle the projected number of new residents. Several options were discussed but the OSPAC reached no consensus.

ADJOURNMENT {Agenda Item 8}

There being no other new business topics or discussions, Mr. Meehan entertained a motion to

adjourn. A motion to adjourn was voiced by Dr. Costlow and seconded by Mr. DeHaven. A quorum of Committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion; the August 11, 2025 meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

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

Next Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting - September 15, 2025
due to the Labor Day Holiday on Monday 01SEP25