



Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of the September 15, 2025 Meeting

In Attendance:

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

Todd Fisher
Dave Sponseller
Joe Rumsey
Kristen Warner — Board of Supervisors Liaison
Katie Cleary — Township Events Coordinator

Excused:

None

Other Attendees:

Bruce Bailey

Agenda Item 1. MEETING FORMALITIES

In accordance with the agenda the Chair, Mr. Meehan, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. All present participated in the pledge of allegiance. The 15SEP2025 meeting of the OPEN SPACE AND PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING began and minutes of the meeting are reported here.

Agenda Item 3. OPENING COMMENTS

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 11SEP25 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.

The “Introduction to Bocce” program conducted by Ms. Cleary and Dr. Costlow in Fisher’s Park on Saturday 13SEP25 was well-attended (9 participants with multiple age groups represented). Additional programs will be considered.

Agenda Item 4. APPROVAL OF OSPAC MINUTES – Meeting of 11 August 2025

There were proposed corrections and deletions to the draft minutes. All suggested changes were approved. The corrections will be made and appear in the issued minutes of the August 11, 2025 meeting. A motion to approve the corrected minutes was voiced by Ms. Becker and seconded by Ms. Blake. A quorum of Committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion; the minutes were approved as corrected.

Agenda Item 5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Agenda Item 6. OLD BUSINESS

Updates from Mr. Kraynik provided by Mr. Meehan were incorporated into the relevant topics. OSPAC discussed and proposed ten (10) capital projects for inclusion in the 2026 budget. Each of these projects was detailed in a Budget Request Form prepared by Mr. Meehan for the Township.

6.1 Review and Approval of Capital Budget Requests for 2026 to Towamencin Township

6.1.1	Advance the development of Veterans Park	\$260,000	
6.1.2	Design and engineering of pickleball courts at Butch Clemens Park		\$63,000
6.1.3	Create Grist Mill Park connector trail	\$318,025	
6.1.4	Design and engineering of utilities for restrooms at Butch Clemens Park		\$40,500
6.1.5	Expand parking at Green Lane Park	\$274,120	
6.1.6	Continue the tree planting program	\$25,000	
6.1.7	Engineering for connecting trail from Trumbauer to Spring Valley Road		\$5,000
6.1.8	Resurface the courts at Valley View Way Cul-de-sac	\$6,000	
6.1.9	Install way-finding signs in Fischer's Park	\$8,924	
6.1.10	Complete Kriebel Road Trail Phase III	<u>\$397,410</u>	

Total request is \$1,397,979

Item 6.1.1, Advance the Development of Veterans Park, is contingent on a conversation between Mr. Meehan and Mr. Kraynick to determine if initiating work on Phase 1 of the project or funding the engineering portion of the full project would disadvantage any subsequent grant application for the project. If there is an adverse impact of initiating Phase 1 and no impact for preparing the engineering, then Mr. Meehan was authorized by OSPAC to prepare this portion of the budget request to create the best advantage for the project, i.e. either the \$260,000 for initiating work Phase 1, or \$96,903 for the engineering on Phases 1, 2 and 3.

Item 6.1.5 is controversial because of the tree plan. See note below referring to Green Lane parking.

The inquiry about the Rosemore Gardens plot as a possible purchase for open space was resolved. This plot is already owned by Towamencin Township. The designation of Rosemore in the records is in error.

The motion to proceed with items 6.1.2 through 6.1.10 was made by Ms. Becker with a second by Dr. Costlow; the motion carried unanimously. The motion to proceed with item 6.1.1 was made by Ms. Becker for the full budget request of an additional \$260,000 for initiating Phase 1 work with the provision that OSPAC would not recommend any expenditure if it creates an impediment to getting a grant for the planned development of Veterans Park; a second was voiced by Dr. Costlow. An amendment to the motion was made by Dr. Costlow and a second voiced by Ms. Becker. To add: If there is an adverse impact of initiating Phase 1 and no impact for preparing the engineering, then Mr. Meehan is authorized by OSPAC to submit the 2026 budget request for \$96,903 for the engineering on Phases 2 and 3 [Phase 1 was done in 2025]. The OSPAC intent is to create the best advantage for the project getting grant funding. The motion, as amended, carried unanimously.

There is uncertainty in the preliminary values voted on at the meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Becker and a second voiced by Mr. Fisher to allow Mr. Meehan to correct each of the preliminary 2026 budget requests by plus or minus 20% to attain accurate proposals for submission to the Township. A new vote on the budget proposals would not be needed for corrections within this range.

6.2 PROJECT UPDATES

6.2.1 Grist Mill Park Recreational Improvements

All recreational equipment is on site; most of it is installed. Progress on the pavilion is limited. An opening date could be in late October with a ribbon-cutting event.

Summary Notes:

- ❖ Tree planting is done. Any trees which die will be replaced.
- ❖ 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. Remedies are still being pursued, however there is a delay in project completion. Decisions on opening the playground and the play equipment without the pavilion will be deferred until a timeline for the pavilion is established.
- ❖ Kids still enter the construction area and use the play equipment. The Contractor has posted signs to “keep off”, but enforcement is limited.

6.2.2 Green Lane Road Park Soccer Fields

There are on-going problems with this project:

The creation of level playing fields with proper turf growth has not yet occurred. Multiple observations and comments between April and September confirmed this. Discussions between OSPAC members, the Township, CKS Engineering and Land Tec Enterprises appear to have led to an active re-contouring and re-seeding of both soccer fields. The delay in the establishment of a robust turf playing surface will require that play on the fields cannot occur until the 2028 season.

Additional parking is needed. The OSPAC provided a counter proposal to the Township that would avoid the loss of the mature trees. This was not accepted for adoption. The OSPAC remains opposed to the proposal by the Township to remove mature trees. The OSPAC would like to discuss this further before any work on the parking lot is initiated. The consensus was to keep the Township-proposed plan as a 2026 OSPAC budget request and if the project is funded, then re-initiate a negotiation on the specific plan for the parking lot to facilitate maximal use of the space available.

OSPAC concluded:

- ❖ trees should NOT be felled unless absolutely necessary 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 should be discouraged except for special circumstances
- ❖ re-grading and re-seeding of the playing surfaces to effectuate robust turf growth on the new soccer fields will delay recreational use of the space until the 2028 soccer season.

A clarification on the \$1,050,000 total cost estimate for the project was deferred; Mr. Meehan will review again with Mr. Kraynik and report.

6.2.3 Planting Trees in 2025 and 2026

Proposed plantings were prepared by OSPAC and after consultation with the Township (Mr. Carney) the specified species of trees will be ordered from David Brothers with the same survival enhancement insurance as previously adopted. Locations for 5 trees are not final but 22 of 27 trees in total are:

- ❖ Green lane Road Park along north side Kriebel Road (6)
- ❖ Green lane Road Park along south side Kriebel Road (3)

- ❖ Firehouse Park (7)
- ❖ Drinnon Way Park along trail (4)
- ❖ Grist Mill Park along perimeter adjacent to Jacobs Woods (2)

6.2.4 Veterans Park Development Plans 2026

In addition to the discussion of the 2026 budget item for this location Mr. Meehan indicated there is a proposed change to the park entrance. The entrance will be at the intersection of Allentown Rd and with Thorndale Dr/Shopping Center Entrance and an access road will run parallel to Allentown Rd west , inside the shopping center property, to the current gravel path entrance. This eliminates the option of access from Tomlinson Rd.

6.2.5 OSPAC Website for the Committee Members

The OSPAC consensus was that the shared Google cloud drive should be for the use of OSPAC members only, not Township employees or residents. Dr. Costlow pointed out that the cloud drive is not a website, it is only shared digital space. Some additional documents have been added, but a comprehensive loading of historical OSPAC information has not occurred pending discussion of the desired content and organization of that content. The OSPAC was invited to send suggestions regarding content and organization to Dr. Costlow. The Google account has 15GB of digital storage. OSPAC members have the hyperlink to the drive and editor-level access to facilitate information sharing among OSPAC members, the account email is [Towamencin.OSPAC@Gmail.com] .

6.3 GRANT APPLICATION UPDATES

6.3.1 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]

Proposed 2026 budget request includes \$63,000 for engineering design for the site.

6.3.2 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) [\$250,000 May 2025 request]

Decision expected late 2025.

6.3.3 Kriebel Road Trail Phase III

The \$250K grant application under the Montgomery County 2040 Program 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.

Agenda Item 7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Process for OSPAC Comments on Developer's Plans

Terminology for land development is not clearly defined. Terms such as common space, open space, storm water management area, and others appear to be interpreted differently by developers the township and the OSPAC. OSPAC discussed the need for clarity in the Township zoning ordinances and for us to have a process to comment on plans submitted to the Township for real estate and other developments within the Township. No specific proposal was made, but there was a suggestion for

review of the ordinances and/or possibly a draft proposal may be tabled at the next OSPAC Meeting.

7.2 Meeting with Brookside Farm Community regarding Valley View Way cul-de-sac

This project is proposed for the 2026 Capital Budget. Before implementation. There will be a notification letter to the Brookside Farm residents, and a meeting with them and come to a consensus on the project. The neighborhood wants the courts refurbished but there is concern from some about the types of sport that will be played there. Should the court surfaces be unpainted or should lines be painted to segregate basketball and pickleball to separate courts?

7.3 Additional parking for events at Fisher's Park

During Towamencin Day cars were parked in the park near the Kriebel Road entrance. This was acceptable because the ground was dry. Restricting access to the park to exhibitors only for the early hours would reduce congestion and confusion; this was considered but no proposal was adopted.

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. A more effective and permanent solution to trail wash-outs is desired but none are being discussed currently.

Could a voluntary recreational activity be scheduled and advertised for bocce in Fisher's Park, and not be in violation of the Township restrictions for sports league play or for-profit exercise activities? There was no consensus either way.

Agenda Item 8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other new business topics or discussions, Mr. Meehan entertained a motion to adjourn. The motion was voiced by Ms. Becker and seconded by Dr. Costlow. A quorum of Committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion; the September 15, 2025 meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

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

Next Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting - October 13, 2025