

7:30 PM Tuesday  
November 10, 2014

### **Upper Merion Park and Recreation Board Minutes**

**Attendees:** David Burns, Eileen Connelly, Tina Garzillo, Dan Russell, Neil Sardiñas, Barbara Schafer, Bill Schutter, Mike Trachtenberg

### **Pledge of Allegiance:**

**Approval of Minutes:** October 14, 2014

**Guests:** Greg Rishel from T&M Associates

T&M Associates is producing a master park plan for Upper Merion Township. Greg Rishel spoke to the UMPR Board about the project's study to determine the requirements for Upper Merion's parks. The township park survey is being released soon. The UMPR subcommittee has identified key community groups to interview. The intent is to gather input from as many people and organizations as possible. Dave Burns presented names for consideration to add to the list for T&M to interview. The current list includes civic associations, sports organizations, schools, social organizations, businesses, and special needs groups.

Greg Rishel: What are your thoughts about the current park system? Is it beneficial?

BS: There is inadequate space.

DB: Listed the different sports using the parks.

BS: Heuser Park is over used.

GR: mentioned that he is told "UM leads not follows. UM does not currently lead."

BS: I want more fields at Heuser Park.

TG: Need to focus on the big picture on how to better use our park system.

NS: Can UMPR assign practice fields?

GR: Heuser has lavatories while other fields do not.

DB: The schools have a net loss of sports fields

TG: There is more to the park system than just sports fields.

Greg Rishel: Looking at passive recreation space, does the township and UMASD share facilities?

DR: The Township uses school facilities for programs and UMASD uses Heuser, Walker and Baxter fields. Upper Merion Township does not charge UMASD, but UMASD charges UM for use. UM sports organizations use township properties free of charge.

EC: What land is not developed?

DR: Heuser and Mullen Tract have undeveloped space.

Greg Rishel: Do you have suggestions for improvements and do we need additional park land?

TG: First, we should upgrade what we have and then acquire more land

DR: Do we have access for everyone to walk to a neighborhood park?

NS: Parks should have trail connections to each other.

TG: Improvements include flexible space, LED building, nature areas, lavatories, and benches. Other ideas are pavilions, picnic areas, amphitheater, community gardens, and a sanctuary. Open space for free play, playground equipment, and rock climbing walls. Improvements should tie in with UMASD learning center, trails, and aesthetic landscape design.

DB: If there was money, the township should fix the Moore House.

DR: If the KOP Players can raise money, they intend to rehabilitate the building. It would require millions of dollars to fix the building.

Greg Rishel: What is the opinion of the condition of the parks?

EC: Bill Schutter has done a wonderful job with the limited resources that he has.

BSchutter: More staff is needed. Currently park maintenance staff is collecting leaves and Bill is the only staff member working on parks.

Group discussed whether sports teams help in contributing to maintenance and cost of lights.

Greg Rishel: How does the park system compare to other systems?

NS: Suggested that we look at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in suburban Washington D. C. for ideas on varied uses of parks. MNCPPC is designed to be inclusive of all demographics. Their parks contain nature centers, gardens, woods, playgrounds, ice rinks and more. It includes both active and passive recreation areas. Our plan should not be to copy the 22 fields SoccerPlex plan in Germantown, Maryland. This land use is exclusive to registered players on soccer or lacrosse teams.

DR: A Penn State study concluded 40 uses per field. Heuser has over 500 uses.

**Director's Report:** Dan Russell

- The next UMPR Master Plan meeting will be December 2, 2014 at 6:30.
- Every week there is a UMCC construction meeting. The scheduled UMCC opening is July 2015.
- Construction of the Valley Forge to Heuser Trail will begin soon and is expected to be finished in 2015.
- Upper Merion's Holiday Hoopla is scheduled for December 5, 2014 from 6:30-8:00 PM

<b>Park &amp; Recreation Department 2015 Proposed Budget</b>					
	2014 Adopted Budget	2015 Dept. Request	2015 Manager Recommend	\$ Change	% Change
Total Pers. Scvs.:	865,085	1,135,110	1,125,180	260,095	30.1
Total Oper. Suppl.:	138,078	180,581	133,310	(4,768)	(3.5)
Total Prof. Svcs.:	288,679	406,109	404,294	115,265	39.9
Total Misc.:	525,982	556,709	547,644	18,012	3.4
GRAND TOTAL:	1,817,824	2,278,509	2,210,428	388,604	21.3

**2015-Personnel Services**

- Salary/Wages Professional: Increase of 58.4% or \$106,295 due to hiring of 4 new full time positions for 2015
  - Assistant Park & Recreation Director, 2 Program Coordinators, and Marketing Specialist
- Salaries/Wages Clerical & Other: Increase of 500% or \$69,500 due to hiring of regular full time staff from July-December 2015
  - Maintenance Foreman, 2 Custodians, and 2 Front Desk Supervisors

**2015-Operating Supplies**

- Older adults programs: Decrease of 5.6% or (\$5,893) from \$38,556 to \$28,920 due to prorated (9 months) rent for senior center
- Operating supplies: Increase of 4.5% or \$1,200 due to increase in lease payment to Norfolk Southern for trail crossing

**2015-Professional Service**

- Marketing/Advertising: Increase of 100% or \$7,500, reflects 100% of annual cost for Community Center
- Utilities: Increase of 80.1% or \$87,746, reflects 50% of annual cost for Community Center
- Building Maintenance: Increase of 11.5% or \$10,160. \$6,750 is due to 50% of annual cost for Community Center

**2015-Miscellaneous**

- Concerts: Decrease of 42.2% or (\$19,000)
- Recreation Supplies: Increase of 100% or \$13,125 for materials, supplies & equipment for programs, events & activities at the Community Center. Reflects 50% or annual costs for Community Center
- Heating & A/C Contract: Increase of 100% or \$12,187, reflects 50% or annual costs

**2015-Community Center Expenses****2015-Community Center Revenue**

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The UMPR board has agreed to stop park evaluations for the duration of the winter.

An additional panel has been added to the bottom of the scoreboard without the permission of Upper Merion. Barb Shafer asked for the regulation dimensions of the scoreboard in Heuser Park.

**Park Report:** Bill Schutter

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PARK PROGRESS REPORT 11/11/2014

Completed Tasks (from last month's meeting until now)

-Leaf picking throughout the township in progress

BOB WHITE PARK

-Changed timer box to reflect daylight saving time

EXECUTIVE ESTATES PARK

-Changed timer box to reflect daylight saving time

HEUSER PARK

-Changed timer box to reflect daylight saving time

KINGWOOD PARK

-In the process of cleaning the fence line around the basketball court

MCKAIG NATURE TRAIL

-Delivered dirt and modified mix for a Boy Scout project

M.C. YOUNG PARK

-Replaced the roof on the pavilion

SWEDELAND PARK

-Changed timer box to reflect daylight saving time

-Repaired the roof on the pavilion

SWEDESBURG PARK

-Tree trimming

SWEETBIAR PARK

-Removed evidence of vandalism

TOWNSHIP BUILDING PARK

-Removed fountains

WALKER FIELD

-Changed timer box to reflect daylight saving time

WHITEGATE PARK

-Prepared for tree planting ceremony on Saturday

SHADE TREE COMMITTEE

-Tree planting ceremony this Saturday at Whitegate Park

**Old Business:** The Upper Merion Community Center had its official ground breaking on October 23, 2014.

**New Business:** Dave Burns had concerns about sledding on the hill across Henderson Rd from the township building. Thorn bushes are a hazard to people sledding on the hill. Should there be a "No Sledding" sign or should the bushes be cut? Dave also questioned why is the basketball court in William Wall Park being paved? Dan Russell replied that the path in the park is being paved to be ADA compliant and it made economic sense to pave the small court at the same time.

**Adjournment:**

Neil Sardiñas