

**FREEDOM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
PARKS/RECREATION WORKSHOP
JANUARY 8, 2020
7:00 P.M.**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Allen Beckett, Chairperson
Paul Kellett, Vice-Chairperson
Matt Young

TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS PRESENT

Zach Gulden, Township Manager
Chuck Strodoski, YSM Landscape Architects

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

Mary Buchheit, Ed Buchheit, Herb Milligan, Janet Christiansen, Jim Christiansen, Angie Young, Richy Floyd, Elaine Floyd, Jim Hale, Jim Geleta & Jim Valente

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Beckett called the Board of Supervisor's Workshop to order at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED PAVILION SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Gulden said the Board recently approved a contract with YSM Landscape Architects in order to create a park site development plan, which is required by the Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources (PA DNR) in order to apply for grant funding. The park would be located at the Township lot at 2184 Pumping Station Road. The site plan is shown in three separate phases:

- Phase 1 would consist of building a 24' x 36' pavilion, 6-car parking expansion, rain garden, and cornhole/horseshoe pits.

Mr. Gulden stated if approved by the Board, he would apply for a \$70,000.00 PA DNR Small Community Program Grant in April of 2020 for Phase 1 only. He would also apply for \$25,000 from the Adams County's Parks, Recreation, and Green Space Grant Program in June of 2020. If awarded, Freedom Township would only have to pay \$15,000 for Phase 1. This number could decrease to zero if we had volunteers and donations.

- Phase 2 would consist of a 1/4th mile loop trail, benches, and fitness stations.
- Phase 3 would include a soccer field, bleachers, and site furniture.



Proposed Park Site Plan

Mr. Gulden stated he designed the park based on the Township's recently adopted 2018-2023 Recreation Plan (Plan). The Plan shows that these items are specifically wanted and needed in Freedom Township. On page 8, the Plan recommends a total of 9 acres of Community Park for every 1,000 residents. Freedom currently has 838 residents and zero acres of park. Page 9 of the Plan describes the survey that was conducted in Freedom Township around 2015 during the drafting of the Southwest Joint Comprehensive Plan. Respondents indicated a current need for a variety of potential park and recreation programs, including fitness programs, family oriented programs, and educational programs. Page 13 of the Plan recommends 1 picnic area with pavilion for every 1,000 population, which would be taken care of with Phase 1. Page 10 of the Plan recommends 1 mile of trail for every 1,000 population, and page 13 recommends 1 exercise area for every 1,000 population. Mr. Gulden stated he combined both of these into Phase 2. Page 10 of the Plan recommends 1 soccer field for every 2,000 population, and he stated that Board members have expressed interest for a soccer field in past public meetings. This would be taken care of in Phase 3. He said that these are all very low maintenance projects, so minimum tax dollars would be used to maintain the improvements.

Chair Beckett questioned the need for a rain garden. Mr. Gulden stated that PA DNR likes to see green initiatives in the projects that they fund.

Chair Beckett questioned the cost of \$110,000 for Phase 1. Mr. Gulden stated that it would be covered by grant funds. Mr. Young stated that grant funds are still PA taxpayer funds. Mr. Gulden said very little tax dollars are used in this grant's pool of money. He said only 15% of 1 penny is tax dollars for this particular grant.

Vice-Chair Kellett stated that this is the stage to see if this project is a good idea. He said it's a possibility that the Township would be denied grant funds. It is also possible to reduce the costs. Mr. Gulden stated the budget does not include volunteer labor or donations, so the costs could decrease.

Chuck Strodoski, from YSM Landscape Architects, stated that Mr. Gulden is correct in that costs could decrease with volunteer labor and donated materials. He also said that if Freedom Township does not accept the money, it will go to another park somewhere else in the state.

Vice-Chair stated this is just the first step, and the Board will need to regroup if the Township receives the grant.

Mr. Young said the Township should build a pavilion at the fire department and forget the grant. Mr. Gulden said he approached Greenmount Fire Department, and they did not seem interested. Mr. Young said he rather build another garage than a park.

Vice-Chair said he likes the idea of a public park within the Township. He said we have a underutilized community resource at the Township lot. People should have a place in the Township to have a picnic with their family. He said if the budget gets out of hand, we would return the grant money. The Board has an obligation to provide these types of resources to the residents.

Chair Beckett said he would like to pursue donations. Mr. Gulden said the Board allocated \$20,000.00 towards the Township's Park and Recreation Fund in Fiscal Year 2020. His goal is not to use a penny of that allocation and instead use grant funding, donations, and volunteers. Chair Beckett said he likes the park design, but he is concerned about the price.

Mr. Valente asked where the park is being proposed. Mr. Gulden stated it will be located on this property where the Township Office is located. Mr. Valente said it is a really nice plan, and the Township residents need a place to go. He asked if this plan is related to the proposed bike trail. Vice-Chair Kellett said no the projects are not related. Mr. Valente said he would like to see the community come together and have functions at the proposed park. Chair Beckett and Vice-Chair Kellett agreed that it would be great to hold events at the park. Mr. Gulden said his goal was to send out a mailer to every Freedom Township resident after completion of Phase 1 and have a grand opening event with food and drinks.

Mrs. Floyd stated she lives next door. She asked if there is any fencing planned around the park. Mr. Gulden said no. She said there is a stormwater pond in the corner of her property,

and she wants to make sure no one would come over on her property and get hurt. Chair Beckett said they could add signage. She said they fully support the project.

Mr. Geleta asked if there has been consideration on future maintenance costs and if the Township's liability insurance would have to be increased. Mr. Gulden said that he choose these particular projects, because they are very low maintenance. In the short term, the trash and recycling bins would need emptied and the grass would need to be mowed. He said our existing part-time crew can handle emptying the trash and recycling bins. They already mow the property. In the long term, the pavement may need replaced in 40-50 years. He said the Township already has liability insurance to cover incidents, but he would have to check with the insurance agent if the liability coverage would need to be increased.

Vice-Chair Kellett made a **MOTION** to approve the site plan as submitted and authorize Chair Beckett and Mr. Gulden to work together in order to review the budget and grant. Chair Beckett **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The motion passed 2-1. Mr. Young voted nay.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Chair Beckett made a **MOTION** to adjourn. The Motion was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Kellett. Chair Beckett adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.