
Borough of Media
Open Space, Parks, and Recreation, & Plan
Plan Advisory Committee

Meeting Report August 17, 2020

Location: Zoom

Date: Monday August 17, 2020

Time: 7:00 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.

Participants: Committee: Stephanie Sher, Kevin Boyer, Stephanie Gaboriault, Michael Jordan, James Tangorra (sent an email), Terry Rumsey, Daniel White, Jen Malkoun, Peter Williamson, Larry Johnson, Joe Leach, Sandie Liacouras, Chris Wilchensky, Katie Dooley, Karen Taussig-Lux (KTL), Brendan O'Riordan, Ally Britton, David Gale, Lars Seufert.

Audience Members: Ira Josephs, Robin Lasersohn, Tu Packard, Gregory Blewitt, Sari Steuber, Lora Werner, John Wysor, Chris Bannon, Linda Healy, Jane Sleutaris, Ann Pittenger, Paul Indorf, Rich Hoffman, Carole Smith, Abbie Wysor, Theresa Dotts, Susan Palmer, Paul Rowe, Will House, Faith Treen, Heather Hurley, Fred Shalara

Consultants: Tavis Dockwiller (TD), RLA and Ann Toole (AT), CPRP, CPP

Meeting Report

- 1. Welcome and Check In** – The planning team welcomed the Media Borough Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Advisory Committee. The planning team and the Committee members did a check in to see how all members are doing amidst the pandemic and sheltering.
- 2. Meeting Format** – The consultants welcomed the interested citizens joining the Zoom and described the meeting format. The Committee members had a discussion based upon the agenda and any other topics they wanted to bring to the group. The interested citizens entered comments and questions into the chat which the consultants addressed.

- 3. Future Committee Meetings and the Public Meeting** – Committee meetings will continue virtually. The public meeting will be virtual as well and will be planned for the fall. Focus groups could include Young Professionals and recreation provider organizations.
- 4. Programming** - The consulting team has been interviewing recreation program providers including the Youth Center and Katie Dooley for the Parks and Recreation Board. Additional interviews will be conducted with other providers and the idea of doing a recreation providers forum appears to be less important than interviewing the various providers. The Committee provided the following insights:
 - Teens are underserved other than sports. The Garage in Kennett Square is a good model. Teens gather outside Kung Fu Tea. Look to the schools of help in getting teens. KTL said she can get some to interview. Have a teen advisory board. The building (the cottage) on the Borough property is a potential place for a teen center. The pockets of open space throughout the Borough lend themselves to gathering places – can we make that happen for teens in a community desirable way? Art and video for teens needs to be explored with them.
 - Community gardening would be a good idea
 - Barrall Field really needs to be looked at as it is severely underutilized. How can we optimize its use for public recreation? Problems are beyond physical use alone: the public thinks that it has to be reserved to use it. This begged the question of why anyone would want to use it.
 - More active athletic areas: ultimate frisbee, basketball courts, tennis lacrosse hitting wall, skate park, e-sports. Tennis appears to be popular.
 - Community Garden or farm is a good idea.
 - Glen Providence Park has monthly events: movies, nature walks, summer concerts and others. There's been a huge uptick in park visitation.
 - Lots on the west side of Orange Street between Front and Amber Streets should be considered for open space and recreation. The lots are rising to the top in problem/opportunity sites. Look at all county owned land in the Borough. There may be pressure to create parking areas for jurors here. It's likely that the County will be looking at spreading out services and leasing space elsewhere throughout the County. A suggestion was made to go to a County Council meeting to ask Council about the status of this land and indicate interest in it for open space and recreational purposes.
 - Consider drive-in movies, Pokémon, ultimate frisbee.
 - Involve the Media Arts Council.
 - Look at the Media Film Program MyFi.
 - **Management and Programming** - Consider Upper Providence as a program partner. AT explained the Circuit Rider grant which provides funding for a Director phased in over four years basically amounting to half a director's salary with the match provided by multiple municipal partners thereby making the position affordable. The goal is for that director to

build a sustainable operation over four years so that operations and services are in place once the grant funding expires. \$10,000 in funding is available for a study of this idea in depth with a very minimal match of \$1000 split among multiple partners. Before looking at multi-municipal parks and recreation consider a part-time position to coordinate all the groups and providers of recreation services. There are so many groups serving Media in a variety of ways. **It is getting more difficult to get volunteers.** Effective communication so that the public and stakeholders are informed or know where to go to get information about parks and recreation and that is it convenient and easily available.

- **Demographics** – Getting information on renters and their interests is important.
- **DEI - FARE** – Dan White explained the diversity efforts underway in the School District and that he is coordinating a work session with FARE and our planning team to get input for the plan as well as help promoting the public opinion survey.

The issue of decreasing diversity and affordable housing is critical in the Borough and beyond the scope of this project. This plan could reference its importance however to bring one more vehicle of support for it.

- Borough Council got a petition about poor sidewalk conditions resulting in concern about meeting the needs of those with physical challenges regarding mobility. This will be considered in the connectivity portion of the plan.

5. Committee New Business – To respond to requests from Committee Members for topics they propose for discussion or other items to consider for the plan, the planning team has added a “New Business” element for all agendas going forward.

- **Third Street Dam** - Terry Rumsey raised the question to the Committee: “Would Committee members like to attend a special meeting to see Robin Lasersohn’s PowerPoint presentation on the Third Street Dam?” The PowerPoint is 45 minutes long and time for discussion would be added. The PowerPoint provides information about the history and status of the Third Street Dam. In response to Terry’s request, the Committee members discussed the dam covering KMG as an advocacy group with representation on the Open Space, Parks and Recreation Plan Advisory Committee, the Borough’s desire to avoid any more law suits, the environmental issues related to the dam and Glen Providence Park; legal status of the Borough which is under court order to construct the dam, the funding in place via grants to build the dam along with the engineering completed, and the final document in place in the hands of the County regarding no adverse effect resulting from dam construction that County Council has not signed. The consulting team stated that if there was to be a special committee meeting, it should be an educational session. They asked, how would all viewpoints be represented in this meeting since KMG is an advocacy group? How would the Borough’s legal situation, the County’s position on Glen Providence Park and the document of “no adverse effect” and the Country Club’s desire for the dam project with resulting lake be incorporated for full committee understanding? Since this is a special meeting outside the Scope of Work of the Open Space, Parks and Recreation

Plan, the consulting team will not be attending. The Consultants have seen the PowerPoint and interviewed Robin once with a second interview upcoming. With all the complex issues woven through the Third Street Dam project, the Committee agreed to the planning team's proposal to send an email to committee members asking for each member to reply with their response to Terry's question on if they would like to attend a special meeting to view Robin's PowerPoint on the Dam and how they suggest ensuring that the Committee see all perspectives. The Committee Members agreed that the goal should be a balanced perspective on this project with all viewpoints presented. The consulting team will send out the email to which the committee member can do a "reply-all". Once the responses are in, the consulting team will provide the findings to the Committee and the next steps can be taken. The consulting team noted that discussion about Glen Providence Park and the dam is scheduled for upcoming committee meetings (schedule will soon be distributed).

6. Citizen Comments

- Orange Street lots are a great spot for community gardens – talk with the County?
- County Councilman Brian Zidek said they'd like to keep at least one of the lots in greenspace so perhaps they'd be open to community gardening. Previously the County had indicated that one lot would be used for parking while another would be for green space.
- Citizens commented on the need to provide additional education about the Third Street Dam, supported the idea of presenting the Power Point on the Dam history, supported having all viewpoints represented in a factual based presentation and discussion. Concerns raised included dam ownership, the future of the road, and public funding dedicated to support the dam construction.
- Consider covering parking area with solar panels and include food gardens.
- KTL can find teens to interview
- Put up volleyball nets for teens and others to hang out
- An interested citizen asked why open space was not being discussed while the discussion was oriented toward developed facilities. AT explained the planning process and that tonight the focus was on the meeting formats for the future and discussions on financing and organization. A future meeting will be devoted to open space in the Fall. This is an Open Space, Parks and Recreation Plan so the planning process is devoting segments to each topic including financing, partnerships, programs and operations and management.
- Consider collaborating more with South Media even though they are in a different school district.
- Expanding open space should provide opportunities for people programs and a nature focus.

- The DELCO 2035 Plan is open for public comment if anyone wants to reinforce the importance of affordable housing.
- The Committee listened to all public comments before they made a decision for the request to hold a special meeting for the PowerPoint Presentation on the dam. Public comment indicated that all interests should be identified and described so that the Committee and the public has a full and accurate understanding of the dam history and situation. Broomall's Dam is an important, complex issue that requires understanding by all committee members and the public. Public comments indicated a fear of losing natural land in Glen Providence Park and a desire that the public and committee be aware of this. Some members of the public would want to see Robin's PowerPoint on Third Street Dam. It would be important to invite different stakeholders to present their perspective on the dam and the Park.