

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.
AGENDA**

1. Call to Order (*E. Croke*)

Dave Morris	Chair
Kerry Boccella	Vice Chair
Sara Hughes	Member
Noelle Powell	Member
Adrienne Smythe	Member
Emily Croke	Director of Parks and Recreation
Ed T. Graham, Esq.	Commissioner

Guests:	Nick Matteo	Friends of Hillcrest Pond
	Sharon Vecchione	Rotary Club of Springfield Township
	Lisa Vecchione	Rotary Club of Springfield Township
	Christopher Vernick	Resident, CEO of Big Game Hoops
	Carmel Archdekin	Resident
	Aidrian Archdekin	Resident
	Robert McGrath	Resident

2. Approval of Minutes from June (*All*)

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee unanimously approved the June minutes.

3. Administrative Report (*E. Croke*)

The Township welcomes the new Director of Public Works, Ian Hammer who began in mid-summer. Mr. Hammer is familiar with the area and is well versed in park maintenance.

4. Recreation Report (*E. Croke*)

From June 21 through August 27, Springfield Township Parks and Recreation was able to provide summer programming to 823 participants. The Department facilitated over 45 programs bringing in a total of \$138,951 in program revenue over the nine week period. All programs sustained COVID-19 masking protocols through the duration of the summer.

The Township has partnered with Jump Start Sports to run the annual fall Pee Wee and Youth Soccer Leagues this season. The benefit of partnering for this program will be evident in the quality of program and instruction provided to players and volunteer coaches. While this will be an adjustment, the program is headed in the right direction. The program features 128 Pee Wee players, 120 youth boys and 80 youth girls. A total of 328 players are participating in the fall soccer league. The season began on September 11.

The Township completed registration for Travel Basketball on September 26. The program is highly competitive and requires each player to try out for a spot on the roster. For the first time, the Department will be able to field 16 teams, one for each age and gender division. One team is submitted for ages 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 both boys and girls (16 total). Each team is comprised of 10 players. This year, 123 players registered which will result in 20 player cuts. The league is intended for highly competitive players. Anyone who does not make the roster has an opportunity to play in the Recreation League where no cuts are made.

5. Park Report (*E. Croke*)

- **Bysler Park:** No Issues.
- **Connor James McKelvie Community Park:** No Issues.
- **Henry R. Chiaramonte Park:** No Issues.
- **James A. Cisco Park:** No Issues.
- **James R. Fulginiti Park:** No Issues.
- **Laurel Beech Park:** No Issues.
- **Marlow Field:** No Issues.
- **Mermaid Park:** Environmental Advisory Committee will host a plating event October 30.
- **Sandy Run Park:** No Issues.
- **Veterans Park:** No Issues
- **Wyndhill Park:** Local Wyndmoor residents hosted a Little Free Library Grand Opening on August 23 at Wyndhill Park. The project was led by Ada Devinney, age 8. Volunteers included Girl Scout Troop 71526 and surrounding neighbors.
- **Springfield Township Recreation Center A:** No Issues.
- **Springfield Township Recreation Center B:** No Issues.

6. Old Business (*All*)

Park and Recreation Professionals Day: Third Friday in July – Update: Parks and Recreation Professionals Day was hosted on July 16. Ms. Croke was honored by the Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society for her dedication to the community.

Community Day – October 3, 2021: Thank you to our incredible event organizers for hosting the long awaited return of Community Day. A special thank you goes to the Township Public Works Department and Friends of Hillcrest Pond for diligently working to preparing the venue, James A. Cisco Park. Furthermore, thank you to Kerry Boccella and the Erdenheim Civic Association for bring the event together for the community.

7. New Business (*All*)

Spartan Lacrosse Club Shed Proposal – Jason Purcell: Jason Purcell of Spartan Lacrosse presented a request to install an equipment shed and bounce back wall at the upper field within Cisco Park. The upper field sits closest to the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Paper Mill Road. Cisco Park has become the primary location for the Spartan Lacrosse program. The club currently stores nets and equipment in the Recreation Center garage on 1200 Willow Grove Avenue. By means of eliminating transporting goals and borrowing space, the club proposed the installation of an equipment shed on site in Cisco Park. Additionally, the bounce back wall will provide a place for lacrosse players, soccer players, etc. to practice independently. The wall has the potential to serve the general community. Mr. Purcell displayed a power point including detailed schematics, funding source and location options. Mr. Purcell is aware Cisco Park sits in a flood zone. Proposed locations accounted for the flood hazard. The project is fully funded. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of allowing the Spartan Lacrosse Club to install an equipment shed and bounce back wall, pending approval from the Zoning Department.

Rotary Presentation – Lighting Project: Sharon Vecchione, President of Springfield Township Rotary presented a project proposal for lighting the Cisco Park Gazebo. Sharon and Lisa Vecchione presented the Rotary Cisco Park Gazebo Lighting Project. No visual plans or schematics were shown to the committee during the presentation. Mrs. Vecchione verbally explained the general scope of the project. After PRAC discussion and review, members voted unanimously in opposition to the proposed project.

Sharon and Lisa Vecchione explained that the \$17,000 project includes upgrading the electrical unit and mounting of lights to the roof of the gazebo. No lights would exist on the pillars supporting the structure. Additionally electric would need to be run from the power source. Mrs. Vecchione explained the inspiration

for the project was Philadelphia's boathouse row. Mrs. Vecchione noted the primary use of the lights would be for nighttime events in the park such as summer concerts and the Rotary Winter Festival. The lights could be utilized during public events and rentals. The lights would only be on during special occasions. The Township would take ownership of maintenance and expenses. Mrs. Vecchione noted the project had been approved by the Board of Commissioners and all funding has been collected to begin the project.

The decision in opposition to the project was the result of several elements. Primarily, all Springfield Township parks are open dusk to dawn. The Township does not permit events to occur after hours per Township Ordinance 59-2. Parks are closed after dark to eliminate misuse and destruction of public property. The Township Parks and Recreation Department does not host nighttime events in Parks. The Township hosts four summer concerts which conclude before sundown. Secondly, the PRAC identified several projects within the Cisco Park Complex in need of restoration and replacement. Funds are needed for projects such as the Playground Rehabilitation project, an ADA accessible bridge, and gabion repair. PRAC noted \$17,000 in funds would be better allocated for outstanding projects that benefit the community on a wider scale. The third reason for objection to the project stemmed from financial and administrative concerns. The Township would be financially responsible for all maintenance costs and electrical bills. The electrical outlets are currently locked and not accessible to the public. Open outlets would encourage additional use and high electric bills. The PRAC felt as though lights would encourage nighttime rental requests which in turn would require special approval from the Board of Commissioners for patrons to utilize the parks after dark.

Mrs. Vecchione noted the lights are meant to be turned on for special events. PRAC expressed concerns that the Township would utilize the lights around 5 times per year. If the lights remained on year-round, they could attract people to visit the park after dark, which would require a police presence to patrol for loitering.

Recreation Basketball Partnership Proposals: Three sport organizations have submitted proposals to partner for the winter Recreation Basketball League. The rec league is a relaxed environment for children to learn fundamental basketball skills while having fun. Partnering with basketball focused organizations presents the Township with the opportunity to improve the quality of the programs offered to our community.

Proposals from the following organizations were submitted:

- Big Game Hoops – Chris Vernick
- Next Play Basketball – Matt Paul
- Jump Strat Sports (currently cohosts the Township Fall Youth Soccer League)

Park Naming Policy Concerns: Communications were received by the Parks and Recreation Department regarding concerns from neighbors surrounding the park naming policy. A few residents felt parks should not be named after people, regardless of how influential the individual was in the Township. Although the gesture is well intended, every deceased member of the community does not have the opportunity to be remembered in the form of a park. The concern resident requested the Township update the current park naming policy to avoid future frequencies.

ICGSL Softball League – Future of Program: The Fall Travel Softball program rostered 10 players, 8 Springfield residents and 2 non-residents. The popularity of the program has slowly declined over the last few years. The Township will utilize the Spring 2022 season as a gage on the future of the program.

Bridge at Cisco Park – Near Gazebo: Residents have submitted feedback regarding the dated wood bridge. The current bridge is not ADA accessible and can be utilized in one direction at a time. The bridge should be added to the list of park improvements.

Skate Park Inquiry: Carmel Archdekin and her son, Adrian Archdekin, explained the popularity of skating and the growth of the now Olympic sport. Mr. Archdekin described the culture of skateboarding to be very inclusive and respectful. Mrs. Archdekin provided numerous location options within the parks system and is open to further suggestions from the community. Potential locations include the circle in the rear of Cisco Park bordering Bethlehem Pike, the grass plot behind the Recreation Center at Laurel Beech and Wyndhill Park. Mr. Archdekin clarified that skaters are currently using the entrances to local Wyndmoor businesses, such as Enza Pizzeria, as a place to practice because locations in Springfield are limited. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of researching for the potential installation of a skate park within Springfield Township boundaries. The Committee encouraged Carmel and Adrian Archdekin to research funding opportunities both locally and nationally. Additionally, the PRAC suggested the Archdekins explore the potential creation of a “Friends of the Skate Park” group.

8. Public Comments (*All*)

None.

9. School District Report (*M. Needleman*)

The razing of old Enfield is still on track. Notices to the public who want items or tiles should be going out in April or so.

10. Commissioners’ Report (*E. Graham*)

No report.

11. Call for Adjournment (*E. Croke*)

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 7:00 pm