

# Haverford Township

## Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan

### AGENDA

#### COMMITTEE MEETING #3

FEBRUARY 7, 2023

**Attendees:** Committee & Project Team Lead

#### Introductions

#### Project Updates

- > Public Meeting #1 & #2 Highlights
- > Survey Highlights
- > Key Person Interview Highlights

#### Tonight's Activities

- > Maintenance Memo
- > Themes and Goals
- > Programming

#### Next Steps

- > Next Steps
- > Steering Committee Meeting #4
  - March 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM



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## MEETING MINUTES

### HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP PARK, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE PLAN

#### COMMITTEE MEETING #3

Location: CREC, Haverford Township

February 7, 2023

Attendees: Scanned Sign-In Sheet Attached

## PROJECT UPDATES

### PROJECT SCHEDULE

An updated project schedule was provided to the committee during the meeting.

### KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

The project scope currently includes 10 total key person interviews (can be groups). So far HRG has conducted six key person interviews. Currently, there are four or five more groups that will be interviewed over the next month. As interview notes are wrapped up, they will be shared with Brian and Eileen. Highlights that are relevant to topics being discussed at future steering committee meetings will be presented during their respective meetings.

- Conducted Interviews
  - Parks and Recreation Maintenance
  - Friends of Haverford Trails
  - Youth Sports Organizations
  - Tree tenders
  - Trail Users
  - Darby Creek Valley Association
- Remaining Interviews to be conducted
  - Civic Groups
  - Senior Groups
  - Parks and Recreation Board
  - Moms Groups
  - Middle School (Potential Group)

Notes from discussion:

- Potential to include the Quadrangle in the Senior Groups Key Person Interview
- Discussion around including the Middle School students as a new Key Person Interview or doing something to get feedback from them.

## **SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS**

It was discussed that there were 2,835 responses to the online survey, and that the results largely mirrored the original survey update. HRG is working to calculate results and provide a final summary of findings prior to the next committee meeting.

Notes from Discussion:

- Found that many of the activities people identified were impromptu play and not scheduled programming.
- HRG noted that the next survey will build off these questions to be more detailed focusing on refining themes to specific strategies.
- The Township will use the same methods to get the word out about the survey but asked the committee to assist in getting the word out.
- It was noted that flyers in the parks may be a good way to get the word out about the second survey.

## **PUBLIC MEETING #1 & #2 HIGHLIGHTS**

HRG presented some of the findings from the two public meetings. Both Public Meeting Notes were uploaded to the Steering Committee Meeting #4 box file, and it was asked that the committee review these files prior to the next meeting.

## **TONIGHT'S DISCUSSION**

### **MAINTENANCE MEMO**

HRG presented the findings that URDC discovered while conducting their review of the Parks & Recreation Maintenance Report. These findings included:

- Coordination between the public, recreation and parks maintenance is needed to establish a standard level of care for all park elements from natural vegetation and plantings to structures.
- Staffing will continue to be challenging as the labor pool diminishes and living wage salary expectations increase.
- A Park Maintenance Management Plan is not in place. Such a plan would establish standards for an acceptable Level of Care needed for all parks, trails and public property maintained by park maintenance.
- Most frequent public complaint concerns natural area aesthetics, vegetation, and athletic field maintenance.
- Trail maintenance requires weekly visual inspection and follow-up. The trails are inspected on foot. Trail work requires increasingly more staff time and equipment as new trails are developed.

- Park design of existing features and facilities does not always align with current initiatives and standards.

The full Maintenance Memo is located in the Steering Committee Meeting #4 box folder for the committees review prior to the next committee meeting.

Maintenance Memo Discussion Notes:

- Brian noted that they steer away from doing memorial trees because they can die.
- The placement and planting of trees are okayed by Jason (Parks and Rec Maintenance)
- Tree Planting:
  - Tree Maintenance Plans
  - A list of tree types that should be considered
  - It was asked if it would be helpful to have an arborist on staff, however with funds maybe it would be beneficial to have someone on an as needed basis.
- It was noted that median level of maintenance that is currently provided requires a ton of staff time for the Parks and Recreation Maintenance Team.

## GOALS & PRIORITIES

The next part of the meeting focused on discussing the goals and priorities under each theme of the plan.

### Trails & Connectivity

Initial Draft Goals:

1. Promote walking and bicycling options within the Township (30)
2. Connect to the regional trail system (15)
3. Connect our neighborhoods to our parks (12)
4. Improve trail signage (5)
5. Provide safer connections to SEPTA (4)
6. Improve trailheads (2)

Discussion Notes on Trail & Connectivity:

- They would love more safe bike lanes but, in many places, the road width is insufficient, even if the roads were to be restriped.
- The logistics of adding sidewalks in existing neighborhoods where they are not present would be difficult to sell politically.
- The Brynmore neighborhood there is very little room to do any improvements in terms of pedestrian accessibility.
- As part of the survey, they wanted to ask residents – where residents want to walk/bike to that they could not (origin and destination)?

- The committee felt that Goal 5 should be removed, as they felt it was outside the scope of this project.
- It was noted that Goal 1 may not fit in the scope of this project, however improving the infrastructure to allow people to walk or bike the trails or to parks is part of the scope of this project.

## Parks & Recreation Facilities

### Initial Draft Goals:

1. Update and enhance the Townships existing facilities (22)
2. Provide more space for informal play (16)
3. Incorporate nature into the existing parks (9)
4. Create welcoming spaces and places for social interactions (6)
5. Provide space for more programmed events (4)
6. Make navigation within the parks more intuitive (0)

### Discussion Notes on Parks & Recreation Facilities:

- They would like the survey to identify specific amenities at specific parks – develop a grid for responses. HRG will confirm if this is possible, or how to approach this best.
- The committee noted that there are always more users than neighbors, and to keep that in mind when working to develop the plan.

## Open Space

### Initial Draft Goals:

1. Explore ways to protect remaining open space lands (17)
2. Provide opportunities to connect with nature (10)
3. Provide opportunities to improve water quality (6)

### Discussion Notes on Open Space:

- Most remaining open space in the Township is along the creek corridors.
- It was noted that working on the riparian corridors could help with MS4 requirements. How can the recommendations in this plan help that.
- A big threat that was identified for the open space is invasives, as invasives tend to take over the open spaces.
- It was noted that the scope to address the open spaces in an effective way is a large undertaking and scope.
- The plan should address key properties that could be acquired.

- One that was noted was Fairmount Park (owned by the City of Philadelphia).

## Programming

### Initial Draft Goals:

1. Provide more passive recreation programming (14)
2. Use local arts to inspire and engage (11)
3. Celebrate neighborhoods (6)
4. Have more Township-wide events (2)
5. Provide more of the same programming due to availability (0)

### Discussion Notes on Programming:

- The adult school in the Township does offer programming for adults that is mainly during the school year that is very popular.
- A potential survey question is asking where residents want to see programming.
- A potential survey question is asking where residents want to see passive recreation opportunities.
- It was noted that there should be more passive recreation programming opportunities that utilize environmental education signage.
- Geocaching was brought up during the discussion
- It was noted that although no one said that Goal 5 was a priority, it is still an issue. Brian noted that many programs fill up quickly (less than a day or even hour). He noted that due to staffing it is hard to increase the programming offerings / spaces.
- There is a deemphasis on neighborhoods within the Comprehensive Plan – noted because of Goal 3.
- It was noted that a new goal may be to “provide park layouts that benefit or allow for programming”. It was noted due to the sprawl of amenities in the parks, it often impacts the type of programming that can be offered.
- It was noted that a lack of electricity at parks impacts programming.
- HRG and the Township are going to investigate the equity of programming opportunities provided by the Township.

## Maintenance

### Initial Draft Goals:

1. Mitigate litter and vandalism (15)
2. Prioritize and maintain what matters (9)
3. Provide low maintenance amenity alternatives (3)

### Discussion Notes on Maintenance:

- Would like to know what to maintain and where
- For Goal 2 it was noted that the word “matters” could be interpreted differently, and potentially make residents feel that if their park is not meeting the level of care they would like to see or is not getting updated that the park doesn’t matter. HRG will look at refining Goal 2 based on this input.
- Potential survey question: ask residents what should be prioritized in terms of maintenance.
- Potential survey question: ask residents if there is an issue that causes them to not visit a park.

## NEXT STEPS

- Committee Meeting #4 – March 15, 2023, at 7:00PM
- Review the Material in Committee Meeting #4 Box folder:  
<https://hrg3.box.com/s/g9n438oe1trqklahkkeqkf0q0g91hwyo>
  - Email reminder will be sent out one week prior to the next meeting.



# Haverford Township

## Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan

SIGN-IN SHEET  
COMMITTEE MEETING #3  
FEBRUARY 7, 2023

First Name	Last Name	Attendance
Brian	Barrett	✓
Eileen	Mottola	
Michelle	Alvare	MFA
Jamie	Jilozian	
Peter	Puglionesi	Prof
Rich	Kerr	RCK
Gail	Farally-Semerad	
Ben	Vaughan	BSV
Paul	Davit	Paul
David	Chanin	D
Gerry	Hart	G

