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**Meeting Minutes: Central/Buchmiller/Sunnyside Parks
 Master Plans
 Study Committee Meeting #1**

Date: August 1, 2006
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Shuts Environmental Center - Central Park
By: Chuck Strodoski
Project No.: 06LAN-01

Persons Attending: James Hackett, Director, Lancaster County Parks and Recreation
 Ed Klaus, Inner City Group
 Joan King, Muhlenberg Botanical Society
 Ralph Goodno, Lancaster County Conservancy
 Colin Farr, City of Lancaster
 Mike Domin, Lancaster County Planning Commission
 Dan Synoracki, Rettew Associates
 Theodore Schaefer, YSM
 Chuck Strodoski, YSM
 Ann Yost, YSM

Purpose of the Meeting: To kick-off the project and explore the committee’s goals and expectations for Central/Buchmiller/Sunnyside Parks.

Of Record:

1. A. Yost facilitated introductions and presented the planning process that would be undertaken to develop the parks master plans. The master plan process will span a twelve month period and seek input from the designated study committee, key person interviews, meetings with elected officials, focus groups, open house, and general public meetings. Master planning will include site analysis, needs assessment, development of conceptual alternatives, pre-final and final designs, construction cost estimating, and operation and management.
2. A. Yost led a brainstorming/discussion session, which explored both the goals for the park and goals for the project. The following questions were asked.
 - a) “Who are the anticipated park users?”
 - Picnickers
 - Pool users
 - Scout groups
 - School groups
 - Lampeter/Strasburg School District
 - Nature enthusiasts

- Ball players
- Walkers/joggers
- Equestrians
- Fitness and wellness seekers
- Canoeists
- Fishermen
- Disc golfers
- Tennis players
- Skaters/teens
- Tots
- Radio control plane enthusiasts
- Gardeners
- Ropes course users
- Rockford Mansion visitors
- Revolutionary war re-enactors
- Garden of the five senses users
- Park staff
- Youth football league (practice)
- Softball players
- Soccer players
- Concert goers
- Hiking club
- Mountain bikers
- Radio tower maintenance

b) “What facilities would you like to see at the park?”

- Polo field (interest in relocating from Lititz)
- Volleyball court
- Dog park
- Memorial tree grove expansion
- Revenue generating facilities (consider driving range or batting cages)
- Area for arts and craft festivals
- Camping areas (not to compete with local private business)
- Wildlife blind
- Area for community movie night or other special events.

c) “What concerns do you have about development of the park site?”

- Pavilions are at maximum capacity.
- Inappropriate use occurring at basketball courts
- The fading popularity of tennis
- Invasive plants
- No designated walkways
- Handicap accessibility throughout park
- Park edges and potential development of surrounding, privately-owned land
- Amount of mowing required to maintain the park
- Athletic fields have too much slope (Buchmiller Park) and rock near the surface (Central Park).
- Continuity of park signage.
- Bikes in the skate park
- Equestrians do not stay on the designated trails.
- Conestoga Trail must cross South Duke Street which is very busy and dangerous.
- Two speed limits in the park. Should be one 15MPH speed limit throughout.
- Closure of City View Drive and loss of that portion of the park site.
- Pubic roads traversing the park are open all night. Park closes at 10 PM. No rangers patrol beyond normal park hours. Need to control inappropriate activities beyond park hours.

- d) “What opportunities do you see regarding the park development?”
- Increase number of pavilions to accommodate demand and increase revenue. Generally, the existing pavilions have a 125 person capacity.
 - Pedestrian/bicycle connections to surrounding lands and greenways
 - Development of an amphitheater or community event area
 - Awareness and increased use of the environmental center
 - Increase ballfield use
 - Increase soccer use
 - Tap volunteer opportunities
 - Encourage special events in the parks such as the MS Walk
 - Riverfront stabilization and restoration
 - Forest management
 - Revenue generation through special events such as arts and craft festival, dog show, etc.
 - Utilize the existing agricultural fields, currently leased for farming, for recreational facilities.
 - Enclose existing portable restrooms to minimize their visual impact
 - Consider acquiring or obtaining conservation easements of surrounding lands to protect the park edges and preserve contiguous open space for the parks.
 - Consider the “Big Picture” as the parks relate to the surrounding lands
 - Consider one large destination playground, strategically located to increase park use.
 - Traffic calming devices along roadways at appropriate locations
 - Opening City View Drive and Oak Trail for public use
 - Development of a paved trail along the River.
 - Keep revenue generated by the park, for park improvements.
3. If you could come back ten years from now, what is the one thing you would like to see happen in the parks?
- Rehabilitate the City View Drive area
 - Provide greenway connections, promote greenway network
 - Provide user friendly venues for youth
 - Improve the existing trail system within the park
 - Develop a hard surface loop trail at the River’s edge.
 - Develop an integrated signage system through out the parks
 - Connect all three parks to a larger, regional trail system.
4. Throughout the meeting, numerous discussions regarding the parks arose. The discussions are highlighted below:
- This planning project scope of work is to master plan Central and Buchmiller Parks and investigate connections to Sunnyside Peninsula. Sunnyside is targeted for high-density residential development in the near future. The master plan should consider the residential impact and plan for appropriate connections. The peninsula contains a large lake, remnant of a former quarry. The lake is believed to be approximately 180 feet deep and will be fenced.

- Public input is crucial to the planning process. In addition to the public participation outlined in the proposal, a suggestion was made to solicit input through the County and City websites.
 - Revenue generation was discussed. Additional pavilions were seen as a need and a good source for revenue. Facilities such as batting cages, golf driving range, special event areas, festivals, and amphitheater should be considered for potential revenue generation. Revenue opportunities must consider extra staff and expense which should be minimized.
 - The Shuts Environmental Center is viewed as underutilized. The County has hired a part time public relations person to help promote the department including the center.
 - Volunteers were viewed as an untapped resource.
 - The idea of mowing less can reduce maintenance and labor costs. Should areas be left natural and un-mowed, the policy and ecological benefits should be communicated to the public to alleviate the perception of mismanagement.
 - Comprehensive signage was requested. A new signage system should be developed to direct visitors from the trails and vehicles. Signs should clearly identify the various features and unify all the county owned parks. The idea of a county park logo was suggested to give visual association with the County Park system.
 - The area of City View Drive was discussed. The area is currently closed to the public. There is great interest to open City View Drive and associated Oak Trail. The area is closed due to settlement of the landfill area and leachate. The leachate is tested annually by the County. An environmental consultant is currently studying the landfill and preparing a remediation plan.
 - The agricultural fields near the farmhouse are currently leased to a local farmer. The lease agreement provides a good source of revenue for the County. Not all revenue is utilized within the park. The potential to develop the agricultural fields for recreational purposes was discussed, to maximize the benefit to the residents. Any recreation facility, removing agricultural fields from production, should be weighted against the loss of revenue.
 - Greenway and trail connections were a dominate topic of discussion. Connections to the Conestoga Greenway and other linkages are strongly suggested. A greenway network is recommended. Acquisition of a privately owned, abandoned rail line (Quarryville Branch), traversing Buchmiller Park and continuing south was discussed. The linear property has been offered to the County for sale in the past, by the land owner. This opportunity should be investigated.
 - A safe connection to South Duke Street is important to promote use by City residents.
5. Key persons and groups were identified to be interviewed as part of the public participation process.
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| ▪ Park staff | ▪ Local colleges and education providers |
| ▪ Scout groups | ▪ SACA |
| ▪ Birding clubs | ▪ Gardeners clubs |
| ▪ Neighborhood organizations | ▪ Rotary/Lions and other civic organizations |
| ▪ Potential park sponsors | |
- In addition to the list above, J. Hackett will provide a list of key persons for interview.

6. A. Yost concluded the meeting by outlining the next steps in the planning process and reviewing future meeting dates. Future committee meetings are scheduled for the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM at the Shuts Environmental Center. The next study committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 3rd at 7:30 pm. The first public meeting will be held in September at a date to be determined. YSM will coordinate with J. Hackett to discuss the time and place for the public meeting.

Provide changes or corrections to these meeting minutes to C. Strodoski at YSM within one week of receipt.