

**Upper Merion Township
Park and Recreation Board Minutes
January 18, 2011**

Attendees: Barb Schafer, David Burns, Neil Sardinas, John Tallman, Eileen Connelly, MaryAnn Ahearn, Dan Russell, Mike Trachtenberg, Erika Spott

Guest: Vinay Bansal

Pledge of Allegiance

Reorganization of Park & Recreation Board

Officers for 2011:

Chair: John Tallman

Vice Chair: David Burns

Secretary: Mary Ann Ahearn

Approval of December 2010 Minutes

Current contact information for all members of the board was provided.

Guests

Vinay Bansal, a founding member of the Upper Merion Cricket Club, came to present the club's request for a home cricket field in the township. The club has 25-30 members and has played in various parks in the township for years. Caley field is often used.

A cricket field can easily be accommodated on a softball field – no lines need to be painted, and there are no goal posts or bases. All that is required is a “pitch”, a flat surface 8-10 ft wide and 80-90 feet long, flush with the field that can provide some bounce. It can be portable and made of jute, or permanently installed Astroturf. The Club would cover all expenses involved, clean up after games and offered to partner with the township in presenting programs and workshops about the sport for children and residents.

Vinay provided satellite images of cricket fields in Haverford township, Evansburg State Park, Oaks and Hatfield so we could visualize the requirements. It was remarked that there did not appear to be any wear patterns around the pitch. The club has considered four potential fields with regard to suitable distance from buildings, a large enough level dry space, and availability on weekends. Games are long but there are few spectators so parking needs would not be great. The softball field at Bob White Park meets all requirements and was discussed as the best site. Vinay provided two possible configurations for a pitch in the outfield.

The cricket club is asking for an OK to use that field. Erika remarked that the BOS and Ron want a recommendation from the P & R board including not only whether or not to allow the cricket field but ways to present it successfully to the community. Added benefits to the community might include the cricket club “adopting” Bob White Park or having conducting periodic clean up days.

Board of Supervisors Liaison Report:

Swim Club: The business plan for Upper Merion Swim and Tennis at 431 W. Valley Forge Rd. was distributed to the board. Erika informed us that it will be on the BOS agenda soon.

Richard Frey of Prestige Pools and Services who used to run the pool, would lease the land for \$1 and bear all costs of renovating and running the club. There would be no financial risk to the township. There was concern that it be well maintained.

Moore House: K of P players want to lease it cheaply for 125 years and rehab the building into a small playhouse. All but the historic section of building would be demolished. The township would do part of the demolition, and the players would do everything else. Their funding is questionable, and demolition costs could be significant.

Goats, vines & Bob White Park: we'll try again in the spring, due to the ugly reactions of some residents.

Directors Report:

Gypsy Woods signage: A sign needs to be erected to acknowledge the donation of this land to Natural Lands Trust by Dr. William Reed.

Trail: \$500,000 PA state grant approved for bike trail between Heuser and VF parks. Township was able to find matching funds. Thanks to Neil, Scott Sibley and Erika who worked over the holidays to get the application submitted on time. Money must be spent between June of 2011 and June of 2012. Settlement of easement issues with Norfolk Southern look hopeful for the first time.

Collette Vacations: met with P & R about offering trip to CO Rockies through P& R. 12 people came out to hear presentation.

UMASD: will meet with Dan to talk about facilities usage in the summer, and funding issues.

Old Business:

Community Center: consultants want to be on BOS workshop agenda soon to be able to wrap up the study.

Skate park: meeting did not happen on the 1/11/11. Fran Littlewood needs to talk with BOS and provide estimates for cost. Video surveillance and skate at own risk would be desirable.

New Business:

Eileen mentioned a benefit in memory of her daughter Shannon on March 19th in Blue Bell at JP Whelihans. Funds will be used to purchase adaptive playground equipment for special needs children.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Ahearn
Secretary