



COUNTY OF DELAWARE
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PARKS AND RECREATION
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VICE CHAIR

KEVIN M. MADDEN
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Delaware County Park Board Meeting
January 11, 2023
12:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom meeting

Attendees:

- **Board:** Marc Manfre, Director of Parks & Recreation; Stephanie Gaboriault; Trish McFarland; Nicholas Furman; Nicholas Hoyt; Kathy Lopez; John McMullan; Kelly Johnson
- **County:** Steven Beckley, Planning manager, Open Space and Trails; Karen Wilwol, Watershed Specialist, Soil and Water Conservation; Beth Chapman, Parks & Recreation
- **Guest:** Gina Burritt, Delaware County Director of Planning
- **Not present:** Chris Chauncey
- Minutes by Carol Tustin
- **Call to Order:** 12:05 pm

Meeting Minutes from November 9, 2022 were approved by the board.

- **Call to Order**.....Chair Stephanie Gaboriault
 - Peter Williamson has resigned from the Park & Recreation Board. He has recently become the Assistant Director of County Planning and needed to resign the Park board position. The vacancy will be advertised in February.
 - Stephanie Gaboriault is taking a 6-month sabbatical after the March 9 meeting, when Vice Chair Kathy Lopez is scheduled to assume the Chair role.
- **Directors report**.....Marc Manfre
 - Karen Wilwol is the lead for the Conservation of the Storm Water Basin at Smedley Park. She is doing a great job. The budget has been raised \$50 - \$65 thousand over last year. Bids are in place.
 - We are still looking for a new Fairway mower.
 - Beth & Marc met with the sound crew, Price Stevens. Things are moving along. We need to purchase a few things for the start of the season in April.
 - We have hired 3 new additional maintenance crew members for the Parks department.
 - We will be involved in many projects. The Scout project along Chester Creek trail is ready to go. We currently have around 22 projects.

- The stream bank restoration at Glen Providence Park is going well. It's the Christmas tree project, where they're anchoring Christmas trees along the bank to capture debris. This was started in 2021. In fact, Karen and Norm have been asked by Upper Darby to give a seminar on how to do this for their project along Darby Creek.
 - The Festival of Lights went well this year. It was bustling and very exciting with the vendors again this year.
 - At Upland, plans were handed to Public Works Department. We will be working on getting the playground done. We are also working on the softball field, which will also be good for soccer. We are going to add a water line.. The football camps will start in August.
 - It is going to be a busy spring at Rose Tree. Pre-bids for projects was held before Christmas, with bids from 15 to 20 contractors. The contracts will be awarded in March.
 - Beth Chapman has been working on the summer concert series.
 - Work and plans are being started on Little Flower. DCNR has been working on plans and we got a grant to extend and put in additional parking and a playground. We are looking at and accessing the structures on the property. The grotto and the mansion will stay. Different townships are involved in the plans, Darby, Colwyn, and Upper Darby to name a few. There will be a county park at Little Flower.
 - The Korean War Memorial will get a face lift. We are going to add benches to the memorial. The enhancement is funded thru the Dr. Jaisohn Korean Memorial Fund.
- Discussion
 - Trish McFarland wanted to thank Marc Manfre and Laura Goodrich, Deputy Commerce Director/Economic Development for a great job with the Festival of Lights. Laura did a good job working with the Park Police and Marketing. Most of the feedback received was very positive. The only negative comment received was about the lack of the creche nativity scene display. The menorah was also not displayed this year. The event will no longer include either of these displays in the future. It was noted that it is tough to park and the holiday village does take some of the parking space but adds to the event.
 - There is a Public Open House meeting planned for Cardinal O'Hara on Saturday, January 14, 2023 from 9am to 12pm to get public input for a master plan for Don Guanella. Steve Beckley and Gina Burritt will be there. Some of the maintenance crew will help with parking. Ann Toole worked very hard on this. It will be hosted by Cardinal O'Hara and Mike Conner.
 - Peter Williamson had reported to Marc and Stephanie that there was a large blown out beaver dam by the Springfield Trail. This has been discussed at different Friends groups. The large beaver dams do sometimes cause flooding on the trails. They recently had to deal with this problem at Pennock Woods. The friends group had to remove a huge dam. A large dam was removed by the Swedish Cabin by a Friends group. This is an ongoing problem and how do we deal with it? Has anybody dealt with this in terms of beaver kill or removal? We need to discuss regulations because of trail flooding vs. control. Karen Wilwol and Marc will go to see a large dam in the Dog Park. They will find out who can help with removal, i.e., the gaming commission, and they will let us know. Some parks have put protection around the trees to stop the damage from the beavers.

- **Guest Speaker.....**County Planning Director, Gina Burritt
 - Gina is the Director of Planning for Delaware County. Gina lives in Marple with her family. She spent time as an Environmental Transportation Consultant using an equity lens on whatever project being done. Gina will be a great advocate for Delaware County. She will be able to provide guidance and find funding, there is a lot of grant money out there. It is very hard to navigate the system, so that will be a big role for her in addition to Steve Beckley.
 - Delaware County wants to make Don Guanella into a world class park, so it can be a resource for everyone in the county. Gina will be a great leader and has a good team with Steve. They led the Green Space Task Force and did a great job with that. We really need Gina's expertise and job guidance.
 - Gina named her top 3 projects for the next 2 months.
 - Don Guanella will be a huge project on the park side.
 - E. C. Greenway in Chester and other trail projects need to be worked on to make it safer for pedestrians.
 - There is a grant for the Chester Courthouse, America 250, which will be ready in 2026. This will include many renovations and a charging station.

- **Old Business**
 - County Park Visit: Our December Mineral Hill visit was postponed to February.
 - County Parks Rules & Policies: The park rules and regulations that the board recommended have been reviewed and updated by members of County Council and County Solicitors. There will be a first reading of the rules at the County Council meeting on January 17th at 10 am. They have asked Marc and Stephanie to attend to answer any questions. All Board members are welcome.
 - Don Guanella update: (also discussed above) Kathy Lopez shared the flyers for the Don Guanella meeting which will be held at Cardinal O'Hara on Saturday, January 14th at 9 am.
 - Friends of Parks Alliance: has not met since our last board meeting. Will revisit.

- **New Business**
 - Nominations Committee: John, Trish, and Nick H. agreed to serve on the Nominations Committee for the Vice Chair election at the March meeting.
 - Vacancies & Board renewals: We learned that board member Dick McClintock passed away. He went back to the beginning of the board, maybe in the 1970's. He had been an active board member for decades. At this time, we have multiple openings to be filled on the Park board. There are 5 of the 11 seats up for renewal. With the loss of Dick McClintock and the resignation of Peter Williamson, and Pete Alyanakian, we have vacancies for Districts 1 and 5 and an At-Large position.
 - Present to County Council in February: We are going to introduce Kathy as our new Chair at an upcoming County Council meeting and share our accomplishments.

- Park visits for 2023: We have visited 12 parks on our alternate months since April 2021. We decided on: Mineral Hill in February, Upland in April, a picnic at Catania with new board members on a date tbd in June, Don Guanella in August, and Little Flower & Darby Creek Trail in October. We encourage everyone to attend the opening night of the Rose Tree Festival of Lights in December. Nicolas Hoyt thought we should go to the Swedish cabin area as time gets closer for the bridge build. This is going to connect Gillespie Park & Little Flower through the Darby trail in August.

- **Year in Review & Board Discussion**
 - Stephanie read a list of what the board has accomplished in the past year. She will circulate the draft for the board's input, for a "2022 Year in Review" to present when we visit County Council in February.

- **Mission Minute.....Kathy Lopez**
 - Our mission is for the parks to be a source of pride in connection to outdoors for all of Delco. Feel free to send suggestions for the next agenda.
 - Trish McFarland again wanted to thank Stephanie Gaboriault and mention that we were grateful for her leadership and that we are looking forward to having Kathy Lopez stepping into the position.

- **Meeting adjourned: 1:24pm**