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Date: September 25, 2019

Project #: 1051219.000

Meeting #: 1

Project Name: Memorial Park Master Site Planning

Location: Borough Hall, East 10th Street, Jim Thorpe, PA

Time: 6:30 - 7:30pm

Attendees: The meeting began with introductions. Each committee member was asked to identify themselves and their backgrounds. Two committee members were unable to attend the meeting, however additional member invitees shall be included for the next committee meeting.

Greg Strubinger – Council Member

Joe Micko – Planning Commission

Connor Rodgers – Junior Council Person Program

Clem McGinley – Jim Thorpe Rotary Club, Summer Recreation Program

Keith McQuait – Commander of American Legion

Maureen Sterner – Jim Thorpe Borough Manager

Christine Mildner – Barry Isett & Associates

Ashley Eichlin – Barry Isett & Associates

Purpose: Review the scope and intent of the project
Review existing park elements and committee initial wish list items
Review next task items to complete this reporting quarter (October)

Minutes: **Planning Process Overview**

- The Project Scope of Work (SOW) and proposed timelines were reviewed with the committee.
- The meeting's agenda, discussion goals a homework worksheet, project base map and a site context map were distributed and reviewed.
- The Jim Thorpe Comprehensive plan should be used as a reference for applicable information that may pertain to Memorial Park.

Memorandum of Meeting

Concurrent Programing

- Jim Thorpe Borough secured funding through USDA loans for new public garage building off-site, at a different Borough owned property. The existing public garage structure is to be included in the Master Site Planning for Memorial Park.
- Due to the various uses and longevity of the existing garage, a Phase II Environmental Assessment would be required for demolition and/or land disturbance in this area of the park. Therefore, the current intention of the Borough is to repurpose the structure, and not demo.
- The existing rental hall is being re-purposed for multi-use, including the new Police Department offices, Borough Hall and administration offices, and spaces for a Community Center.
- A grant has also been submitted for LSA funds for 2 rooms in the in the community center/Borough Hall/Police Department building
 - Police Dept Room for crime watch, police committee meeting room, training room
 - Multipurpose Room in Community Center: Room for programming, would like to start a senior program (white boards, TVs, tables, etc.)
- The existing Borough Hall building will become an open use building. Recommendations of the future uses are welcome, though the implementation of the use is not included within the scope of this master plan project.
- Through the review of property records and deeds DCNR identified that Memorial Park was enrolled in a Land Water Conservation Act (LWCA) by the National Park Service (NPS) in the 1970s. The purpose of the act was to assist municipalities with acquiring and converting lands for public use.
- Due to Federal funds being used for Memorial Park, non-recreational spaces are considered to be non-compliant to LWCA.
- The Borough is required to provide a land swap to provide public open space/recreational use areas to offset the non-compliant areas of Memorial Park.
 - This will be addressed during the Master Planning process

Memorandum of Meeting

- Existing Borough Hall – 100% of the building will be accounted for towards green space.
- Memorial Hall – Only the addition will be accounted for towards green space.
- Existing Garages – Interior/Open Space, Not the structure itself.

Site Discussion

Maps (11x17) of the park were provided to each committee member for discussion about the park, its features and surrounding land uses. Larger sized plans were laid out on an easel for reference.

From here, the members talked about the park's features in more detail.

Existing Elements

Playground

- Playground is heavily used. Children are at the park "all the time."
- Maintenance: Groundskeeper regularly checks the equipment and replaces parts as needed. The groundskeeper recently stopped replacing parts to playground equipment understand that they master plan project may remove the existing equipment. If equipment is broken, then it is removed.

Parking

- Parking lot on 10th street is to remain to accommodate park parking and parking for the adjacent baseball/soccer fields.
- Some park on Fern Street and then walk to baseball/soccer fields
- Road needs to be defined.
- Parking spots need to be lined.
- Additional Lighting near parking lot will be implemented.

Basketball Courts

- (2) existing basketball courts – One is not regulation size. There was interest in exploring sizing options.

Trees

- Park is well-shaded
- Park trees become the homes for bird nests

Parking and Vehicular Circulation

- Parking spaces on 10th Street are poorly defined.

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- There are 3 vehicular access points to the park: 10th Street, Fern Street, and 9th Street.
- 9th Street gate closes after 3pm limiting parking into the park.
- Fern Street becomes overflow parking during park or field events.
- Vehicle restrictive areas of the park are poorly defined.
- There has been discussion of creating one-way vehicular access from 9th street, through Memorial Park (by the Police Department), and out on 10th street.

Pedestrian Circulation

- Pedestrian: Asphalt, wood chip mulch, lawn, walkways, and sidewalk.
- Programming
- Recreation programs take place at the park during the summers.
- Occasional "water days."

Miscellaneous

- Vandalism is high. There is a desire for activities that would pertain to older kids/teenagers.
 - Cameras will be installed at the park in the future. Date has not been determined.
 - Additional lighting will be installed near the 10th street parking lot.
- Maintenance
- Not much of an issue now.
 - Roads crew manages grass cutting. Groundskeeper maintains playground equipment. Recently painted and maintained trees.

"Wish List" Items: Suggested Proposed Elements

The committee was asked to provide one "wish list" item that they would like to see in the new park master plan. The following list of items were identified.

- Stronger park connection to WWI Memorial. Multiple committee members expressed interested in creating a stronger connection of the WWI veteran memorialization. The park had a fountain that included the memorials, but it was taken down. There was interest in creating a stronger focus on the existing memorials. Establishing a historical/educational component as a tribute to the war was suggested.
- Install an informational kiosk
- Programming that will make people want to stay for an extended duration
- Programming that would allow other municipalities to get involved.
- Programming to promote more family gatherings

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- Ensure that the website gets updated to reflect the available facilities at Memorial Park and other parks in the Jim Thorpe area.
- Implement more ADA accessibility
- Install a "Braille Trail" (Though may be more applicable to Mauch Chunk Lake Environmental Center)
- Integrate Multisensory items into park/trail system (Signage, apps, etc)
- Integrate walking trail, dog trail on steep slopes
- Establish a fitness trail
- Connecting trail to high school trail
- Install a bandshell – Currently no "Music in the Park" but would be interested in starting the program if a bandshell was implemented.
- Install a community pool
- Install a splash pad
- Exploration and potential renovation of existing basketball courts
- Install recreational lawn games (Horseshoes)
- Playground Equipment – Old equipment will need replacing. Separate equipment by age group.
- Install bird nesting controls near the pavilions
- Create additional bathroom space
- Improve current bathroom conditions – Cleaned, revitalized, and better air flow
- Install new fencing along Fern Street
- Install fencing to prohibit any potential vehicular access
- Maintenance/Cost need to be considered

Action: **Committee**

- Each committee member to create a "wish list" of what they would like to see in the park. Committee can also reach out to friends, neighbors, etc. for input.

Isett

- BIA to review present analysis findings and pavilion assessments at next meeting.
- BIA to review lifeguard requirements for splash pads.

Next Meeting Date

Wednesday October 30th, 2019 at 6:30pm
Jim Thorpe Borough Hall

Recorded by: A. Eichlin/C. Mildner

Copies: Attendee List

Memorandum of Meeting