



---

## MEETING NOTES

---

Project:	<b>'Southern Park' Master Plan</b>	Project No.:	<b>19082.1</b>
Location:	<b>Appoquinimink Community Library 651 N Broad St #101, Middletown, DE 19709</b>	Meeting Date/ Time:	<b>12.3.2019 7pm</b>
Re:	<b>Public Meeting #1</b>	Issue Date:	<b>12.19.2019</b>

---

### ATTENDEES:

See Sign-in Sheet

### GENERAL NOTES:

#### INTRODUCTION

- Peter Simone (PS) started with introductions to the Simone Collins (SC) team.
- PS briefly reviewed the project scope and project schedule and emphasized that this process will take time.
- PS explained the 'master plan' process which includes:
  - Collect site data, site analysis, develop site program, preliminary concepts, draft plan, 60-day review periods, and approved master plan.
  - PS noted that after the completion of the master plan, funding must be secured before moving towards construction. Projects of this size are typically built in phases.
- Geoff Creary (GC) explained that the project team visited the site on November 6<sup>th</sup> to review existing on-site conditions, nearby park facilities, adjacent neighborhoods, and existing nearby bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

#### PROJECT CONTEXT

- GC explained that this project is an extension of work completed by the New Castle County Parks Task Force.
- Based on extensive public input (through meetings and a public survey which collected 524 responses) the Task Force published recommendations for future parks in New Castle County.

- The 'Southern Park' project area was recommended by the Task Force as the number one preferred park area.
- GC noted that several parcels owned by New Castle County have been planned as future water farms with the potential for biking/walking trails around their perimeter. The Southern Park project area is on the eastern edge of these county-owned parcels.
- Southern Park, located at 1275 Shallcross Lake Road, is approximately 80 acres in size and is currently leased for agricultural use.
- GC reviewed the historical growth the Southern Park project area. The area around Southern Park remained primarily agricultural from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century through the 1990's when the area experienced a major boom in residential development.
- GC reviewed analysis maps which delineate neighborhoods adjacent to Southern Park as well as a 15-minute walking radius to the entrance of the park on Shallcross Lake Road.
- GC reviewed waterways close to the project area. This project will examine how to capture more rainwater onsite for irrigation and to reduce stormwater runoff.
- The following protected lands are in the vicinity of the Southern Park project area: Delaware State owned lands, County-owned lands, Delaware Wild Lands, Preserved agriculture.
- GC reviewed regional parks and schools within a 2,5, and 10-mile radius. The following are existing regional park facilities: Charles Price Memorial Park, Glasgow Park, Iron Hill Park, Lums Pond State Park.
- There are 8 public schools within a 2-mile radius of the project area, 17 within a 5-mile radius, and 25 public schools within a 10-mile radius. There are 3 private schools within a 5-mile radius, and 7 private schools within a 10-mile radius.

## **CARD TECHNIQUE & DISCUSSION**

PS led the public through an interactive card technique and discussion. Through this process the public identified several areas as they relate to the 'Southern Park' Master Plan: Goals, Facts, Concepts, and Partners. Below are the responses gathered from the public during this exercise.

### **GOALS:**

- Plan for pedestrian & bicycle safety
- Plan for adults (including seniors) in park design
- Create a beautiful park
- Control litter
- Control after-hours noise
- Enhance habitat
- County to be a good neighbor
- Look at adjacent fields
- Create an ADA park that is accessible for all
- Control/ plan for waste (sewage)
- Plan for increased traffic
- Control traffic speed
- Allow for people to walk / bike ride to park

- Consider travel distance

### **FACTS:**

- Surrounding roads and neighborhood have tranquil character
- Existing eagle population in the area near park
- There are playgrounds at local schools
- 248 total parks in New Castle County (roughly 245 north of the canal)
- Narrow bridge north of the park (spillway)
- In Progress WILMAPCO trail study

### **CONCEPTS:**

- Plant more trees!
- Splash pad / sprinklers
- Delineate public vs. private trails and areas
- Vending Machines
- Pervious Paving
- Overflow Parking
- Horses & Horse Trails
- Little League Fields
- Undisturbed Open Space
- Dog Park (fenced in)
- Basketball Courts
- Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)
- Kayaking
  - PS noted that while a water feature large enough for boat use is unlikely, a proposed pond could be good for fishing, ecology, and capturing stormwater runoff.
- Pre-determined park hours
- Farmers market
  - The farmers market that takes place at Glasgow Park is popular for the farmers of the Middletown, Odessa, Townsend areas.
- Softball fields
  - Delcastle Recreational Park and Banning Park are currently used for softball in New Castle County.
- Soccer fields
- Indoor Sports
- Bird Viewing
- Make a sledding hill (add topography) (&Chairlift)
- Low-Impact Sports
- Pizza Oven (think outside the box!)
- Cedar Lane pathway connection
- Archery range
- Unstructured Open Space
- Ample trash & recycling

- Multi-purpose trails
- Exercise circuits
- Allow bikes on trails
- Widen Shallcross Lake Road
- Expand tree line
- Add pickle ball and tennis courts
- Sand volleyball court
- Lights
- Fenced in playground
- Include artwork
- Fountain
- Playground
- Teaching events
- Shaded areas
- Game tables
- Pavilions
- Public / Community gardens
  - Community gardens are currently restricted within some home owner associations near Southern Park
- Water fountains
- Controlled access point(s)
- Create 'Friends of Southern Park'
  - PS noted that it is important for the community be involved in the park after design and park construction. A 'Friends of Southern Park' community organization provide additional 'eyes' on the park for security and assist the County with maintenance / park upkeep.
- Gated Park
- Patrol the park for safety
- Jogging & walking trails
- Sensory gardens for the differently-abled
  - SC should look at 'Can-Do Park' at Alapocas Run, as well as 'HIGH 5 Park' within Glasgow Park for reference
- Swings
- Housing association playground inventory
- Buffers around park for residents
- Multiple entry points & Smaller Parking Lots
- Add more facilities at Glasgow (so that Southern Park can be less structured)
- Easement into the park
- Park benches
- Shaded Grove
- Picnic tables
- Trails & Sidepaths
- Bathrooms

- One audience member noted that portable bathrooms used at Glasgow Park are uncomfortable. Permanent bathrooms that are open during all park hours should be strongly considered by the design team. Bathrooms should be placed strategically close to playgrounds.
- Parking

### **PARTNERS:**

- Community Home-owner Associations
- Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control – DNREC
- Delaware Department of Transportation (DELDOT)
- Wilmington Area Planning Council (Wimapco)
  - New Castle County is working with the Wimapco Trail Plan to connect this park to the region via trails.

Questions / Comments generated during discussion:

- *Q: How much parking will be required for the park?* A: That is not known yet, won't be known until further into the design process.
- *Q: This park will increase traffic, and roads are already poor in this area. Will they be improved?* A: It is too early in the process to say, this will be evaluated later in the design process.
- *Q: How far will people travel to reach this park?* A: That depends on the facilities that will be designed within the park.
- *Q: Why aren't people using existing playgrounds at NCC schools?* A: School playground facilities are generally closed during and sometimes closed outside of school hours.
- One community member, while supportive of the park, was concerned about late-evening noise at the park and security.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- PS explained that residents should take the online public opinion survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/southernpark>
- This public opinion survey will help guide process to determine what people want to see within the park. The SC team will work with New Castle County to analyze existing parks and recreation facilities.
- PS reiterated that public involvement is and will continue to be an essential component to the Southern Park process.
- The next public meeting will take place on March 4<sup>th</sup> at the Appoquinimink Community Library at 7pm.

This report represents the Professional's summation of the proceedings and is not a transcript. Unless written notice of any correction or clarification is received by the Professional within ten days of issue, the report shall be considered factually correct and shall become part of the official project record.

Sincerely,

SIMONE COLLINS, INC.  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JP Wallace', written in a cursive style.

Joseph P. Wallace