

Lower Saucon Township
Parks & Recreation Board

Business Meeting

November 3, 2008

1. The meeting was called to order at Town Hall. The time was 7:06 PM.
2. **Roll Call:** Present: Tom Butera, Vice Chair, Scott Schantzenbach, Sheri Herman, Donna Bristol, members; and Jack Cahalan, Council Liaison. Absent: Dave Spirk, Chair; Bill Ross.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of October 2008 were presented. Motion for approval and second for the October 2008 minutes. All in favor.

4. **Citizen Non-Agenda Items**

None.

5. **Projects:**

➤ **Town Hall Park Nature Trail**

Mr. Cahalan said the only update was a press release for the Nature Trail. We had a nice little ceremony for MJ Roche, the Boy Scout. He showed up with his family. The weather was just as bad as it was when we opened Polk Valley Park. It was pouring rain. It was very nice. The trail looks great and everybody who has seen it has really been surprised. The press release is on the website and other information about Town Hall Park Nature Trail so people can go on the website and go out to Town Hall Park and take a look at it.

➤ **Southeastern Park**

Mr. Cahalan said there is nothing new on Southeastern Park, although Donna was at the conference on the 29th at DeSales on Sustainable Parks, and the key note speaker was Larry Weaner, who did our meadow out at Southeastern Park. He gave a nice little talk and there was some discussion on the meadow. It was good to see we did Polk Valley Park and a little bit of Southeastern Park. It's now in the fourth year and starting to show some growth. Each year gets better. By the ninth year, it's in full bloom. It's coming along on schedule.

➤ **Heller Homestead**

Mr. Cahalan said after we put in the trail with the Girl Scout, MaryBeth Paskewicz, and she did a very nice job, Public Works did some upgrades out at the nature trail. We were all looking at the trail as it went above the bluff at the Saucon Creek and everyone said what a terrific view and too bad we can't do some things with this so people can come up here and look at the view and the creek. He asked the Planner to come up with some recommendations and they sent him a plan. There are two overlooks that we're building off that trail overlooking the Saucon Creek. They'll be a bench there. The railing is already there and the mulch is down. We just have to do a couple of plantings and put the bench down and anchor it and we're ready to go. When you get a chance, go out and take a look at it. It's fabulous. It's a remote spot and he hopes there isn't any vandalism. That was pretty simple and inexpensive to take care of. We have really dressed up an area with the nature trail loop that was kind of neglected and it's really looking great. Another thing we wanted to do out there in the park area away from the historic section, to see if he could put a gazebo out in the park. He asked the Planner to give him some recommendations on that and they sent him

1 sketches which he handed out to the members. They are proposing to put the gazebo right off the
2 mowed path. He showed where they are proposing to put the gazebo. At one of the other parks,
3 we have a picnic pavilion for people to use for gatherings and it's also used for kids in the summer
4 if it's raining and they need shelter to go to, and we were trying to come up with something like
5 that. He wanted to get a gazebo that we could at least get one or two picnic tables in it. Someone
6 said the Heller Homestead has an awful lot of events like picnics and luncheons, so she doesn't
7 know if they want it. Mr. Cahalan said they are the ones that recommended the gazebo, the Saucon
8 Valley Conservancy. He showed where the gazebo would be. It would be accessible and pretty
9 close to where they are going to have their activities. It is not taking any grassy area away where
10 they do the Civil War reenactments. It's in an area that's not utilized, but close enough so it's
11 accessible to them, but far enough away, that you can come to the park and utilize it and not be
12 disturbed. This is going out to everybody. They haven't seen this yet. They may have another
13 recommendation. The one problem he had, if you look at the map, we don't own all of this property.
14 There is a property right there that is owned by Society Hill, so we had to get it on the township
15 portion. Mr. Cahalan will have to see what the cost is. He doesn't want to get too fancy and have
16 to have it repaired. The Council has voted to tear the maintenance garage down. It's in the flood
17 plain and had been put up in the 60's. It's loaded with junk that was put in there by the
18 Conservancy and some old SauconFest things that the Township put in there. Once it's empty, we
19 will have it leveled. There are some ruins just to the south end of that, an old sawmill that was part
20 of the Heller Homestead property and we want to preserve that. That's what we're working on at
21 the Heller Homestead. He'll keep you posted. If you have any other recommendations, please
22 email him.

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24 ➤ **Polk Valley Park**

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Dave Spirk arrived. The time was 7:26 PM.
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27 Mr. Cahalan said based on some of the comments made, he put together a memo and it's been
28 distributed to the staff and consultants in the township. It takes in the issues of the parking, the
29 fencing, and the access to the playing fields that we talked about. Mr. Spirk said you haven't seen
30 a parking problem until you've gone to a tournament. Someone said are we are going to have to
31 have someone there to help with the parking when there is a tournament. Mr. Spirk said it will get
32 worse as more kids are playing. The Lower Saucon Police were there yesterday and never gave
33 tickets. Mr. Cahalan said eventually they are not going to be able to park there. They need to park
34 up in the lot and walk down. If the police aren't doing anything about it, he's going to have to deal
35 with that. Someone said Officers came up on Sunday, looked around, and he left. Then the second
36 Officer came up, parked on the grass, and sat there for about 10 minutes and never got out of the
37 car.

38
39 Mr. Cahalan said the whole parking lot was designed with the storm water management and if you
40 start paving over gravel, it's not going to work. There are parking lots with infiltration and all has
41 been calculated into the pervious. The parking lot is going to have to be managed and enforced.
42 It's not going to be an extended parking lot. Someone said it had to be figured in there for pervious
43 because the thoughts were it was going to be a future building site. Mr. Cahalan said there's no
44 drainage there.

45
46 Someone said he believes it should be made a stone parking lot. That's our recommendation and
47 the recommendation that should be taken to Council. Mr. Cahalan said that's in here. Someone
48 said we pushed the games apart and he went up there for a game on Saturday morning and there
49 were only about four spots left in the parking lot. Mr. Cahalan said they are going to make
50 extended parking and it's going to be up by the school. Mr. Spirk said that's not going to work, not

1 with five and six year olds. Mr. Cahalan said that's what we talked about as an overflow, now all
2 of a sudden you want all the parking on the property. Mr. Spirk said we have to come up with
3 more spaces. If he has to go to a Council meeting and tell them himself, he'll do it. That's what
4 has to be done.

5
6 Someone said you have to be there to appreciate it. Council should come and see how people have
7 to sit there and wait for people to back out. Mr. Cahalan said this was planned by the experts to
8 have parking for three multipurpose fields. Mr. Spirk said that's not enough. His whole career he
9 spent dealing with people who sit at a desk and make things up and have not a great grasp on
10 reality, so Boucher & James, Hanover, they did it wrong.

11
12 Mr. Cahalan said we talked about one of the problems was the scheduling of the matches. Mr.
13 Spirk said they've adjusted the schedules and there still is a problem. In five years, it's going to be
14 worse. Mr. Cahalan said there's got to be a capacity at some point. Someone on Saturday's,
15 grandparents, aunts, uncles come, it's a huge event in families lives. We play a team from Radnor
16 from Philadelphia, that's the last thing they want to do is park at the school and walk over to the
17 fields. Mr. Cahalan said he's just telling you that he doesn't think Council is going to start taking
18 grass areas in the park and turn them into parking lots. Mr. Spirk said do you want people parking
19 on the roads. Mr. Cahalan said this is the first he's heard that we have a serious, serious problem.
20 What we talked about in previous meetings was that we had some start up problems with the
21 parking, scheduling, and we put in 18 more slots. The next meeting we came and found out that
22 people were not using the slots, and wanted to park along the road. We said that's enforcement.
23 Now this is the first time that he heard we are totally over capacity.

24
25 Mr. Spirk said what is the down side of parking on the grass? He was just at Notre Dame and
26 that's where they park. Mr. Cahalan said the Township Council does not want people parking on
27 the grass. It's not a parking lot. Then they'll be all over the place parking.

28
29 Someone said we've had a lot of situations with people with wheelchairs, and it's not accessible to
30 wheelchairs. Mr. Spirk said it's all well and good to sit in the white tower and make decisions, but
31 there's reality. There are tiny little children involved here. Mr. Cahalan said this must be a
32 different group sitting here because in previous meetings we talked about going to Lehigh County
33 fields and other places and you have to park and walk, and that's where we are going, now he's
34 hearing let's park next to the field. Mr. Spirk said he said let them park on the flat spot. Mr.
35 Cahalan said that's in here, but now he's hearing more.

36
37 Someone said what happened with parking it the dog park? Mr. Cahalan said that was an overflow
38 parking lot. Mr. Spirk said the problem with the dog park was it was too wet at the bottom and
39 people got stuck. Someone said reality, if the Township wants to build another park, go for it, the
40 Township needs another one. Mr. Cahalan said when the trail goes in from the high school, there
41 will be signs telling you where to park. We have to work on this. He's hearing a whole other story
42 here tonight. Someone said all he's suggesting is allow the people to park in the grass. You have
43 five months to figure it out before LaCrosse starts. Mr. Cahalan said he will represent what you
44 are saying to everyone on Council.

45
46 Someone said they are only talking about the one grassy area. Mr. Cahalan said wait until people
47 start pulling in with their dogs when the dog park is opened. Someone said the one key thing that
48 was talked about at Polk Valley Park was where were the busses going to turn around, and that's
49 where the engineers might have had a misconception. That's way back we talked about that. Mr.
50 Spirk said his recommendation is to allow people park in that spot here (pointing to the sketch).
51 Upper Saucon Park, they have fields where the busses are that say "Don't Park in the Grass", but
52 then they schedule three LaCrosse games at the same time. They say go down and park at the
53 bottom lot, but people just park in the grass. People aren't going to walk a half mile when you

1 have a kid in the game. They don't care about paving it or putting stone there, just allow them to
2 park there. At Grist Mill, they park on the grass. They've been doing that for years. Mr. Cahalan
3 said they are going to have Homer sign off, and then knock the barn down. Everything else is
4 good. The trail is going in with the pervious concrete. It's being done this week. The only other
5 issue we have up there is the two backstops. The subcontractor put the netting up and we're not
6 happy with the way he did it. We were back and forth with him and he finally agreed to take it
7 down and fix it.

8
9 Mr. Cahalan has put together a maintenance plan for the park. He has a pest management plan that
10 he will run past the EAC. It has mowing and all the features they want to do. He wants to get it
11 finished and take it to the EAC and the Council. Park and Rec. members said maybe we could
12 even volunteer to do some things at the park. Mr. Cahalan said he hopes to have this adopted by
13 the Council by the end of this year so we have it in place. The grass cutting we are going to go out
14 for bid. The first two years they were great, and now they are missing spots, etc. There's a lot of
15 fencing up there and you can't get the zero turn mowers near them. You need to get weed
16 whackers up there to do that. When we went to bid the first year, we liked them so much and
17 extended the price into the second year with the same price. Then they showed up and got different
18 guys and it's not the same. We're going to have to change. Mr. Spirk said the problem is they may
19 be the lowest bidder. Mr. Cahalan said the school changed, and the guys we have now had been at
20 SV High School.

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22 ➤ **Kingston Park**

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24 Mr. Cahalan said there is nothing new.

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26 ➤ **Grants**

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28 Mr. Cahalan said there is nothing new.

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30 ➤ **Volunteer/Scout Projects**

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32 Mr. Cahalan said we did both of these and they are finished. We have some scouts that are doing
33 some minor bird houses and bat houses for the EAC.

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35 **6. Old Business:**

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37 ➤ **Polk Valley Park Phase I Improvements – Update**

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39 Mr. Cahalan said this was discussed above.

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41 ➤ **PVP – SVSD Connector Trail - Update**

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43 Mr. Cahalan said we're still waiting to finalize the agreement with the homeowner to knock the
44 barn down.

45
46 ➤ **SEPTA Rails to Trails Project - Update**

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48 Mr. Cahalan said you may have seen one part of the contract was to clear the trees and brush, and
49 that's been done. The guy came up pretty quickly with the excavator and knocked everything
50 down in the right of way, and that's been done all the way up to Hellertown. The guys who are
51 coming much slower are taking the rails and ties out. The last they saw them, they were just
52 getting out to Living Memorial Park in Upper Saucon. They are not near DeSales yet. They are
53 slowed down due to the fact that they have to pull the rails up, take them to an area to get them off

1 the track, and then load them on a flat bed. They'll probably still be coming up this way by the end
2 of the year. Our Solicitor is working with the SEPTA solicitor on the lease agreement. There
3 doesn't seem to be any major problems with the legal documents. We do want to have the
4 Engineers check the route through Lower Saucon to make sure there are no serious drainage issues
5 and make sure once we do take this over, that we don't get stuck with some major problems.
6 Otherwise, everything looks good. In 2009, we'll be setting up an Advisory Committee. He told
7 Donna Bristol she'd be a good candidate for that. We'll need to meet with the other municipalities
8 and get grant applications together.
9

10 ➤ **Christ Lutheran Church Property**

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12 Mr. Cahalan said this property, we did the appraisal. It's too high. It's apparently still a buildable
13 piece of property. Council is going to discuss it on Wednesday. He has a feeling they are going to
14 say it's too much money. They haven't discussed this with the church yet. It's on Mockingbird
15 Hill and we can put an access road in and put a parking lot in. He will keep you posted on this.
16

17 ➤ **2009 Preliminary Budget Recommendations**

18
19 Mr. Cahalan said the only thing on here Parks related, we made a proposal for the rubberized
20 mulch at the playgrounds. It is expensive, but he thinks Council was convinced it was a good idea.
21 It's safe and non toxic and the only concern he heard was it does produce zinc, but that's a problem
22 if you use it in gardens with vegetables. They are going to look at that and they'll get it approved.
23 When they do the playground at Polk Valley Park, they'll plan for rubberized mulch. Town Hall is
24 one of the biggest parks they will have to do. Steel City will probably be done in 2009 sometime.
25

26 7. **New Business:**

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28 ➤ **Heller Homestead Park Improvements**

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30 Mr. Cahalan said this was discussed above.
31

32 ➤ **Naturalization of Detention Basins**

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34 Mr. Cahalan said they asked the Planner to look into this with some recommendations. We don't
35 have to discuss it right now. Look it over and bring it back with recommendations and we can talk
36 about it at a future meeting.
37

38 ➤ **Steel City Park Design Sketches**

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40 Someone said that a resident asked him if anything was done about bringing up a sign that the park
41 closes at dusk. She continues to chase the kids off the park after dark. Mr. Cahalan said he will
42 look into that. He said he has sketches 1, 2 and 3. He had the results of the Visioning Meeting at
43 Steel City Playground this past August. These are conceptual sketches and will give you an idea as
44 what the Planner tried to do. It was based on recommendations on the rank of how important
45 people thought they were. They took these recommendations to see what they could fit on the
46 property up there. It now includes the new piece of property that the township acquired. Parallel
47 parking along Riverside Drive and all of the sketches, with the exception of sketch Plan 2, there is
48 parking on the park property. Sketch Plan 1 has 20 spaces for parking and Plan 3 has 10 spaces for
49 parking. The pavilions are close enough for people to come in to unload. Two people said they
50 didn't like Plan 1. Mr. Cahalan said based on what they talked about, no. 3, they put the basketball
51 courts out on Riverside Drive and then moved the parking down and put a volleyball court in
52 between. When you move the pavilion and all the other stuff in all the fields, you get a decent
53 sized Little League practice field. They'd improve the backstop, the infield, put in some fences and

1 benches in, and still have room for a paved walkway. Someone said regarding the parking and how
2 important the parking is, it's either no. 2 or 3. Mr. Cahalan said the pavilion would be good as the
3 playground is adjacent to it if a mother wanted to sit under there. The basketball court would be
4 along Riverside Drive and be visible and lit up. Someone said are you allowed to park at the fire
5 house? Mr. Cahalan said you could. There was a discussion at one of the meetings about that
6 being used for parking and they never followed through with the roadway for safety for crossing.
7 Someone said the way to go would be Plan 3 without the interior parking and then have some sort
8 of understanding with the fire house. Someone said they are squeezing a lot into the park. It's a
9 very, very small Little League field. Mr. Cahalan said it has too many things like utility poles,
10 guide wires and even if we wanted to fix up the infield and the back stop, the outfield you couldn't
11 and it's not worth it. It's a nice little park. Someone said he doesn't believe parking is issues as
12 there aren't going to be a lot of games there. Maybe someone could talk to the firehouse as they
13 have a lot of parking spaces there. Mr. Cahalan said take this home, look at it and bring it back to
14 the next meeting. They'll be a couple of different go arounds, but right now he thinks you are
15 leaning towards Plan 3.

16
17 ➤ **Redington Chapel Site Improvements**

18
19 Mr. Cahalan said this is a really small site. It's out on Redington Road off of Riverside Drive. It's
20 not a well traveled road. Out there was a settlement called the Iron Works, a historic area, and
21 there was a building on there that we had to demolish as it was falling down for fifteen years.
22 Because of the historic significance, we did a report on it and once it was razed, what's left, there's
23 a very tiny lot at the intersection and what we want to do is dress it up with some plantings. We are
24 starting to work on historic markers that we are going to put at various sites in the township. The
25 first one was the Meadow's Road Bridge and we had a little ceremony for that. Redington Chapel,
26 there will be a historic marker placed there and we're designating that as a very small park. You
27 can walk by it, you can admire it or you can stop and look at it, that's about it. We'll dress it up a
28 little bit.

29
30 ➤ **Brandon Kazan Recreation Fee**

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32 Mr. Cahalan said he had a recreation fee that was paid by Brandon Kazan for a small subdivision
33 on Lower Saucon Road and it was \$3,113.00. Normally we put this in Southeastern, but because of
34 the mulch cost, we have township wide parks, we recommend we put this in Town Hall Park.

35
36 Motion to approve and a second to put the \$3,113.00 recreation fee from Brandon Kazan into
37 Town Hall Park. All in favor.

38
39 Mr. Cahalan said he will take that to Council.

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41 9. **Adjournment:** Motion for adjournment. All in favor. The time was 8:30 P.M.