

Perry County Greenways, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Study

Study Committee #1

Meeting Summary

October 7, 2009

Present	Name	E-mail Address	Present	Name	E-mail Address
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amanda Parrish		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Wheatley	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Anita Todd		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Karan Balaban	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Annette Mullen		<input type="checkbox"/>	Ken Martz	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Barbara VanHorn		<input type="checkbox"/>	Linda Sieber	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Benner		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Dorman Peffer	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carl Tressler		<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark Ticehurst	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheryl Miller		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Melanie Wertz	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Clarence "Jim" Reisinger		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Merril Brofee	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cloyd Knouse		<input type="checkbox"/>	Sandra Philpot	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dan Heacock		<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie Stoner	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Jon Noll		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steve Shirmer	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ed McMillen		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steve Zeigler	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Place		<input type="checkbox"/>	Suzanne Howell	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fred Lauster		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Fitzpatrick	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jim and Roberta Saylor		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Graupensperger	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jim Renner		<input type="checkbox"/>		

Project Team

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jason Finnerty	PCPC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lauren Zumbrun	RETTEW
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Todd Brajkovich	PCCD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ann Toole	Toole Recreation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sally Tengeres	PCCD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ann Yost	YSM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Frank Chlebnikow	RETTEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mike Piaskowski	DCNR

Other Attendees

Marel Raub
 Rich Morder
 John Stokes
 Bill Kvaternik
 Amy Sive
 Aren Tma (??)

Welcome

Jason Finnerty, Perry County Planner introduced the project team.

Project Introduction

Frank Chlebnikow introduced the project and briefly discussed the role of the project team. Ann Toole and Ann Yost provided information about their backgrounds in planning for recreation and parks. They also provided examples of

other parks, recreation, greenways and open space plans, and briefly explained how these plans were being implemented and their effects on the communities. Meeting attendees introduced themselves by stating their name and the organization/municipality they represent.

Schedule

The project schedule was distributed to committee members. Frank Chlebnikow discussed the project schedule and the purpose of the core committee. Ann Toole asked meeting attendees that were interested in serving on the core committee, which is to meet more often, to indicate this on the sign in sheet.

Core Task Force Members

Committee Members

1. Tom Fitzpatrick
2. Steve Shirmer
3. Melanie Wertz
4. Carl Tressler
5. Merrill Brofee
6. Tom Graupensperger
7. Jim Saylor
8. Dan Heacock

Non-Committee Members*

1. John Stokes
2. Marel Raub

* - Are welcome to attend but are not officially part of the Core Task Force.

Roles and Responsibilities

The core committee will be responsible for intimately guiding the project and will meet more often than the full committee. These people are expected to be able to attend additional meetings and devote additional time to the project. The consultant team appreciates your feedback as the project moves forward. Please let us know if you like the way things are going, or if there are certain areas that we need to focus our attention on.

Mike Piaskowski of DCNR provided the committee with an overview of grants available through DCNR.

Perry County Opportunities and Challenges

The committee discussed opportunities and challenges for parks, recreation, greenways, and open space in the county.

The items discussed are as follows:

Opportunities

- Large and small waterways
 - Fishing
 - Kayacking, boating on the Juniata and Susquehanna
 - Canoeing – overnight sojourns
 - Over 100 mile sojourns on Susquehanna – opportunity for tourism – people have to pick and choose where to stay overnight, but there are no availabilities in the county unless you get permission from private landowners
- Riverwalk – planned for Newport but stalled because of liability concerns
- Bike trails
 - Topography characteristics – mountains to the north and south
 - BMX bike park
- Loop trails needed – most trails are linear now and you have to get dropped off at one end and picked up at the other
 - Tuscarora Trail connects to the Appalachian Trail between Concord Rd. and Little Valley Rd to SGL #88

- 30 miles of trails on public land and only cross 2 highways
- Lots of large undeveloped tracts
- Need to involve the Chamber of Commerce
- Large equestrian county
 - Equestrian trails
 - Equestrian community in Shermansdale
- Link walking trails with historic canals (historic interpretation opportunity)
 - Canals and locks all up and down the Juniata River
 - 113 acres bequest to Perry County Historical Society
 - There is no central place where people can go to get the whole briefing – need a “clearing house” for historic/cultural info.
- Waggoner’s Gap Hawk Watch
 - Hawk Rock – long hike to Hawk Rock from Waggoners Gap
 - IBA (Important Bird Area) signs
- Almost an opportunity for every municipality to have a park (opportunity for more parks)
- Scenic Byways / scenic overlooks
 - Leaf Peepers – Tour
 - Need a Foliage Festival in Perry County
- Beautiful landscape – needs to be preserved
 - Mountain Laurel – western part of the county
 - Box huckleberry
- Tourism – soft industry – tourism, bed and breakfasts
 - 14 covered bridges in Perry County – 2nd most in the state
 - Native American historical sites
 - Old iron furnaces
- 23.2 miles of dirt/gravel roads in SGL / state forests in one area
- Abandoned railroad grade (East-West)
 - Non-continuous; some developed, some in farmland
- Hunting
- Existing parks / state parks
 - Fowler’s Hollow
 - Big Springs
 - Swimming pools in Liverpool, Millerstown, New Bloomfield, and Duncannon
 - Local parks
- Great geology, archeology, paleontology
 - There is no central place where people can go to get the whole briefing – need a “clearing house” for historic/cultural info.
 - Breathtaking geologic views
- 7,000 acres of permanently preserved land
 - Farmland, forest, etc.
- Central PA Conservancy
- Wildlife
 - Scottish cattle
 - Bison
- Amish community – popular events
 - Quilt auctions draw visitors
- Sizeable commercial campgrounds
 - Ferryboat campground
 - Dresslers
- Blain Heritage Days
- Marysville Lions Club
- Perry County Council of the Arts

- Map showing where artists are located
- Nationally significant resources – should be used to leverage funding
 - Water gap
 - Susquehanna River
 - Appalachian Trail
- Major motocross

Challenges

- Susquehanna River blocked off by Norfolk Southern Railroad
 - N-S owns the canal right of way
- Perry County is a part of the Capital Area Tourism Bureau
 - Being grouped with Harrisburg and Hershey results in Perry County getting lost in the shuffle
 - Perry County is more in line with Juniata and Mifflin County
 - Perry County is not included in the Harrisburg or Lewistown newspapers
 - Don't relate to anyone
- Low population vs. high costs to develop parks concerns the public
 - Consider multi-municipal agreements
- Lots of people are convinced that development won't come and that you don't need to plan
 - No compelling reason to preserve land
- People are buying large tracts of mountain land and posting everything
 - Problem working with landowners
 - Problem with access for hiking/fishing, too
- Lack of respect for the land by the public
- Perry County and the Susquehanna Valley are beautiful, but US 11/15 is an uncontrolled corridor
 - Trashy, billboards, etc.
 - Uncontrolled development
- Gateway – visual
- Lack of ordinances in some municipalities
 - Open space/fee in lieu of land dedication ordinances
 - Lack of planning; lack of zoning ordinances
- Agricultural preservation / TDRs
 - Need to make it more palatable to a landowner
- Need park and rec input earlier in the land development process
- Municipal and state maintenance practices along roadways – spraying is aesthetic concern
- We are a sue-happy society and farmers are afraid to allow people on their property because of that
- Marcellus shale
- Need to provide an area for 4-wheelers / ATVs

One Thing that this Plan should Accomplish

- Perry County should stand alone – no longer part of the Capital Area
- More preserved open space
- Greater appreciation for open space and what's available here
- More municipal cooperation
- Kid-friendly areas
 - Use recreation to prevent juvenile disobedience
- Better understanding of what's in our own area (Perry County)
 - Promotion / awareness
- Involve the Chamber of Commerce
- Smart, realistic, attainable goals about specific things
 - Make it easy for DCNR to “go to bat” for various initiatives
- More accountable elected officials

- Partnerships with school districts
 - So they are aware of benefits to kids
 - Link fun family activities and outdoors
- Adopt ordinances
- Connected system of hiking and biking trails
- Responsible land use
- Strategy for river corridors / stream
- River access between Marysville and Duncannon
- More parking – fishing and river access
- Community and county pride
- Preservation of the beautiful landscape
- “soft industry” tourism
 - Bed and breakfasts, restaurants
- Access to more historical sites

Homework Assignment

- Key person interviews – committee members were asked to identify 3-5 people or organizations that the consultant team should talk to during this project.
- Committee members were asked to complete a Perry County Trends work sheet that was handed out at the October 7, 2009 meeting. A copy of the work sheet was e-mailed to members that did not receive it at the meeting.
- Picture Project – committee members were asked to take pictures of 5-10 places in Perry County that they love.

Questions/Discussion Next Steps

The next meeting is scheduled for December. The December meeting will be a meeting of the Core Committee.