

**East Vincent Township
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2022 7:00 PM**

Chairman Austin Hodge opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 PM. Also in attendance were: Chris Orzechowski, Member; Nicole Keegan, Member; Nev Lynch, Member; Bill Hoffman, Member, Catherine Ricardo, Township Manager; Tom Comitta, Land Planner and Cindy VanHise, Engineer. Rachael Griffith, Member, and Rocky Roeger, Vice-Chairman were absent. There were ten (10) attendees online, and one (1) in-person attendee.

1. Minutes of November 15, 2022

Motion to approve the minutes, as amended with corrections discussed this evening.

Moved: A. Hodge

Second: R. Roeger

Vote: Unanimous

2. Reports:

The Engineer's Report and Board of Supervisors minutes were received. No action was taken.

3. New Business

A. Independence Park Phase I & II

C. Ricardo stated that for the last few months different iterations of this plan have been before the Park and Recreation Board. C. Ricardo stated there is a master plan that the Township adopted in 2016, and there are 10 phases laid out for total buildout of the property, which is about 100 acres of property that the Township owns situated next to the Southeastern Veterans Center. C. Ricardo stated that right now there are two trailers on the property owned by the state and federal government, and much of the property is heavily wooded. C. Ricardo stated that in 2019 the Township was successful in receiving grant funding from Chester County Parks & Preservation and more recently received a grant from DCNR for the development of this property, bringing the total grant funding is roughly \$550,000. The total project cost for the plans presented this evening is roughly \$1,000,000, with the Township committed to match the remainder of the funding with fee in lieu of dedicated open space funds and general fund contributions.

C. Ricardo stated that when the Township received the DCNR grant last year, they started looking at the Master Plan to see if it was actually feasible to build as the plans had been prepared. C. Ricardo stated that the plan that was in the 2016 Master Plan was the plan that was submitted with the grant applications. C. Ricardo stated that once the Township Engineer started reviewing the plan, they found a lot of steep slopes and which would make it very expensive to put in what was proposed, as paved walking trails, so they had to go back to the drawing board and see what could be done staying within the original budget. C. Ricardo stated that with T. Comitta's guidance, they decided to do the developing in phases to limit disturbance to one section of the site and refocus some of the improvements in future phases. C. Ricardo stated that the field that is along Dunlap Road is existing, along with some existing parking even though it is in poor condition. C. Ricardo stated that the one trailer is the federally owned by the Department of Veteran's Affairs and they are willing to donate the trailer to the Township, which is likely to be temporarily reused as a comfort station until a more permanent facility can be established. C. Ricardo stated that they went through various iterations of this plan and the ADA trail is a required component from DCNR. C. Ricardo stated that all the parking is being repaved and represents a significant cost in these first two phases.

C. Ricardo stated that there is an existing pavilion that is currently in use and is in good shape. C. Ricardo stated that this plan is now in the land development process to get the Planning Commission's feedback, and recommendation. C. Ricardo stated that this also needs to be reviewed by the County and the Board of Supervisors. C. Orzechowski stated that there are very minimal changes that are proposed to the infrastructure. N. Keegan asked if the Schuylkill River Trail link is part of this phase. C. Ricardo stated that it is not part of this phase because of the steep slopes and the issue of obtaining access across PECO property and will be part of other phases. B. Hoffman asked how many acres are included in this phase. C. Ricardo stated that one parcel is 79 acres, and one parcel is 25 acres, they are focusing on the 25-acre parcel. N. Keegan asked if the park gets a lot of use currently. C. Ricardo stated that it is currently not open to the public. Hodge asked if long term there a plan is to make a more permanent comfort station. C. Ricardo stated that there is a hope in the future to have a more permanent facility. A. Hodge asked if it will be dog friendly, C. Ricardo stated that the residents voted to have at least one of the parks dogs friendly, so we are trending in that direction. C. Ricardo stated that the hope is to lay the groundwork for future phases and apply for more grant funding. N. Keegan asked if the green area will be maintained. C. Ricardo stated that it will be and is currently mowed and maintained.

Motion to recommend approval of Independence Park Phase I & II Plan, as discussed this evening.

Moved: A. Hodge

Second: N. Lynch

Vote: Unanimous

Public Comment:

- **Eric Turnbull of Haverfield Drive** – E. Turnbull stated that there used to be a trail proposed to go right by their homes and he doesn't see that proposal on this plan set. E. Turnbull stated that it sounds like that is not something that is going to happen now. C. Ricardo stated that is something they are not moving forward with at this time.

A. Hodge stated that last month they discussed the AP/RC Zoning Districts last month, a memo was received from Chester County Planning Commission which is available on the Township website, and it will be reviewed and discussed at the upcoming January meeting.

B. Hoffman wished everyone happy holidays.

A. Hodge thanked the Park & Recreation Board for their hard work on the Independence Park Plans.

Motion to adjourn at 7:26 PM.

Moved: A. Hodge

Second: B. Hoffman

Vote: Unanimous