

**East Vincent Township
Park & Recreation Meeting
August 26, 2025, 7:00 PM**

Brian Wilde opened the meeting at 7:00PM. Also in attendance were Chris Cobb, Doug Schmidt, Cynthia Barney, Todd Palmer, and Christine McNeil. Also in attendance were the Township Manager, Bob Zienkowski and Township Supervisor Craig Damon.

1. Meeting minutes from June 24, 2025, were not available for approval. This will be addressed during the September meeting.

2. Guest Discussion

- A. Community Food Forest

Yatin Kapu and his mentor Tyler Heitzman presented the Design and Build plan for the Permaculture and Food Forest planned for Park on the Ridge. The system is designed to work with nature. It is planned to be built in a section of the park close to the pavilion. The ethics of the project for covering Earth Care (water, soil, and nature), People Care, and Future Care. Their mission is to turn the lawn space into a food forest and to teach the community about permaculture. The area will be filled with fruit and nut trees that the community can consume. The project is designed to share and recognize how the indigenous people of the area obtained their food.

The project considers the available sunlight, available water, and the soil. There will be four main phases that will convert the area into a closed loop system that can last for generations. A sample can be found in Downingtown where there is a 100-year old food forest. Part of the project consists of plantings that benefit each other. These plantings will be part of the guilds built within the food forest. (A guild is a permaculture concept where a central food-producing species is surrounded by a diverse community of plants and other organisms that support its health and productivity by providing functions like soil enrichment, pest deterrence, and attracting beneficial insects. Guilds are designed to mimic natural forest ecosystems, creating a self-sustaining, multi-functional mini ecosystem that provides food, medicine, fiber, and other benefits.) Rainwater is controlled by designed swales within the area which will route water where it is needed. Work on the project will begin in late September to early October timeframe.

D. Schmidt motioned to approve the start of the food forest project by Y. Kapu and that he also provides a phased schedule to the board with costs so the board can determine funding support. Second, by C. McNeil. The vote was unanimous.

B. Trail Stewards

Independence Park trail stewards provided a summary of their observations in the park. It was reported that the mowing near the dirt mound is not being done by a known individual. The open meadow nearest the Canopy Trail is being mowed by a local resident. D. Schmidt will meet with the trail steward Paty to address this further. Trail steward Ruth visits the trail at least five times a week. She reported that there is less trash on the trail than before. She also reported that one of the trash barrels needs a new handle. D. Schmidt agreed to provide one.

There is a group of logs on the Canopy Trail where walkers appear to be bypassing. It was suggested that the logs be replaced by a bridge since the area is wet. D. Schmidt will contact local scout troops to see if they are interested in building a bridge.

3. Old Business

A. Open Issues List

B. Wilde reviewed the Open Issues list. During the review a **motion** was made by C. Cobb to accept the new sign design for the Bridge Street park wayfinding sign pending approval from the Veteran's Hospital and the National Guard. Second, by C. McNeil. The vote was unanimous.

B. Independence Park

a. Trail Mowing

This issue was discussed during the trail steward's section.

b. Trail Extension

The trail extension is being worked. It is currently marked with green tape.

c. 2nd Annual Rugged Indy Race – Nov 16

Reservations for the event are growing. Everyone needs to promote the event. The township arborist may participate in the walk.

d. Lure Coursing – Dec 3 and 4

This is the dog chase event that is on schedule.

C. Park on the Ridge

a. Park Improvements

This was discussed during the review of the open issues list. Comments can be found there.

b. Community Day – Oct 19

i. Pumpkin decorating: prizes and judging

It was suggested that trophies be provided to the top three winners. D. Schmidt will investigate 3D printed trophies.

D. Peoples Park

There was a brief discussion regarding vehicle parking close to Route 23. This issue requires additional investigation.

E. Sheeder Woodlands Park

No discussion.

F. Parkerford Historic Riverfront Park

No discussion.

4. New Business

There were several potential grant applications discussed. There is a need to fund the food forest, Independence Park cleanup, the Historical Commission support for the Vincent Canal Story and Mill Pond, interpretive signs on the Indy Trail and a potential covered bridge over the stream in Independence Park.

C. McNeil mentioned that the PECO Green Region application for Independence Park is a possibility. She also mentioned the Schuylkill Highlands cultural grant via Natural Lands that could be pursued to support interpretive signs in Independence Park that focus on the history of Pennhurst as well as a commemorative sculpture.

It was also brought up that research is needed to see if a grant is available to assist with weed removal at Park on the Ridge.

5. Miscellaneous Discussion

None.

6. Public Comment

E. Milito asked the board if they can readdress the issue of no dogs in Park on the Ridge. C. McNeil suggested that the boards revisit the policy. C. Damon suggested that there will be a need

to waste bags and stations around the park. The policy change could restrict dogs to a specific area of the park. This will be added to the agenda for the September meeting.

7. Adjourn

Moved: D. Schmidt

Second: C. Cobb

Vote: Unanimous