

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 7, 2026, AT 6:30 P.M.
AGENDA**

1. Call to Order (*J. Murphy*)

Adrienne Smythe	Chair
Brian Sokel	Vice Chair
Lee Abberley	Member
Christina Kerper	Member
Robert McGrath	Member
Nick Matteo	Friends of Hillcrest Pond Representative
Neil DiFranco	School District School Board Representative
Charles Wattley	School District Representative
Grace D'Amico	Student Representative
Rob Goldberg	Commissioner Liaison

2. Approval of September Meeting Minutes (*All*)

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee unanimously approved the September minutes.

3. Administrative Report (*J. Murphy*)

It was announced that the Township's Fall/Winter Newsletter was sent out to all residents in September and is also available on the Township website. The newsletter contains a lot of information about the upcoming fall and winter season pertaining to all of the Township departments. It was also mentioned that Fire Prevention Week is this week October 4-10 and Fire Marshall Pat DePaul will be hosting a Home Fire Safety Workshop at the library on Tuesday, October 20 from 7:00 PM—8:00 PM

4. Recreation Report (*J. Murphy*)

Throughout the month of September, Springfield Township offered weekly programs, including Martial Arts, Yoga, Soccer Shots, Adult & Senior Stretch, 3 golf programs including after school at the FF Country Club, Gymnastics, Track & Field, Adult & Youth Tennis Clinics, Chess, Basketball Clinics, and Lego Engineering. Our Rec Soccer League for ages 4-8 also started. A total of 292 kids registered for the league. In total for the month, 492 people participated in recreation programming.

5. Park Report (*J. Murphy*)

- **Bysher Park:** No Update
- **Connor James McKelvie Community Park:** Springfield Township Skateboard Association given approval by the Board of Commissioners to design a community skatepark within set parameters, meeting held to discuss design considerations
- **Henry R. Chiaramonte Park:** No Update
- **James A. Cisco Park:** Community Day, red stone beach replenished
- **James R. Fulginiti Park:** No Update
- **Laurel Beech Park:** No Update
- **Marlow Field:** No Update
- **Mermaid Park:** The Community Canopy Project plantings- 103 total planted (75 trees, 28 shrubs), likely one more planting event needed
- **Sandy Run Park:** No Update
- **Veterans Park:** No Update
- **Wyndhill Park:** No Update
- **Springfield Township Recreation Center A:** No Update
- **Springfield Township Recreation Center B:** No Update
- **Walnut Avenue Master Site Plan Committee:** No Update
- **Recreation Center Advisory Committee:** 90% Construction Document Submission on 9/30, review, last comments given, prepare for bidding and permitting

Two questions were posed during the Park Report. First, Brian Sokel asked if the recreation center project construction would affect use of Laurel Beech fields. The construction will not affect the fields, however, there will be the loss of the recreation center parking lot until completion of the project. The Laurel Beech parking lot along Mermaid Lane will be the only usable lot. It was suggested to contact Robertson Flowers regarding possible use of their lot during youth athletic games at the field.

The second question was from Bob McGrath regarding the possible reconvening of the Walnut Ave Committee now that abatement/demolition are close to starting with the first phase of construction following shortly after. This will be discussed among Township staff and update given at that November PRAC meeting

6. Old Business (All)

No old business was discussed

7. New Business (All)

Pennsylvania Environmental Council's Lawn to Meadow Project Proposal at Mermaid Park

Paul Racette and Becca Jarvis presented the Lawn to Meadow project on behalf of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC). The proposed meadow area is 0.3 acres located toward the middle of Mermaid Park. It would be funded by the DCNR C2P2 Lawn to Meadow grant that PEC received. Paul started by giving a brief synopsis on PEC, their history and what they do. Becca filled PRAC in on the specifics of the proposed project. She started by giving some details on why meadows are a necessary habitat including the ecological benefits, sustainability and educational opportunities. She then gave a summary of the meadow assessment administered by PEC in August 2026 which led to Mermaid Park being chosen as one of the sites for their DCNR grant. The area is visible from the trail network, receives adequate sunlight, and does not have any trees in the center of the plot. While the park has many ecozones for nearby wildlife to utilize, a meadow is a missing system. Next, the two-year timeline for the grant was established. If approved, year one (Spring 2027-Spring 2028) would include the removal of the lawn turf in the Spring of 2027 with the application of herbicide to suppress existing vegetation and spot-treatment of particularly noxious weeds. The site would be monitored throughout the year for treatment efficacy and additional spot treatments if necessary. In the Fall of 2027, the seed mix (site focused, native mix of annuals and perennials) would be broadcast. Year two (Spring 2028-Spring 2029) would consist of a summer 2028 and a late fall/winter mowing and spot spraying as needed. After that, ongoing maintenance responsibilities (periodic mowing and invasive plants removal) would be transferred to the Township.

The PRAC members and attending residents had several questions, comments and concerns regarding the proposed project which included yearly cost for ongoing maintenance post year two, potential disruption to the Cresheim Trail project, cost to educate Township staff and/or outside contractor on invasive species identification and removal, balancing the passive recreational space of the park, seed mix selection, possible redesign or decreasing of the size of the project, potential for herbicides to effect the new plantings from the Community Canopy Project (CCP), other plants in the park and the pond water. A few of these could be answered. First, the project would not affect the Cresheim Trail. The contractor PEC selected for the project was available via a Zoom call and was able to address the questions about herbicides. The herbicides used would be targeted for specific species, administered in low volume, become inactive once they hit the soil and weather is monitored prior to application to avoid high winds and rain. Pre-emergent herbicides may be chosen to prevent seed germination of invasive plants. The seed mix chosen would not be genetically modified, rather selected for natural resistance to the specific herbicides used and ability to thrive in the identified soil at the park. It was also asked if Fulginiti or Sandy Run parks were assessed for this grant. Fulginiti was and Sandy Run was not. Mermaid was selected, among other reasons, due to it being more public facing than Fulginiti. Becca Jarvis stated that potential future grants could help with ongoing maintenance costs and/or fund another meadow site in the Township park system. Lastly, it was suggested that a park-by-park assessment be finalized for the Township to have a vision of what each park should look like.

PRAC decided to table a vote while more information was compiled. Specifically, yearly cost to maintain the meadow after the grant, education to enhance the ability for either the Township staff or outside contractor to perform the necessary maintenance, comparison of the total acreage of the park to the new CCP plantings to the potential meadow project to assess amount of space available for passive recreation, and engagement of the community (via a letter to nearby residents and signage posted at the park) for further feedback/notification of the discussion about the project at the November PRAC.

Little Box of Kindness Proposal

Resident Sophia Willis presented her proposal for a “Little Box of Kindness”. This project will be used to help her achieve her Girl Scout Silver Award. It is a birdhouse-like structure similar to a Free Little Library with a similar model of lending and borrowing. Instead of books this lending library involves sensory toys such as pop-its, fidget spinners, stress balls, etc. With her project, she hopes to better support mental health struggles in the community, encourage teens to speak up when they need help and assist underserved or less fortunate members of the community who may not have access to these coping tools. Sophia has successfully implemented this project at The First Presbyterian Church in Flourtown.

All the necessary tools and supplies to construct and install the project have already been purchased or donated. As well as volunteers to help with the install and supply of coping tools to stock it. Sophia has also enlisted fellow Girl Scouts to help keep the project going in the future. Cisco Park near the playground is the preferred location. A few suggestions were given by PRAC members. First, considering the first iteration of the project was implemented indoors, to ensure a weather proofing seal is applied. Second, add a hand sanitizer bottle to the box and continue to restock it. Lastly, it was asked that Sophia return once the project is implemented to give the PRAC an update.

Adrienne Smythe made a motion to recommend the project to the Board of Commissioners. PRAC members voted unanimously in favor.

8. General Public Comment (*All*)

See “Pennsylvania Environmental Council’s Lawn to Meadow Project Proposal at Mermaid Park” for a summary of the public comment.

9. School District Report (*N. DiFranco*)

Neil DiFranco gave several updates on upcoming events/meetings:

Middle School Upgrades Unveiled on Friday 10/9/26.
Academic Affairs Committee on 10/14/26 at 4:00pm
Flu/Covid Shot Clinic at Enfield Elementary on 10/19/26 from 4:00pm-6:00pm
School Board Meeting on 10/20/26
Property Committee on 10/21/26 at 4:00pm (also available on Zoom)

10. Commissioners’ Report (*R. Goldberg*)

Chief Pitkow was tasked with investigating surrounding municipalities deer culling programs. The results of that investigation will be presented at the October 12, 2026, Board of Commissioners meeting.

11. Call for Adjournment (*All*)

- Next meeting: Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at 6:30 pm