

**SPECIAL MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**April 20, 2015  
DELRAN, NJ**

**SUNSHINE STATEMENT:** Be advised that proper notice has been given by the Township Council in accordance with the sunshine law in the following manner. Notice advertised in the Burlington County Times and Camden Courier Post on April 17, 2015 and posted on the bulletin board on the same date.

**ROLL CALL:** Mr. O'Connell, Ms. Pangia, Mr. Schwartz, Mrs. Kolodi and Mr. Catrambone were present.

**ALSO, PRESENT:** Mr. Paris, Mayor, Mr. Hatcher, Administrator, Ms. Eggers, Municipal Clerk and Mr. Winckowski, Township Engineer.

**DELRAN COMMUNITY PARK PRESENTATION**

Mr. Catrambone welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that the meeting will be very informal and is an opportunity for everyone in the community that is interested to see what is going on with Delran Community Park. Mr. Catrambone stated that the best way to do that is to learn the history of the park.

Mr. Paris provided a brief history on the acquisition of Delran Community Park that started back in 2004 when the Township passed the Open Space referendum. The land was acquired in 2007 for \$1,800,000. This facility was much needed in Delran. In 2011, an ordinance to fund phase 1 of the project was approved. In 2014, we created a partnership with Jake's Place for an all access playground. So far we have received \$594,950 in grants from Burlington County. We have also established a fundraising committee. Mr. Paris turned the meeting over to Mr. Catrambone to discuss the phases of the park.

Mr. Catrambone asked Mr. Winckowski, Township Engineer to join him for this part of the presentation. Mr. Catrambone stated that the Township intention was to create a core facility for all sports that would also connect to the High School and Notre Dame Park.

Mr. Winckowski discussed the Phase 1 improvements. They include the main infrastructure improvements and four baseball/softball fields. There is also parking for about 200 vehicles. We also had to build out all storm water management improvements, electrical improvements, irrigation and utility improvements for a future concession stand. The park is scheduled to open on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Catrambone stated that in Phase II we added lighting for the entrance, parking lot and one mid-size field based on the recommendation of the Delran AA.

Mr. Winckowski stated that we anticipate that the lighting will be completed by opening day.

Mr. Catrambone stated that Phase III improvements will include the concession facility. The Township is still working on the plan for the concession facility. Additional projects for the park would include the remainder of the sports lighting, bleachers and also Jake's

Place all access playground. The final phase of the project will include the multi-purpose field and trails. Mr. Catrambone stated that there has been a lot of discussion on why the project is taking so long. The reason that it is taking so long is because we are trying to do this with the least impact to taxes, whether it be through the Open Space Fund, through grants or fundraising. Mrs. Kolodi will discuss fundraising for the park and Ms. Pangia will serve as the liaison between the Township and Jake's Place as far as fundraising for the playground. Mr. Catrambone showed an aerial drone video

Mr. Catrambone invited Jake's Place to present the plans for Jake's Place Too.

Jim Cummings stated that they would like to show a ten minute video with an overview of everything that Jake's Place does currently in Camden County and to get an idea of how they will do something similar here in Delran. Mr. Cummings stated that he is one of the founding members of Jake's Place. Jake was his grandson and he was not able to pay on any playground. When they lost him in 2007, they decided they wanted to do something that he would have liked. They decided to build as many playgrounds as they possibly could as long as they could find communities to welcome them and help them. That is why we are here today. The Township has welcomed us and now we need the communities help. The playground in Cherry Hill was built only because the residents of Camden County realized that one out of every ten kids has some type of disability. Most of which you can't see. Every kid needs to play and at Jake's Place all the kids play together. If we are going to make Jake's Place happen in Delran we are going to need so much help. It is very expensive to build a playground of this type but it is so worth it. Many days there is not enough parking spaces to accommodate the people at the Cherry Hill Jake's Place. We need the support of the people of Delran. We want to talk to every school, service organization, Fire and Police Department. We are not going to build this without the help of the residents of Delran. Mr. Cummings stated that he hopes everyone here will take the time to look at the very preliminary concept plan for Jake's Place Delran which is South Jersey themed. If anyone here can think of any way that they want\ to help please come up after the meeting and give your name, address and e-mail so that we can keep you informed.

Arthur Aston stated that he is a resident of Delran and was hired in 2013 to be the Executive Director for Build Jake's Place. The thing about Jake's Place if the park is fully accessible. It is not astro turf it is a rubberized surface. It goes beyond the children playing. For someone like himself, who is in a wheelchair, he can now take his niece and nephew to the park. It serves a purpose that is much bigger than just children playing. We will be here tonight to take your names and addresses for anyone willing to help. Mr. Aston introduced Michael Wiley to go over preliminary drawing that they have for Jake's Place Too.

Mr. Wiley went over the design of Jake's Place Too. Mr. Wiley stated that it was Kate Cummings, Jake's mom that came up with the concept. What this playground does is bring communities together. This is a playground for children of all ages and abilities. He urged the resident to come up after the meeting and look at the design and also to visit Jake's Place in Cherry Hill. He would love to hear any suggestions.

Debra Gordon stated that she grew up in Cinnaminson and has been blessed to be a part of Jake's Place for about five years. She stated that everyone sitting here tonight is probably sitting here like she was over five years ago thinking what can they do to help. Jake's Place will be having a wing night at Whistler's in Cinnaminson. They are having a 5K Run/Walk in the fall. They are also looking to have a designer bag bingo in December. There are plenty of events to include everyone. It will not be some big company that builds this park, it will be the residents of Delran. If anyone has any questions about any event they are all listed at [buildjakesplace.org](http://buildjakesplace.org).

Mr. Catrambone stated that finally they would like to talk about the sponsorships that are available. Mrs. Kolodi along with the Delran AA and the Delran Business Association has put together a sponsorship form. We have everything from Titanium sponsorship down to individuals that may want to purchase a block for the concession stand.

Mrs. Kolodi stated that in conjunction with the Delran Business Association, we would like to share our vision of Delran Community Park with the businesses. Mrs. Kolodi stated that she met with Bob Kennedy of the Delran AA to go over the things that we need for the opening of the park. They include items like scoreboards, dugout covers, bleachers and batting cages. We would like to get the Community involved along with the businesses. All of this is very tentative, we are open to any and all suggestions. We would also like everyone in the community to be able to donate any donation of their choice. The vision of the park is beautiful but it does take a long time. What we want to do is start the fundraising as soon as possible. If there is anyone in the community owns a business or know someone that may want to contribute please reach out to them.

Mr. Catrambone stated that we are trying to do this with the least impact of taxes as possible. The fundraising and grants we received will determine how fast the complex is completed. Mr. Catrambone asked if anyone on Council has anything to add.

Ms. Pangia stated that she is working with Jake's Place and on table there are four clip boards with upcoming events. If anyone is interested they can sign up. Trunk-or-Treat donation will also support Jake's Place again this year.

## **PUBLIC PORTION**

Mr. O'Connell made a motion to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Mrs. Kolodi. All were in favor, motion approved.

Bill Curzie, Haines Mill Road, questioned what the significance of the Too.

Mr. Cummings stated that there is the original Jake's Place and this will be Jake's Place Too.

Bob Gilbert, 75 Stewart Avenue, asked if Jake's Place and the Delran Community Park are two separate entities as far as fundraising.

Mr. Catrambone stated that it is an interesting partnership. Whatever money is raised from Jake's Place fundraising will go to help build Jake's Place Too. Whatever money is

raised from fundraising for the Delran Community Park will go to the improvements at the park. All the money raised will stay in Delran.

Mr. Gilbert stated that Thursday, someone from Congressman MacArthur's office was down by the river and then on Friday, someone from the Governor's Office was there. He just wanted Council to be aware of this.

Mr. Paris stated that a resident reached out to the Congressman and asked him to come out to discuss the situation. Basically, we are just trying to continue to get something done. As far as the Governor's Office, there is a new liaison that visited the river along with the Engineer. They also toured other areas like Route 130 and Hartford Road. We also talked to her about Delran Community Park.

Tom Tartaglia, 58 Springcross Drive, asked when the park will be open.

Mr. Catrambone stated that it is scheduled for May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Tartaglia stated that the Delran AA Baseball and Softball have tournaments. The Softball tournament on May 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> and the Baseball Slugfest on Memorial Day weekend make quite a bit of money and they can use that money to purchase equipment to maintain the fields. He asked why the park cannot be open for those events.

Mr. Catrambone stated that Council did not randomly select that date. That date is based upon a number of factors from the Engineer.

Mr. Winckowski stated that we need to finish this growing season.

Mr. Tartaglia stated that two weeks early is not going to make a difference.

Mr. Paris stated that damage to the field could cost the Township more than they will make. We would love to be able to open the fields.

Mr. Tartaglia stated that the money raised from the tournaments are going back into the maintenance of the fields.

Mr. Catrambone stated that it is understandable. It will not look good if the fields get torn up because we opened them two weeks early.

Mr. Tartaglia stated that it is thousands of dollars that we could make. We are very appreciative of the work that Council did at Leon Avenue but the volunteers spend numerous hours maintaining the field.

Mr. Paris stated that the President of Delran AA has attended every meeting and we are just at the point that we have to wait.

Shawn McLoughlin, 27 Cranberry Lane, stated that first he wants to say that is a phenomenal investment in Delran. Everyone will benefit from this. He stated that he is from the Delran Soccer Club which represents hundreds of kids along with the Delran AA. The investment in parks and recreation has not been a high priority in his opinion. The entire program is using Vermes Field in the spring because other fields are closed. The

field at Conrow Park has received no improvements and is very dangerous to play on. He feels it is very important to continue the investment in the parks. It is very disappointing to see that the soccer field at Delran Community Park may be years away. If Council is concerned about raising taxes for senior citizens maybe we can ask the residents of Delran through a vote if they would be willing to raise taxes to fund the completion of the park.

Mr. Paris stated that it is not only the senior citizens that we are concerned about. There are resident down by the river that have major flooding concerns. We have dedicated a lot of funding to Delran Community Park. Everything is a balancing act.

Mr. McLoughlin stated that he understands but at some point he feels you bring it to the people and have them have a say.

Mr. Reismann asked if there was an original projection date as to when the park would be completed.

Mr. Catrambone stated that he is not sure there was a projection date. We had hoped to move it along faster but we had some obstacles with grants and bad winters.

Mr. Reismann stated that he works outside for a living and understands the issues but we had our best year last year as far as weather. Mr. Reismann asked if there was a start stop penalty assessed to the contractor for failure to complete the project by the time allotted.

Mr. Winckowski stated that there are liquidated damages built into the contract. Right now we are trying to get this phase of the contract completed and then we will work with the Solicitor to discuss damages.

Mr. Catrambone stated that we really can't discuss the issue any further.

Mr. Reismann stated that it just seems that projects get started and not finished. The monies seem to always run out. He does not understand how you run out of concrete on a sidewalk project.

Mr. Catrambone stated that we received a grant for the sidewalks along Fairview Street through the Safe Streets to Transit Program. The County changed the requirements on the project and we have had to widen the sidewalks and move the curb back in order to meet the standards. That shortened the scope of the project. It shortened the project by one block and we have subsequently funded the remainder and it has been completed.

Mr. Reisman stated that at the concession stands they could have coin drops for Jake's Place. Also as far as the grants, there are not a lot of people supporting the projects because there is serious mistrust as to how this project went down. He feels that the Township needs to be more open about the project and he feels tonight that the ball was dropped on tonight's meeting by having it the same night as the Board of Education meeting. There are rumors going around that the first round of grant money was mishandled and we did not receive the full funding.

Mr. Paris stated that when received the first grant the first phase needed to be completed and the County indicated that we would not receive the next round because we had not finished the first phase. There was no mishandling of funds.

Mr. Reismann stated that it was not mishandling it was that a grant was rescinded because we had not started on time.

Mr. Catrambone stated that a grant was not rescinded, we just did not receive funding in year two of the grant.

Mr. Reismann asked what Council could have done better to get the second grant.

Mr. Hatcher stated that he attended all of the meetings with the County and when we submitted the first grant we explained to the County that this was a large project that we were just beginning. Originally not having the first phase completed did not pose a problem with receiving additional grants. Unfortunately, in the second year of the grant they had less money to give out then they had towns that had submitted. They put in procedures and since we had not completed the first phase we would not receive an additional grant. Most towns were submitting much smaller projects that could be completely finished. We explained to the County that this would multi-year protect and they had indicated that the funding should be there but it was never a guarantee. There was no way the first phase could have been completed in one year.

Mr. Reismann stated asked if there are utilities in place for the concession stand.

Mr. Winckowski stated that the sewer and electric is in place. We will be using the well for water. There is still some utility extension work that will need to be completed.

Mara Wuebker, 181 Forge Road, stated that she wanted to speak because she is surprised by the negativity. She is thinks it is really exciting that the Township took the initiative to acquire the land and pursue grants. She is sure that there would be a lot of people that would have come out to support the project. She stated that if she could help out Jake's Place in any way she would love to.

Kevin Meldrum, 105 Arch Street, stated the Engineer stated that there were liquidated damages from the project.

Mr. Winckowski stated that liquidated damages are built into the contract if the contractor fails to meet requirements. We will need to discuss this further with the Township Solicitor.

Mr. Meldrum asked if there were any damages charged to the contract. We are talking several years since this project has started. He asked if there was a date set for the contractor to have the fields up and running.

Mr. Winckowski stated that there was and he exceeded the timing.

Mr. Meldrum asked what the date set for the contractor to be completed.

Mr. Winckowski stated that the date was last year sometime but there were delays in the project.

Mr. Meldrum asked what those delays were.

Mr. Winckowski stated that there was an issue with PSE&G and there was an issue with the fill. The contractor delayed getting the fill needed.

Mr. Meldrum stated that he does not understand why we still don't know about liquidation damages a year after the contractor was to be completed. He has never heard of a contractor having a year extension without liquidated damages being charged. He does not know why the contractor has not been held accountable. Mr. Meldrum asked what the liquidated damage charges are.

Mr. Winckowski stated that the damages are set at \$500 per day. We have to discuss this with the Township Solicitor.

Mr. Catrambone stated that he has to stop the conversation because we are talking about potential litigation and contract issues.

Mr. O'Connell made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mrs. Kolodi. All were in favor, the motion was approved.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Pangia to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor, the meeting adjourned.

Submitted,

Jamey Eggers  
Municipal Clerk