

Meeting Minutes: Chickies Creek Day Use Area Master Site Development Plan Study Committee Meeting #1

Date:	January 25, 2021
Time:	6:30 PM
Location:	East Donegal Township Municipal Building
By:	Ann Yost, RLA
Project No.:	20EDT-01

Persons Attending: Jeffery Butler, EDT Manager
Cory Sine, Chairman, EDT Park Commission
Scott Kingsboro, Secretary, EDT Park Commission
James Gerlach (online), EDT Park Commission
Nickolas Ebersole, EDT Park Commission
Paul Weiss, Lancaster Co. Parks and Recreation Department
Bryce Sadler (online), Donegal School District
Skip Nell, Maytown Historical Society
Brandon Crouser, Donegal Fish and Conservation Association
Alan Kaylor (via email), EDT Park Commission
Ann Yost, YSM
Chuck Strodoski, YSM

Purpose of Meeting: To kick-off the project and explore the committee's goals and ideas for Chickies Creek Day Use Area.

Of Record:

1. Everyone introduced themselves.
2. A. Yost provided a brief overview of the planning process for the Chickies Creek Day Use Area Master Site Development Plan. The planning process will span approximately 12 months and include six study committee meetings, three public meeting, and key person interviews.
3. A. Yost led a discussion of project goals. Discussion items included:

Who are the current park users?

- Families

- Young families
- Dog walkers
- People using the pavilion
- Mothers with children
- Donegal High School cross country team uses park for training
- PA Fish & Boat Commission uses barn for boat storage
- Anglers don't use site to fish

What are the ideas and opportunities for the park?

- Area for dogs, could be an off-leash dog park
- Provide dogs access to the creek for swimming
- Disc golf
- Improve fishing opportunities, ADA fishing access
- Link to the Northwest River Trail
- Small area of agricultural field is farmed, no income generated. Area could be overflow parking for park activities.
- Second pavilion
- Kayak launch and landing
- Archery course
- Keep as is for passive enjoyment of setting
- Shorter loop trail for seniors
- Dark sky area
- Restrooms at Ranger Station
- Scattered picnic tables for informal picnics
- Outdoor environmental education opportunities
- Lawn games
- Play equipment for special needs children
- Benches, grills, and other amenities
- The park could be a walking destination for seniors and others who do not like the crowds and bicycle speeds on the Lancaster County Northwest River Trail.

What are the issues and concerns associated with the park?

- Buildings – what is the best future use?

- Access and parking. Drive is steep and traverses farmstead/building area. Existing parking is not defined.
 - Access from Route 441, limited sight distance and heavy traffic to the south. Would right turn onto Route 441 from Long Lane make sense?
 - Water is available, however water extension to site is private and is deteriorating. Water line runs under the creek. Will likely need to drill a well in the future.
 - Restrooms are served by an on-lot septic field. Condition is unknown.
 - Flooding of Chickies Creek – does not reach the house. Donegal Creek does not significantly flood within park.
 - Vehicles drive on grass
 - There have been a few break-ins into the house
 - Vehicles driving loop road in park make dust in picnic pavilion
 - The site is isolated with access issues and not compatible with special events.
 - Invasive species, bamboo taking over wooded area, English ivy tearing down trees
4. Attendees were asked – If you returned to the park after 10 years, what is the one thing you would like to see improved?
- More natural area in woodlands and removal of invasive species
 - Unchanged, kept passive, retain natural character
 - House is restored and is used
 - Use the ranger station, pave trails, and develop a stable kayak launch
 - More trails, mark trails and identify on a map, extend trails across Long Lane
 - Provide access to the water, buildings renovated
 - Partner with GEARS for programs in the park
5. The following contacts were suggested for key person interviews:
- GEARS
 - Donegal High School, earth science teacher
 - Lancaster Preservation Trust, Mike Cassidy
 - Donegal Trout Unlimited
 - Rivertowns U.S.A.
 - Lancaster Conservancy, Brandon Tennis
 - Boy Scout Troup 53, Maytown
 - Jim Landis - historian
6. Additional general information regarding the park site and master plan considerations include:
- The stream banks are severely incised and eroded, limited current interaction with the stream

- There is currently no use of the house. The house has been vacant since 1992. Windows have been replaced as necessary and minor improvements to make water-tight. Kitchen is removed.
 - Property use to be a campgrounds
 - There are currently no programmed activities occurring at the park. EDT Park Commission has discussed potential programs as well as teaming with GEARS to provide.
 - Avoid making the park into a parking lot for activities associated with the Lancaster County Northwest River Trail or other nearby parks.
 - Consider changing the park name. “Day Use Area” is leftover from the designated use when part of the County park.
 - Paul Weiss noted that there are no former studies of the park and no mapping.
 - When flooding occurs along Chickies Creek, the house and barn do not flood.
 - The Girl Scout Trail is popular with walkers.
 - The park is a popular area where visitors bring dogs, and some allow dogs to run off-leash.
 - The pavilion is often reserved.
 - When kayaking Chickies Creek it would be good to have a landing to stop prior to going under the Route 441 bridge. The creek west of the bridge is rocky. Existing steep banks are an issue.
 - The playground equipment is relatively new, installed by East Donegal Township.
 - The house and buildings are not on the Historic Register or in a Historic District, but Lancaster Preservation Trust has listed the structures as high priority for preservation.
 - The house is believed to be haunted.
 - There are neighbors that watch the park and report issues.
 - Consider environmental based non-profits such as Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Donegal Trout Unlimited and other potential users for the house.
 - There are no easements on the property.
7. The project schedule was discussed. The next meeting will be pushed until March to allow for better weather to complete the site analysis.
 8. Please provide changes or corrections to these meeting minutes to chucks@ysmla.com at YSM within one week of receipt.