

Department of Community Development  
Engineering Office

Nicole S. Shapiro, PE, PP, CME  
Director of Community Development  
& Township Engineer



Parminder Sumal, PE, PP, CME  
Assistant Engineer

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**MEMORANDUM OF MEETING**

**TO:** Meeting Attendees

**FROM:** Nicole S. Shapiro, PE, PP, CME  
Director of Community Development  
Township Engineer

**DATE:** November 6, 2018

**SUBJECT:** **Proposed Cottrell Farm Park**

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**PURPOSE**

**OF MEETING:** Public Information Meeting

**DATE, TIME & PLACE:** Friday, October 26, 2018 @ 7:00pm  
Old Bridge Township  
One Old Bridge Plaza, Courtroom

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Attendance Sheet Attached

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**ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:**

1. Mayor Owen Henry began the meeting by reviewing the history of the property beginning with the current zoning as Towne Center District (TCD). This property received approval for high density residential development as what is permitted in the TCD zone. The prior administration didn't agree the intensity of the development for this location received funds from different entities to preserve the property as open space. The County is the underlying owners with the Township having the stewardship over the property. The Township has gone through several iterations of conceptual plans. The Mayor fully supports the current concept plan and looks forward to given back to the residents of Old Bridge.
2. Nicole Shapiro, Director of Community Development & Township Engineer, continued the meeting by giving a timeline of the project history, as follows:
  - Cottrell Farm was acquired using funding from Middlesex County, NJDEP Green Acres, & Old Bridge Township Open Space Trust Fund
  - Middlesex County (60%) and Old Bridge Township (40%) jointly acquired Cottrell Farm on March 31, 2011
  - In 2015, Middlesex County retained an LSRP to prepare a Preliminary Assessment and Site Investigation Report, Remedial Investigation, Remedial Action Report and Response Action Outcome

- In 2016, Middlesex County retained an Architect to perform a conditions assessment on all existing building.
  - In April 2017, Old Bridge Township entered into a Conservation Management Agreement with Middlesex County for the maintenance, security, preservation and improvements
  - In Summer 2017, Conceptual Plan and Presentation prepared and presented to the County, Council & Planning Board
  - In Spring 2018, RFP prepared and Design Consultants awarded project
3. Steering Committee was developed in the summer of 2018. Members of the steering committee included Mayor, Business Administrator, Council President, NJDEP Green Acres, remember Green Acres needs to approve anything the Township does since the property was acquired by Green Acres funds, County Engineer & Assistant, Planner, DPW Director, Recreation Director, Police, Fire Marshal, OEM, CCO, Conservation Officer, Planning Board, Historical Society, and Grant Writer. First Meeting was held on July 26, 2018 to present Concept A which refined the original concept plan prepared by the Township professionals. The second steering committee meeting was held on October 17, 2018 which reviewed a further refined plan, called Concept Plan B that addressed Steering Committee member comments.
4. Between the two Steering committee Meetings Township Professionals and our consultants refined the park improvements based on the following:
- Preliminary Meeting with Middlesex County Planning and Engineering Department
  - Meeting with OBMUA and Conservation Officer/Forrester and Shade Tree Commission member
  - Coordination with Office of Emergency Management and Fire Marshal and Construction Code Official
  - Compiled and addressed Steering Committee Comments
  - Investigation of Funding Opportunities with Middlesex County and State
  - Internal Design Meetings and Conceptual Design Refinement
5. Ruben Garrido, Manager of EI Associates Architectural Department, continued the meeting by reviewing the existing buildings and the proposed improvements to the existing buildings to meet ADA compliant and update the buildings for public use, as follows:
- The Cottrell Farm House (Main House - 3,469 SF) - Four Seasons Meeting Hall, Lecture Hall, Warming Kitchen, and Administrative Offices. 49 person occupancy 1st floor (meeting areas), 29 person Occupancy 2nd Floor (office space). The house will maintained as is, walls painted, windows re-glazed, molding sanded, repaired and painted, flooring refinished and upgrades for ADA compliance.
  - The Barn (Barn - 1,375 SF) - Three Seasons Large event space with option for a Mezzanine. Code compliant stair and mezzanine railing require. Refinishing of the interior wood working.
  - The Stone Garage (Stone Garage - 947 SF) - Three Seasons Events space. Refinishing of the interior wood working and sanding and staining of garage doors.

- The Shop Building (CMU Garage - 1,890 SF) - Three Seasons Medium size events space, Community/Meeting Room(s). Overflow space for large events in conjunction with large events in the Barn. The CMU Garage to be used as Office/ Community Room(s) and will be designed with mechanicals to support four seasons. The restroom will be rehabilitated within the building to update all existing features and the room redesigned to provide internal ADA ramp since the bathroom floor is 8 inches higher than the garage floor. The door on the east side of building will be removed and front windows replaced with doors and both garage doors will be replaced to provide for insulation. Two concepts were prepared for the internal wall within this garage:
    - i. Demolition of the existing internal wall & the addition of a folding partition wall for use as two separate spaces when required, and;
    - ii. Maintain and repair the existing wall and provide an updated internal door.
  - The Pool Cottage (Rear Garage - 720 SF) - Two Seasons. Storage Building and designed for two seasons since there is no storage on site. Refurbish the building, replace doors and add a slop sink. Since now the pool cottage will not be restored to be used as a restroom,
  - A rustic designed prefabricated restroom building will be selected and located more central to the park features.
6. Mr. Garrido continued the meeting by reviewing each building and internal proposed layout and recommendations of each. In addition he reviewed a proposed exterior rendering of what the CMU garage would look like with the features as he identified above.
7. Old Bridge Township Engineering/Landscape Architect Consultants, French and Parrello Associates, PA, (FPA) Michael Piga continued the meeting by reviewing the revised Concept Plan, as follows:
- The intention of the park design is to keep the theme of the farm.
  - Access driveway entrance A is from CR516, a formal grand entrance with a roundabout to allow access to the east and west side of the park, and secondary access driveway B is from Cottrell Road, both County roads.
  - The parking areas were divided throughout the park to give visitors easy access to all the amenities in addition to not have patrons who are attending an event at the barn compete for spaces for those who want to use the waking trails, great lawn, splash pad and other amenities.
  - The area on the northwest corner of the park proposed for farmers market or overflow parking, a community gardens located just east of the farmers market for community groups, residents and senior citizens and a memorial garden just east of the community gardens to plant trees in memory of a loved one that past.
  - Main walkway parallel to CR516 which offers an east/west connection through the park that can be constructed as a memorial walk with bricks that can be etched in memory of a loved one that past.
  - Within the center of the park are a splash pad and playground with perimeter seating and a prefabricated restroom building located between the two play areas.

- At the east side of the park is the great lawn with a park pavilion and amphitheater
  - Apple orchards will be preserved but have a 100 foot buffer from the activities on site to ensure that the maintenance of the trees will not co-mingle with the visitors of the park. Walking paths are proposed to meander through the apple orchards.
  - Increase landscaping throughout the park, raingardens and swales to take care of stormwater management and provide for low impact design.
  - Town Center District Standards will be implemented for streetscape along CR516 & Cottrell Road and altered to reduced removal of trees.
  - Emergency access, 10 feet wide, for ambulances & police from Bradford Drive (Old Bridge Mews) using load bearing decorative pavers.
  - Grand plaza paver area located in front of the buildings to connect the area.
  - Sample photos of proposed site features such as site identification signs for historical buildings, heritage trees and nature walk were shown. In addition samples of rustic park pavilion and prefabricated restrooms were shown. Lastly an example of a farm themed playground was presented.
8. Ms. Shapiro continued the meeting by identifying the next steps.
- Compile and implement Public Information Comments, if applicable. Written comments due by November 9, 2018.
  - Pursue additional means of funding as this project will be implemented over the next 5 years, at a minimum, depending on funding.
  - Determine Project Cost Estimate and Phasing
  - Prepare Phased contract plans and specifications
  - Phase I Public Bid and Award
  - Phase I Construction Spring 2019

## **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

1. One resident was concerned with the emergency access from Bradford Drive, specifically people meandering out of the park and through the Old Bridge Mews neighborhood. Ms. Shapiro explained that it is part of the walking path that would give residents of Old Bridge Mews and opportunity to access the park without driving and parking on site. Two residents of Old Bridge Mews spoke out that they were receptive to the connection to their community.
2. Has there been a traffic study completed for the project and does the design consider safety since there is the municipal complex across the street? A traffic study done for this project. We use existing parks as traffic models to estimate trip generation and parking demand for the park. It should be noted that this is a less intensive park then Mannino and Geick both with sports fields and one with a YMCA. People would have to cross the street at the traffic light at the intersection of CR516 and Cottrell Road.
3. Would there be a perimeter fence? If so, the residents prefer that it not be chain link fence. Ms. Shapiro yes, most likely wooden split rail around the perimeter.

4. Resident concerned with drug use and safety within the park. Ms. Shapiro stated that the Township has entered into a management agreement with the County where the Township is responsible for the maintenance and security on site. The Township will have personnel dedicated to maintaining and monitoring the park to ensure safety and maintain our investment.
5. Will the park have security cameras? The Township has begun a security system upgrade plan. This park will be included in the future but will not be implemented as part of the current plan since it's not built yet.
6. One resident was concerned with how big the large parking lot is along Cottrell Road and requested that it be shifted to the east side of the great lawn. Ms. Shapiro stated that one of the intentions of the large parking lot was to assist with Old Bridge Day with use as additional parking or a location for vendors. Another reason was to have parking for events at the buildings. In addition when the Licensed Site Remedial Professional had tested the soil in this area it was recommended to cap the area with the parking lot and it was a recommendation by the County to place the parking lot in this area. Lastly the entire park drains towards the intersection. This makes it easier to have the parking lot drain to the stormwater basin while limiting costly underground structures.
7. Resident concerned with vehicles traveling from CR516 westbound entering the grand entrance as there are vehicle stacking that occurs at the signalized intersection. Ms. Shapiro responded that the developer that has been approved to build a commercial development at the southeast corner of Cottrell Road and CR516 must put in a dedicated left turn lane which will require widening 4 feet along CR516 westbound side for the entire length of the Cottrell Farm property. The widening will allow cars to enter the park if there is a que from the signalized intersection.
8. Will the sidewalk be extended on Cottrell Road north to Old Bridge Plaza? Ms. Shapiro stated that due to the environmental constraints in the northwest corner of the park the sidewalk will terminate at the old farm path.
9. What kind of lights will be on the walking path through the park? Ms. Shapiro stated that the colonial style decorative lights similar to that newly installed on Cottrell Road and CR516 will be implemented through the park. They will not run all night and will be on a sensor. They will be at least approximately 100 feet away from the residents on Portsmouth Drive. The street lighting within Old Bridge Mews would be closer that the park lights, approximately 15 feet from the front of the homes.
10. Can you rent out the building for events? Ms. Shapiro stated that the intention is to do so but all the money generated would have to go back into the park and we must follow NJDEP Green Acres program rules.
11. Can you bring a caterer to operate out of the farm house? Ms. Shapiro stated that the upgrades to the farm house kitchen will only allow it to be used as a "warming" kitchen. Renovations to the kitchen will include new appliance, sink, counter tops and re-facing the kitchen cabinets.

12. In the future can you continue to develop more into the apple orchards? Ms. Shapiro stated that the intention is to keep the apple orchards and not go any further that what is being proposed.
13. Will there be a dedicated right turn lane from Cottrell Road due to the high volume of cars that turn left onto Cottrell Road from CR516? Ms. Shapiro said that there will not be a stacking issue since it is a free movement and the driveway entrance is almost twice the required distance from the intersection as that which is required by ordinance. Therefore a dedicated right turn lane is not required.
14. Would property taxes increase due to the proposed Cottrell Farm Park? Ms. Shapiro stated that she has worked for the town for the past five years under this Mayor and Administration and from what she has witness, although the town is permitted to go as high as a 2% increase in taxes, any tax increase she has seen has been less than one percent, if anything.
15. Resident requested that we repost the concept plan with dimensions of the great lawn, playground, splash pad, and from the residential development to the walking paths. Ms. Shapiro stated that the consultant will revise the plans and she will repost online.
16. Mr. John Hauser, former farmer on the Cottrell Farm had taken care of the orchards buildings and grounds for over 30 years. He worked with the builder who bought the property from the Cottrell Family to preserve the orchards and later with the County to preserve the farmland. The prior Mayor Jim Phillips was responsible for purchasing the farm from the developer and preserving it as open space. This is the oldest working farm and the building is the oldest within town. Original house is over 250 years old before the fire. Mr. Hauser began a student farming program in which he provided the busing for students and taught them the principles of farming. They grew crops for two years and provided food for the food bank before he was asked to stop. He didn't envision a park for this property but rather a pick your own apple orchard for a fee, a farmers market in the red barn that he would run and a bed and breakfast for the farm house.
17. Mr. Hauser doesn't like the splash pad or playground at the farm and would rather see it at the YMCA. He does not think residents will use walking paths. With the walking trails he cannot take care of the orchards in the future.
18. A resident had questioned who would take care of the orchard in the future? Ms. Shapiro stated that it's too early to know for sure at this point but it can be turned over to park and recreation or DPW Staff with the proper training. Councilwoman Greenberg-Belli stated that Rutgers college extension program might be interested in dedicating students to coming to preserve the orchards free of charged.
19. Why do you think the splash pad is appropriate in this location? What will the splash pad look like and how big? Ms. Shapiro mentioned that the residents need something more centrally located in town and on this side of town. Mannino Park already has a playground and the YMCA. She did not have dimensions on the splash pad but will provide an update of the Concept Plan on the project website. The intent is to make the splash pad very passive and fit within the theme of the park.

20. How big is the playground? What will it look like? Ms. Shapiro stated that the playground will be farm themed as shown on slide 19 of the presentation and small. Exact dimensions will be shown on the plans and updated on the project website.

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. A Public Input due on Friday November 9, 2018 to [nshapiro@oldbridge.com](mailto:nshapiro@oldbridge.com)
2. Ms. Shapiro to forward intersection improvements to the County.
3. Once Phase I construction is confirmed preparation of contract plans and specifications will begin. Phase I Public Bid and Award is anticipated in Spring 2019 with construction in Spring 2019/Summer 2019.
4. Project information, presentation, concept plan, minutes of all meetings can be found on the Township website at [www.oldbridge.com/projects](http://www.oldbridge.com/projects).

We believe the foregoing record to be an accurate summary of the discussion and related decisions. We would appreciate notification of exceptions or corrections to these Minutes within five (5) working days of receipt. Without notification, we will consider these Minutes to be a record of fact.

Respectfully Submitted,



Nicole S. Shapiro, PE, PP, CME  
Director of Community Development  
& Township Engineer