



**TOWN OF BERLIN
BERLIN FALLS PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, March 8, 2018 6pm**

**Berlin Town Hall – Council Chambers
10 William Street
Berlin, MD 21811**

Agenda

1. Approval of minutes—January 25, 2018 Meeting
2. Brainstorming with EDSA/Review of Concept Plans
3. Confirm Themes for Park Discussed at January Meeting
4. Calendar: Meetings on third Thursday, except August and December

January 25, 2018

Berlin Falls Park Advisory Committee

7:00pm

Council Chambers, Berlin Town Hall

Present: Committee Members Barra, Field, Fitzgerald, Gaddis, Hyder, Orris, Patton and Councilmembers Purnell and Tyndall

Absent: Nichols

Also: Town Administrator Allen, Project Coordinator Deutsch

The Committee chose Ms. Amy Field as Chair and Mr. Jack Orris as Vice-Chair.

Mr. Roger Fitzgerald moved for approval of the minutes of the November 16, 2017 Committee Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bruce Hyder, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

The tour of the park property by the Committee, which was originally scheduled for January 6, 2018, and was postponed due to severe weather, has been rescheduled for Sunday, February 11, 2018 at 1:00pm. The Committee selected Thursday, March 8, 2018 at 6pm at Town Hall for its next month.

A map of the property contained in the Berlin Falls Park Interpretive Plan prepared by Conservation Community Consulting, LLC (CCC) was provided to each Committee member.

Town Administrator Allen introduced Steve Farr, the Watershed Manager for the Coastal Bays Program. His agency has awarded the Town a \$5,000 grant for the interpretive signage recommended in the CCC report. Ms. Maloof suggested the proposed sign locations be staked so Committee members could better understand the signage implementation plan. Mr. Orris suggested Braille script on the signs to enhance the park experience for visually impaired persons. Mr. Fitzgerald recommended the various buildings on the property be marked with

identifier tags so Committee members and others would better understand what the existing structures are on the Park.

The Committee discussed focusing on the Interpretive Plan for its preliminary goals. Mr. Fitzgerald urged that the recommended turtle basking platforms be installed in an early phase.

Ms. Maloof raised concern about property adjoining the park on the west side which is listed for sale. Marketing brochures list apartments and/or self-storage facilities as potential uses. Mr. Purnell mentioned that wetlands in the area would preclude any building near the Town property.

Mr. Orris asked about the Trails and Rails project. Town Administrator Allen introduced Planning Director Dave Engelhart who provided an overview of the Trails and Rails project, which will traverse the Town from US50 south to Evans Lane. A site plan for the trail will be provided to the Committee. Town Administrator Allen mentioned the goal of multi-modal access for BFP, including use of the trail, the possibility of trolley service, and other transportation options. Councilmember Tyndall recommended checking with Shore Transit regarding bus service to the site.

Ms. Maloof suggested the Committee engage in more brainstorming about the potential for BFP. Councilmember Tyndall said some form of a suggestion box should be available.

Town Administrator Allen mentioned a goal of having a revenue producing element at BFP to offset capital and operating costs. There was a reference to the Freeman Stage in Delaware, and an interest in examining the non-profit business model which has significant volunteer support.

Chair Field stated the Mayor and Council Resolution establishing the Committee should be a guide for the Committee's work. She said the review framework for ideas for BFP should be "is it Berlin enough"? She suggested the notion of a place that is "artsy", welcoming, fun, "cool", and green. The notion of inclusivity was mentioned, noting the need to be accessible to residents who live east of US113.

Ms. Barra said that people do not know about the Park, and she suggested an awareness campaign, including taking to one local resident to BFP, and telling three others about it.

There was brief discussion about renaming the Park. Ms. Patton suggested “Mary Humphries Park” to honor a well-known local philanthropist. Mr. Fitzgerald said a designation as “Berlin Nature Park” or a similar title would give visitors a better idea of what the property is all about. Councilmember Tyndall moved to create a subcommittee of the Chair, the Vice-Chair and himself to examine potential names, including using the Naval Research Center at Salisbury University as a resource. He withdrew the motion, as there was consensus to hold off on the naming issue until the Committee is deeper into its work.

Mr. Orris asked if the Committee could get a “blank” black and white map of the Park so that members could draw their own preferences. Town Administrator Allen suggested the Committee examine the Concept Plans developed by consultants for the Town.

There was a brief discussion about a possible YMCA on the site. Mr. Deutsch mentioned visits to YMCAs in Easton, Pocomoke and Salisbury. Ms. Allen also mentioned visiting the County indoor recreation facility in Snow Hill. Ms. Patton suggested a list of potential partners should be prepared.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.