

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, April 2, 2025
6:00 PM (Approximately)**

Chairperson: Gilda Kramer
Vice Chairperson: Maggie Harper Epstein, Sean Whalen

AGENDA

1. **FOR DISCUSSION ONLY - CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS FOR DOGS IN TOWNSHIP PARKS**
2. **WAIVER OF ENFORCEMENT OF TOWNSHIP CODE 111-4.2 REGULATING OPEN CONTAINERS FOR THE BRYN MAWR TWILIGHT CONCERTS HOSTED BY LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP AND RISING SUN PRESENTS AT THE BRYN MAWR GAZEBO, 9 S. BRYN MAWR AVENUE BRYN MAWR**
3. **NAMING THE TRAIL IN GULLEY RUN PARK IN HONOR OF BILL SWYER**
4. **RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZATION OF A DCNR GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE ACCESSIBLE TRAIL LINK FROM THE CYNWYD HERITAGE TRAIL TO THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN TUNNEL**
5. **RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZATION OF A DCNR GRANT APPLICATION TO PARTIALLY FUND IMPROVEMENTS ALONG RIGHTERS FERRY ROAD**
6. **RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZATION OF A DCED GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE ACCESSIBLE TRAIL LINK FROM THE CYNWYD HERITAGE TRAIL TO THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN TUNNEL**



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: FOR DISCUSSION ONLY - CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS FOR DOGS IN TOWNSHIP PARKS

The Committee will discuss pilot programs for possible amendments to Chapter 109-13 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, entitled Bringing animals into parks, to align the Code with Pennsylvania Dog Laws.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
❏ Issue Brief	Issue Briefing
❏ Chapter 109-13 Bringing Animals Into Parks	Ordinance

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Parks & Recreation Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Consideration of Options for Dogs being permitted in Township Parks.

Prepared By: Donna Heller, Director of Parks & Recreation

Date: March 28, 2025

- I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:** Discussion of pilot programs for possible ordinance amendments to Chapter 109-13 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, entitled Bringing animals into parks, to align the Code with Pennsylvania Dog Laws.
- II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:** The Board of Commissioners must approve pilot programs as well as ordinance amendments.
- III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):** Current Ordinance prohibits any person from bringing any animal other than service dogs into a park or playground with some exceptions where dogs are permitted on-leash.
- IV. Other Relevant Background Information:** This discussion is not regarding the current Off-Leash Dog program. Staff will continue to seek additional areas to expand the permitting of off-leash dogs.

There are no records as to the parameters for the establishment of the current bringing animals into parks ordinance. Based on the Parks and the description of the areas where dogs are permitted on-leash, one can conclude that these areas are passive parks/areas, nearly exclusively without playing fields, courts or playgrounds. (Township Ordinance Attached)

While there isn't a specific "dog ownership explosion" event, the pandemic saw a surge in pet adoptions, as well as residents working from home which has increased the number of residents visiting Township Parks with their canine companions. The current ordinance regarding where dogs are allowed is difficult for residents to follow. Unless they enter a Park near a "Park Rules and Regulations" sign many are unaware of posted dog restrictions.

Enforcement of the current ordinance where dogs are permitted on-leash, is difficult and time consuming as written and understood by the public. It is different from the Pennsylvania State Law, which requires dogs to be "under control when at-large" not necessarily with a leash. "Under Control" means that the owner or a handler must be able to get an immediate and desired response from the dog by use of a leash, voice commands, hand signals, whistles or other effective means.

The Parks and Recreation Department, Police Department and some Commissioners have received inquiries surrounding enforcement of the ordinance on both sides of the issue as well as requests to change the ordinance to expand the areas where dogs are allowed on-leash. Some examples are:

- Wynnewood Valley Park
 - Wynnewood Civic has requested a limited area be accessible to dogs on-leash.
 - A Wynnewood Resident expressed concerns of dogs owners in the playground area.
 - The Park Friends group has expressed concerns about dogs at large, impacting vegetation and wildlife.
- South Ardmore Park
 - Residents have requested use of the walking paths for dogs on-leash since there are no sidewalks in the neighborhood.
 - A few residents have expressed concerns of dogs owners allowing dogs off-leash on the playing fields.
- Shortridge Park
 - Shortridge Civic has requested the entire Park be accessible to dogs on-leash.
 - A Shortridge resident has expressed concerns about dogs off leash in the Park.
- General Wayne
 - A request has been made to allow dogs on the interior walking paths on leash.
 - A request has been made to allow dogs off-leash during morning hours in the field area along Maplewood Ave.

Many of our neighboring municipalities and the City of Philadelphia have addressed their “Dogs in Parks” ordinances differently.

Radnor Township has expanded the number of parks where “Dogs may accompany their owner(s) ... so long as they are under the control of their owner(s) at all times” meaning no leash is required. Radnor strictly prohibits dogs in other Parks, which are dedicated to active recreation use, i.e. playing fields, courts or playgrounds. This has been a recent amendment so a complete evaluation has not been completed.

Haverford Township’s Ordinance has been in place since 2018 which has “worked well”. Dogs are strictly prohibited in Parks which are dedicated to active recreation use, i.e. playing fields, courts or playgrounds. Dogs under control and properly leashed on a leash no longer than six feet long are permitted on the pathways, perimeter and wooded areas of the remaining parks with a prohibition that they may not be within eight feet of Playground equipment areas, sports fields and sports surfaces, including but not limited to benches, batting cages, dugouts, basketball and tennis courts and other court surfaces; Spectator viewing areas and bleachers around sports fields and sports surfaces;

Restrooms; Concession areas; Pavilions; and All perimeter areas that intersect with these excluded areas.

The City of Philadelphia has two main regulations guide Parks & Rec in the management of dogs on Parks & Rec property.

- Dogs must be on a six-foot or shorter leash and owners clean up after their pets.
- Dogs are prohibited in animal-free areas. An animal-free area is a zone where no animals are permitted, except service animals. Animal-free areas are usually in Parks & Rec playgrounds, ballfields, spraygrounds, athletic courts, and gardens.

All of these ordinances have a common thread of expanding access for residents and their dogs, while excluding dogs from playing fields, courts or playgrounds. Our Goal is to take the best aspects of the possible solutions to form the most appropriate ordinance for Lower Merion Parks to increase recreational opportunities for residents to walk or exercise their dogs. Because many of the resident requests are divergent from each other regarding Dogs in Parks, it is best to develop an ordinance that is easy for all to understand, easy to enforce, one that informs park users regarding the likelihood of encountering dogs as well as the expectations of the dog owners.

V. Impact On Township Finances: No financial impact at this time. Costs would be incurred to provide information and signage updates depending on the final decision. Cost estimates will be provided when a full recommendation is brought forward.

VI. Staff Recommendation: Staff is seeking the committees' input on the direction to bring forward regarding Dogs being permitted in Township Parks.

Staff recommends a blending of other communities ordinances that would fit Lower Merion's Park system and to roll it out in a two year pilot program prior to fully amending the code.

§ 109-13. Bringing animals into parks. [Amended 10-15-1975 by Ord. No. 1750; 11-15-1978 by Ord. No. 1840; 8-1-1979 by Ord. No. 1872; 10-17-1979 by Ord. No. 1877; 5-21-1980 by Ord. No. 1909; 7-16-1997 by Ord. No. 3459; 7-17-2002 by Ord. No. 3650; 3-17-2004 by Ord. No. 3705; 4-20-2011 by Ord. No. 3942]

It shall be unlawful for any person to bring any animal other than service dogs into a park or playground, except in the following cases:

A. Horses. Horses may be ridden on designated bridle trails.

B. Dogs.

(1) Dogs are allowed in the following parks and playgrounds, except that said dogs must be on-leash: **[Amended 9-16-2015 by Ord. No. 4068]**

- (a) Ashbridge Memorial Park.
- (b) Austin Memorial Park.
- (c) Black Rock Road Park Site.
- (d) Cynwyd Station Park.
- (e) Cynwyd Heritage Trail.
- (f) Eco Valley Nature Park.
- (g) Flat Rock Park.
- (h) Henry Lane Park.
- (i) Kenealy Nature Park.
- (j) Linwood Park.
- (k) Merion Botanical Park.
- (l) Merion Square Road Park Site.
- (m) Mill Creek Valley Park.
- (n) Pencoyd Park.
- (o) Righters Mill Road Park Site.
- (p) Rolling Hill Park.
- (q) Sharpe Park and Bird Sanctuary.
- (r) West Mill Creek Park.
- (s) Williamson Road Park Site.

(2) Dogs are allowed in limited areas of the following parks, except that said dogs must be on leashes:

- (a) Shortridge Park. Dogs are permitted in an area of Shortridge Park which is 1,050 feet in length and 65 feet in width.
 - [1] Said area can be entered or exited by dogs only from a northern or a southern point, both of which points are also the north and south terminuses of the one-thousand-fifty-foot length of the area. The northern entrance is from East Wynnewood Road and is 65 feet in width, and the east branch of Indian Creek is its eastern boundary. The southern entrance is the ten-foot-wide paved area which enters Shortridge Park from Parkview Road.
 - [2] The sixty-five-foot width of the permitted area commences at the west bank of Indian Creek and extends in a westerly direction therefrom for a distance of 65 feet.
- (b) General Wayne Park. Dogs are permitted in an area of General Wayne Park, Merion, designated as the "dog walk," located on the north side of the elevated path which extends along the northern border of the park.
- (c) Penn Wynne Park. Dogs are permitted in an area of Penn Wynne Park, Wynnewood, designated as the "dog walk," located in the wooded area on the east-southeast side of the tennis courts extending along the eastern border of the park.
- (3) Dogs are allowed off-leash in the following parks and playgrounds with a valid permit, subject to rules and regulations approved by the Board of Commissioners:
 - (a) Rolling Hill Park.
 - (b) West Mill Creek Park.
- (4) The owner or person in charge of any dog which defecates in any park shall, immediately following such act of defecation, properly wrap, package or protect said dog's feces so as to prevent unsightly disposal or smell or interference with the public health and welfare and shall remove and deposit the same in any public waste receptacle or in a garbage receptacle on the premises owned or rented by said owner or person in charge of said dog.



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: WAIVER OF ENFORCEMENT OF TOWNSHIP CODE 111-4.2 REGULATING OPEN CONTAINERS FOR THE BRYN MAWR TWILIGHT CONCERTS HOSTED BY LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP AND RISING SUN PRESENTS AT THE BRYN MAWR GAZEBO, 9 S. BRYN MAWR AVENUE BRYN MAWR

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners approval of a waiver of Township Code §111-4.2 as requested by the Parks and Recreation Department and Rising Sun Presents to permit patrons to possess open containers with alcoholic beverages and serve alcoholic beverages in public rights-of-way within a regulated area at the Bryn Mawr Gazebo, 9 S. Bryn Mawr Avenue Bryn Mawr during the Bryn Mawr Twilight Concerts (BMTc).

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
□ Issue Brief	Issue Briefing
□ Rising Sun Request	Backup Material

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Parks & Recreation Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Waiver of Enforcement of Township Code 111-4.2 regulating open containers for the Bryn Mawr Twilight Concerts hosted by Lower Merion Township and Rising Sun Presents at the Bryn Mawr Gazebo, 9 S. Bryn Mawr Avenue Bryn Mawr.

Prepared By: Donna Heller, Director of Parks & Recreation

Date: March 28, 2025

- I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:** Waiver of Township Code § 111-4.2 as requested by the Parks and Recreation Department (P&R) and Rising Sun Presents (RSP) to permit patrons to possess open containers with alcoholic beverages and serve alcoholic beverages in public rights-of-way within a regulated area at the Bryn Mawr Gazebo, 9 S. Bryn Mawr Avenue Bryn Mawr during the Bryn Mawr Twilight Concerts (BMTC).
- II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:** The Board of Commissioners must approve waivers of the Township Code. This event requires a waiver of Township Code § 111-4.2 to serve and consume alcohol in public right-of-way and to possess open containers in a public place.
- III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):** Current policy prohibits the consumption of alcohol in open containers in a public place. Current policy also requires approval from the Board of Commissioners to serve and consume alcohol in public right-of-way. This code provision has been waived for special events in Ardmore and other commercial districts in the Township.
- IV. Other Relevant Background Information:** The BMTC is a 2025 Concert Series consisting of separate live concerts by music performers on the grounds of the Bryn Mawr Gazebo, 9 S. Bryn Mawr Avenue Bryn Mawr, during the months of May, June, July and August on dates agreed upon by the Township. RSP is a consultant that is engaged in the production of live music programs for public audiences and is experienced in producing such programs for municipal organizations.

The BMTC has been operating since 2007. This has been a financially self-sustaining program which has obtained community sponsors and collect admittance fees which fully fund its operation.

RSP, the producer of BMTC for Lower Merion Township has requested approval to be allowed to sell beer and wine at the 2025 BMTC series to provide the service to the patrons as well as add an additional revenue source to the program's escrow account. Sales would be handled through Ardmore Music Hall (AMH), an associated company

with a Montgomery County liquor license in good standing. AMH has operated bar services for numerous community outdoor events including Ardmore Rock N Ride, Ardmore Beer Fest, Upper Merion Concerts Under the Stars (UM), and Wayne Music Festival. AMH was approved in 2023 and 2024 to sell beer and wine for the BMTC series, at 1 stationary bar, with no complaints from patrons or neighbors and no health or safety issue. The 2024 sales added \$1,230 to the program's escrow account. The 2025 sales would be limited to beer and wine. Pricing would be comparable to the prices at AMH and UM concert series. Sales would be from a single location on the site and limited to only those attending the concerts. Attendees would be allowed to continue bringing coolers of outside food & drink.

RSP agrees to:

- Abide by all applicable federal, state and Township laws, regulations, and ordinances, and agrees to assume liability for any violations of such laws, regulations, and ordinances by RSP or RSP's contractors, licensees, agents, employees, volunteers or invitees.
- Have a liquor liability insurance policy that includes off-premises locations/services, with a minimum limit of Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00) that shall cover RSP, AMH and LMT.
- Provide proof of insurance least two weeks prior to the first concert of the series.
- Check identification cards for proof of legal drinking age.
- Wristband those of legal drinking age prior to being allowed to purchase.
- Sell only to individuals of legal drinking age with wristbands.
- Provide RAMP-certified security to help ensure that those who drink are of legal age through use of wristbands
- Refrain from serving individuals who appear to be intoxicated.
- Have staff sweep the gazebo & park grounds, picking up and disposing of any litter
- Contribute 30% of net proceeds (after cost of goods purchased, server(s), and additional security) to the Township's BMTC escrow fund for the series.

V. Impact On Township Finances: RSP will contribute 30% of net proceeds (after cost of goods purchased, server(s), and additional security) to the Township's BMTC escrow fund which fully funds the concert series.

VI. Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the alcohol waiver be approved as requested subject to the beverage vendor providing the required insurance certificate documenting adequate coverage as required by the Township.



REQUEST FOR APPROVAL

Rising Sun Presents (RSP), the producer of Bryn Mawr Twilight Concerts (BMTC) for Lower Merion Township (LMT), would like to request approval from LMT to be allowed to sell beer and wine at the 2025 BMTC series, as we've done at both the 2023 and 2024 BMTC.

Sales would be handled through Ardmore Music Hall (AMH), an associated company with a Montgomery County liquor license in good standing.

As in previous years:

- Pricing would be comparable to the prices at AMH and Concerts Under the Stars
- Sales would be from a single location on site and limited to only those attending the concerts.
- Attendees would be allowed to continue bringing coolers of outside food & drink

RSP agrees to:

- Abide by all applicable federal, state and Township laws, regulations, and ordinances, and agrees to assume liability for any violations of such laws, regulations, and ordinances by RSP or RSP's contractors, licensees, agents, employees, volunteers or invitees.
- Have a liquor liability insurance policy that includes off-premises locations/services, with a minimum limit of Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00) that shall cover RSP, AMH and LMT.
- Provide proof of insurance least two weeks prior to the first concert of the series.
- Check identification cards for proof of legal drinking age.
- Wristband those of legal drinking age prior to being allowed to purchase.
- Sell only to individuals of legal drinking age with wristband
- Provide RAMP-certified security to help ensure that those drinking are of legal age through use of wristbands
- Refrain from serving individuals who appear to be intoxicated
- Have staff sweep the gazebo & park grounds, picking up and disposing of any litter
- Contribute 30% of net proceeds (after cost of goods purchased, server(s), and additional security) to the Township's BMTC escrow fund for the series.



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: NAMING THE TRAIL IN GULLEY RUN PARK IN HONOR OF BILL SWYER

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the naming of the trail in Gulley Run Park in honor of Bill Swyer.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
▣ Issue Brief	Issue Briefing
▣ Park Naming Policy	Backup Material
▣ Letter of Support from the Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd	Backup Material

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Parks & Recreation Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Naming the trail in Gulley Run Park in honor of Bill Swyer

Prepared By: Donna L. Heller, Director of Parks & Recreation

Date: March 28, 2025

- I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:** Authorize the naming of the trail in Gulley Run Park in honor of Bill Swyer
- II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:** Naming a park or recreation facility must meet set criteria and be approved by the Board of Commissioners.
- III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):** It is the policy of the Board of Commissioners to review and approve names for Township parks and recreation facilities.
- IV. Other Relevant Background Information:**
The Board of Commissioners established a policy, June 16, 2010, to review and approve names for Township parks and recreation facilities. (Attached)

Although I do not know the history behind all the names, the following are Parks and facilities within parks which are named after someone.

- Vernon V, Young Memorial Park - Ardmore
- McMoran Park – Belmont Hills
- Karen McGuire 60-foot skinned field “B” - South Ardmore Park
- Sharpe Bird Sanctuary - Haverford
- Shortridge Memorial Park – Wynnewood
- Austin Memorial Park - Rosemont
- Kenealy Nature Park - Gladwyne
- Ashbridge Memorial Park - Rosemont
- Harriton Park - Rosemont
- Richie Ashburn Baseball field – Gladwyne
- Charlie Schwab 90-foot field – Bala Cynwyd Park
- Brian D. Rosenthal 90-foot baseball field (Field D) – South Ardmore Park
- Bob Davidson Upper Soccer fields – South Ardmore Park

Thomas Shallow from the American Legion Post 355 reached out to the Parks & Recreation department looking for a way to recognize Bill Swyer’s contributions to the Lower Merion community. The American Legion Post 355 designated: VanDiver–Moylan, owns the cabin and parcel contiguous with the Gulley Run Park located at Conshohocken State Road & Manayunk Road, Penn Valley. They are currently doing volunteer work with the Bala 1

Scout Troop to rehabilitate the 490' trail which runs along the rear of the property and it is this trail they wish to name the "Bill Swyer Trail."



Bill was Bala Cynwyd's Citizen of the year in 2008 and he spent 24 years as Scoutmaster in the Bala Cynwyd community. In 2018, while at Scout Camp, he suffered a heart attack and passed away. In all of his years in Scouting, he remained an important part of the Scouting Leadership for the local Scout Troop "Bala 1". (Troop Bala 1 is unofficially the first Boy Scout troop in the U.S.)

Bill was proud to be part of the American Legion Family as Sergeant at Arms for Squadron 355. Today, Post 355 continues to recognize and applaud those individuals who make significant contributions to their local communities.

For many of Bill's 24 years in Scouting he fulfilled the role of Merit Badge Counselor for: Citizenship of the Community, Citizenship of the Nation, and Citizenship of the World. He truly lived his life as the model for the Citizenship of Community, Nation, and World while helping many scouts earn each of those merit badges.

These were just a few of Bill's contributions to the Lower Merion Community. Also attached is a letter of support from the Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd, Vandiver-Moylan American Legion Post #355 and Troop Bala One.

I believe Bill Swyer's life: his commitment, consistency and many contributions would qualify under the naming policy criteria B, second bullet, which reads:

An individual has made a substantial contribution in terms of volunteer services, providing a broad recreational or environmental benefit to the residents of Lower Merion Township. In most instances, the person should be honored posthumously.

- V. **Impact On Township Finances:** The Township expense will be staff time for coordination and assistance in the trail rehabilitation and memorial dedication.
- VI. **Staff Recommendation:** Recommend to the Board to authorize the naming of the trail in Gulley Run Park in honor of Bill Swyer.

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Board of Commissioners

Policy: Parks and Facilities Naming Policy

Effective Date: June 16, 2010

Purpose: To provide a uniform and consistent process for naming Township owned and operated parks, recreational areas and facilities.

It shall be the policy of the Lower Merion Township Board of Commissioners to review and approve names for Township parks and recreation facilities using the following criteria:

I. Criteria

- A. The name of a park or recreation facility should, if possible, have geographic, historical, botanical, or agricultural significance. The significance of the name should be recognized and known in the area or neighborhood in which the park is located and if possible, generally recognized and known throughout the Township.
- B. A park or recreation facility should only be named after an individual if one of the following examples applies:
 - The park was acquired by means of a substantial gift or donation by an individual, family, organization or corporation. Such gifts or donations may carry a stipulation, if acceptable to the Board of Commissioners, that a certain name is used to identify the park or facility.
 - An individual has made a substantial contribution in terms of volunteer services, providing a broad recreational or environmental benefit to the residents of Lower Merion Township. In most instances, the person should be honored posthumously.
 - It is determined that an individual or family had a significant historical impact on the Township.
- C. A park or recreation facility should not be named after a person whose contribution to the park system was or is a part of that individual's normal duties as an employee of the Township. An exception may be made for former employees who have contributed volunteer services of an exceptional nature beyond their normal duties.

- D. A park or facility name should be of reasonable length and easy to pronounce and spell, so it will be readily used and easily displayed. Names that are controversial should be avoided.

II. Procedure

- A. The Department of Parks and Recreation will encourage input from civic associations, community groups and other groups having special knowledge of the individual or area when considering a proposal to name or re-name a park, recreational area or facility.
- B. Testimonials, record of volunteerism and/or appropriate documentation should be presented to substantiate a proposal.
- C. The selection of a park name should occur during the acquisition or development processes, or at an appropriate time for the situation.
- D. To avoid duplication and confusion, all proposed names for parks or recreation facilities should be checked against a master list of other park and facilities names found in the Township.
- E. Names shall be submitted to the Department of Parks and Recreation for review. Upon confirming that the request meets these guidelines the proposal to name the park or facility shall be discussed by the Parks & Recreation Committee at which time public comment shall be received.
- F. Upon completion of the public comment period, a Parks and Recreation Committee recommendation shall then be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for their approval.

III. Name Changes

- A. Once given, a name should be as enduring as the property itself. Therefore, a park or facility name should be selected with the intention that it will be permanent.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB OF

BALACYNWYD

EST. 1906
P.O. Box 717 • Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

Donna Heller.
Director, Parks & Recreation
Lower Merion Township

Dear Ms. Heller,

I am writing to you in my capacity as President of the Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd.

On January 4, 2025, Elvada Conant and Tom Shallow presented to the NCBC regarding the American Legion, Post 355 Bala Cynwyd's current cooperative project with the Township and the Boy Scouts to restore the trail that runs through Gully Run Park alongside the creek of the same name in Bala Cynwyd. They told the NCBC the American Legion would like to name the trail The Bill Swyer Trail, in honor of this beloved citizen of Bala Cynwyd.

I am writing to inform you that the Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd voted unanimously to support the naming of the trail in honor of Bill Swyer. We hope that this request will be honored.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Best,



Kay Sickles
484-343-2741

cc: Tom Shallow
Vada Conant
Members of the Board of the NCBC



Vandiver – Moylan American Legion Post #355

850 Conshohocken State Road

Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

Donna Heller

Director, Parks and Recreation

Lower Merion Township

19 January 2025

Director Heller,

It is with pleasure that I write this to inform you of the support of this Post in the naming of the trail that runs through Gully Run Park alongside the creek of the same name. Bill Swyer was a founding member of the Post's Sons of the American Legion Squadron, an outstanding Scout Leader of Bala 1 Troop and an exceptional member of this community. He is certainly deserving of this honor. We look forward to working with you in making this project a reality.

Sincerely,



Vada Z. Conant USA (Ret)

Commander



TROOP BALA-ONE

Established 1908

The Oldest Troop in America

St. Asaph's Church

St. Asaph's Road and Conshohocken State Road

Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania 19004

January 22, 2025

Donna Heller, Director
Parks & Recreation
Lower Merion Township
75 E. Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, PA 19003

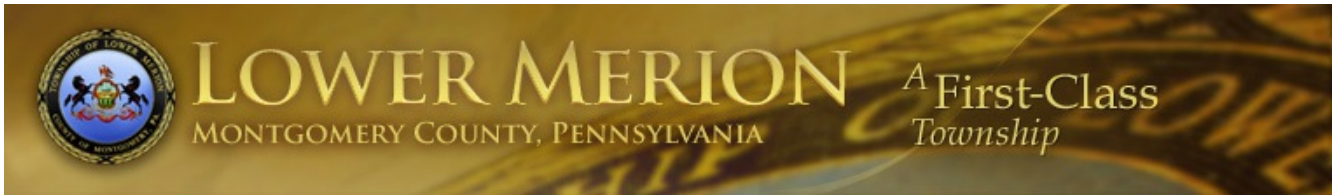
I am writing to you on behalf of Boy Scout Troop Bala One to give our full support in naming the proposed trail in Bala Cynwyd's Gulley Run Park The Bill Swyer Trail in honor of our former Scoutmaster.

Bill Swyer served as the Scoutmaster of Troop Bala One in Bala Cynwyd for twenty-four years. He was an exemplary Boy Scout leader who advanced and influenced the lives of many Scouts and scouting families over the course of his two dozen years. His commitment to the community should be honored and preserved.

We thank you for doing so in his honor.

Respectfully,

Matt Wilk, Scoutmaster Troop Bala One
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZATION OF A DCNR GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE ACCESSIBLE TRAIL LINK FROM THE CYNWYD HERITAGE TRAIL TO THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN TUNNEL

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners adoption of a resolution authorizing the Township to submit a grant application in the amount of \$500,000 to the DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) Grant to partially fund the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Brief	Issue Briefing
<input type="checkbox"/> DCNR Resolution	Resolution

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Parks & Recreation Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Submission of a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) Grant for the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel

Prepared By: Donna Heller, Director of Parks & Recreation

Date: March 28, 2025

- I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:** Adopt a resolution authorizing the Township to submit a grant application in the amount of \$500,000 to the DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) Grant to partially fund the accessible trail link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.
- II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:** The Board of Commissioners must pass resolutions authorizing the submission of a grant application.
- III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):** Projects included in Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), seek grant funding whenever possible.
- IV. Other Relevant Background Information:** The Board received Cynwyd Spur Trail Feasibility and Planning Study in 2015. This study determined the trail's feasibility and construction options to connect the Cynwyd Heritage Trail (CHT) to the riverfront, which has a 80' to 100' grade differential. At that time the Righter's Ferry residential development was constructing their riverfront trail and Pencoyd Bridge which connects directly to the Wissahickon Gateway and ultimately the Schuylkill River Trail.



At that time the Township was also negotiating with Norfolk Southern (NS) for the 33' wide easement between the Township property and river that passes under the Norfolk Southern railroad bridge. Now that the NS lease has been obtained and the work is

underway on the railroad bridge, the focus has moved to the accessible trail connection from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.

There is funding in the 2025 CIP for the construction documents for the trail connection, with anticipated construction funding in 2026. One of the primary concerns for the alignment of the trail connection was accessibility by cyclists and pedestrians of all abilities. Therefore, the construction documents alignment will meet ADA trail requirements. This is a vital gap trail gap identified in the regional trail network.



DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program Grant requires a matching contribution from the applicant that is equal to 50 percent of the project cost, which would be exceeded in this project. Contributions exceeding the match requirement has the potential to increase the appeal of the grant application to the reviewers.

- V. **Impact On Township Finances:** The \$500,000 grant would offset the cost of construction of this trail connect which is currently estimated at \$1,800,000.
- VI. **Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Board of Commissioners adopt the Resolution authorizing submission of a DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program Grant for the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.

RESOLUTION NO. _____



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZATION OF A DCNR GRANT APPLICATION TO PARTIALLY FUND IMPROVEMENTS ALONG RIGHTERS FERRY ROAD

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners adoption of a resolution authorizing the Township to submit a grant application in the amount of \$550,618.95 to the DCNR for a Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) Grant to partially fund improvements along Righters Ferry Road.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Briefing	Issue Briefing
<input type="checkbox"/> Resolution	Resolution

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Parks & Recreation

Issue Briefing

Topic: Submission of a DCNR Community Recreation and Conservation (C2P2) Grant to Partially Fund Trail Improvements Along Righters Ferry Road

Prepared By: Charlie Doyle, Assistant Director, Building & Planning

Date: March 28, 2025

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Adoption of a resolution authorizing the Township to submit a grant application in the amount of \$550,618.95 to the PA DCNR for a Community Recreation and Conservation Program (C2P2) Grant to partially fund trail improvements along Righters Ferry Road.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

A resolution by the Board of Commissioners is a requirement to complete submission of the grant application

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

The Board of Commissioners has approved the submission of grant applications to the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for funding of various projects through numerous programs over recent years.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

The 2024 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Township of Lower Merion includes Service to People Project No. 4499, Cynwyd Heritage Trail – Phase II that allocates funding for the lower trail along Righters Ferry Road from Pencoyd Landing to Monument Road. Currently, the Township Engineer has produced civil engineering plans and a cost estimate for the project totaling \$1,101,237. A total of \$525,000 in funds have been budgeted in the CIP for construction expenditures in 2027.

The approximate 2-mile Cynwyd Heritage Trail is a regionally significant multimodal pathway linking access to historic landmarks such as West Laurel Hill Cemetery, Westminster Cemetery, and SEPTA's currently operating Cynwyd Station as well as remnants of a former Barmouth Station. Additionally, it is easy to connect to the Manayunk Bridge Trail, which crosses the Schuylkill River and provides a connection to the popular Schuylkill River Trail.

The Township was recently awarded grant funds totaling \$100,000 from the Department of Community & Economic Development through the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Grant program. These funds would supplement the Township contributions to the proposed trail improvements.

In pursuit of funds to subsidize construction of the future project, Township staff identified the DCNR Community Recreation and Conservation Program (C2P2) Grant to partially fund improvements along Righters Ferry Road at the amount of \$550,618.95 with project costs that meet the minimum 50% match requirements for the total grant being sought from the Commonwealth.

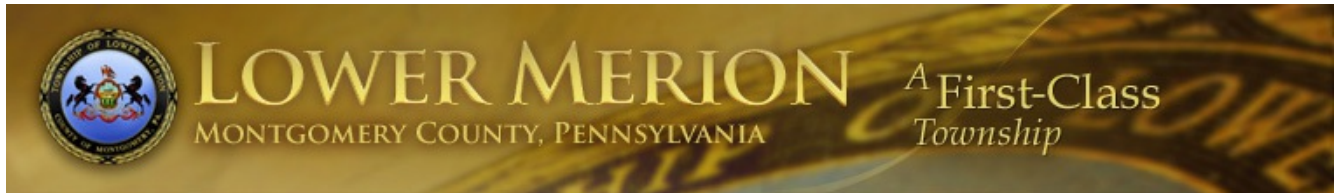
V. Impact On Township Finances:

There is no fee for the Community Recreation and Conservation Program application. The \$550,618.95 grant would offset the cost of the trail improvements which is currently estimated at \$1,101,237.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends applying for Community Recreation and Conservation Program (C2P2) Grant funds at the amount of \$550,618.95.

RESOLUTION NO. _____



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZATION OF A DCED GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE ACCESSIBLE TRAIL LINK FROM THE CYNWYD HERITAGE TRAIL TO THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN TUNNEL

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners adoption of a resolution authorizing the Township to submit a grant application in the amount of \$250,000 to the Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) Grant to partially fund the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Brief	Issue Briefing
<input type="checkbox"/> DCED Resolution	Resolution

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Parks & Recreation Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Submission of a Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) Grant for the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel

Prepared By: Donna Heller, Director of Parks & Recreation

Date: March 28, 2025

- I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:** Adopt a resolution authorizing the Township to submit a grant application in the amount of \$250,000 to the DCED Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) to partially fund the accessible trail link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.
- II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:** The Board of Commissioners must pass resolutions authorizing the submission of a grant application.
- III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):** Projects included in Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), seek grant funding whenever possible.
- IV. Other Relevant Background Information:** The Board received Cynwyd Spur Trail Feasibility and Planning Study in 2015. This study determined the trail's feasibility and construction options to connect the Cynwyd Heritage Trail (CHT) to the riverfront, which has a 80' to 100' grade differential. At that time the Righter's Ferry residential development was constructing their riverfront trail and Pencoyd Bridge which connects directly to the Wissahickon Gateway and ultimately the Schuylkill River Trail.



At that time the Township was also negotiating with Norfolk Southern (NS) for the 33' wide easement between the Township property and river that passes under the Norfolk Southern railroad bridge. Now that the NS lease has been obtained and the work is

underway on the railroad bridge, the focus has moved to the accessible trail connection from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.

There is funding in the 2025 CIP for the construction documents for the trail connects, with anticipated construction funding in 2026. One of the primary concerns for the alignment of the trail connection was accessibility by cyclists and pedestrians of all abilities. Therefore, the construction documents alignment will meet ADA trail requirements. This is a vital gap trail gap identified in the regional trail network.



DCED GTRP Grant requires a contribution from the applicant that is equal to 15 percent of the project cost, which would be exceeded in this project.

- V. **Impact On Township Finances:** The \$250,000 grant would offset the cost of construction of this trail connect which is currently estimated at \$1,800,000.
- VI. **Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Board of Commissioners adopt the Resolution authorizing submission of Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) Grant for the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION AUTHORIZING THE
APPLICATION TO THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR A
GREENWAYS, TRAILS AND RECREATION GRANT TO
PARTIALLY FUND THE ACCESSIBLE TRAIL LINK FROM
THE CYNWYD HERITAGE TRAIL TO THE NORFOLK
SOUTHERN TUNNEL**

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania “the Commonwealth” passed Act 13 of 2012 that establishes the Marcellus Legacy Fund and allocates such funds to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (the “PA DCED”) has established a Greenways, Trails and Recreation Grant Program to distribute Marcellus Legacy Funds; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Lower Merion is an eligible applicant as a municipality for a grant that shall not exceed a total of \$250,000; and

WHEREAS, eligible projects for development, rehabilitation and improvements include greenways and trails; and

WHEREAS, the 2026 Capital Improvement Program for the Township of Lower Merion includes Service to People Project No. 4500, Connelly Site Master Plan allocates funding for the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel; and

WHEREAS, the Township seeks to apply to the PA DCED through its Greenways, Trails and Recreation Grant Program for implementation grant funds of \$250,000 to construct the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel for the project estimated by the Township Engineer for the cost of \$1,800,000 with a match that exceeds the minimum 15% match requirements for the total grant being sought from the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Township fully understands the application requirements, including the contracting process if awarded grant funds from the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Grant Program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby authorizes the Township Manager to submit an application to the PA

DCED requesting a Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) grant in the amount of \$250,000 from the Commonwealth Financing Agency to be used for the construction of the Accessible Trail Link from the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to the Norfolk Southern Tunnel.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township hereby designates Ernie B. McNeely, Township Manager, and Donna Heller, Director of Parks and Recreation, to execute all documents and agreements between the Township of Lower Merion and the Commonwealth Financing Authority to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant.

RESOLVED this _____ day of _____, 2025 by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

BY: _____
Todd M. Sinai, President

ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary