

Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Green Valley Estates Trust

September 3, 2020

Location: Tonight's meeting was through ZOOM Video conferencing due to the current COVID-19 situation.

Keystone Commercial Attendees: Kress Schwartz and Danielle Denis

Advisory Board Attendees: Erik Saar, Darcie Saar, Dave Mattes, Jeff Orner, Jeff Bryan, Steve Wagner, Verne Bausher, John Jolls, James Testerman and Mike Schmidt.

The Purpose of this Meeting:

NAI/Keystone received an inquiry from a resident of Green Valley. The request is for use of the baseball field located off Pacific Ave. Use would be for an outdoor movie night, September 12, 2020 starting at 7:30pm by the LGBT Center of Greater Reading. The Group has a large outdoor inflatable movie screen and sound system. Members would follow all social distancing state guidelines and enforce the mask protocol. The screen would be placed in the ball field area which would facilitate no disturbance to any homes either on Pacific or Virginia Aves that boarder the common area. Sound would not be loud, and they would be respectful. Plan on showing a G rated movie with a duration of about 2 hours. Members and guests would bring lawn chairs and blankets for seating on the ground. Everything would be torn down and cleaned by 10pm. The group ensures that they will leave no trash and will leave the area as found. If any residents stop by, they are welcome to join the group for the movie. They are not charging for the event, just need a large open area which will allow for social distancing. The Center does have full liability insurance which covers all their events regardless of location.

Pre-Meeting discussions shared by email or phone call prior to meeting:

Below are some additional concerns raised by some other GV residents.

- Would granting permission for this event set a precedent resulting in having to allow any group to use any of the common areas?
- How many people does the requesting group expect to attend?
 - This particular local group has 2,200 followers on Facebook and 1,016 on Instagram. Could we verify count?
 - The development does not have significant parking capacity to accommodate large gatherings.
 - Who will provide security and traffic management?
- COVID

- Who will enforce the current PA mandated limit of 250 total people at an outdoor gathering?
 - Who will enforce social distancing, masking, etc.?
- Large groups coming into the neighborhood from other areas have created problems in the recent past.
 - The group of mostly Cumru Township students that made the walking/bike path bridge their nighttime party / hook up / drug use location
 - A large New Year's Eve party on Atlantic Ave. of mostly students that led to several burglaries that night.
 - Opening the door to people attending the event that may have a criminal record. It's very easy to spot garage doors left open, unlocked cars, houses where the family may be on vacation, etc. An example was whenever Konopelski brought in the carnival or held Shocktoberfest, area burglaries went up.
- If a public event were to get out of control it could jeopardize our ability to host other future GV community events.
- Property value impact
 - If the use of the common area by large outside groups becomes a weekly event, this will have a negative impact in the quality of life for the surrounding neighborhood?

Also noted is that there are many other municipally managed and governed nearby areas available for this type of function, which can be rented by permit for a very low fee and which would put the municipality in charge of security, crowd size enforcement, and parking.

Meeting Discussions:

Opening statements made by NAI/Keystone representative, Kress Schwartz as follows:

NAI/Keystone has no stake in the decision process so the GV residents group should consider a few questions before they decide what they would like to do.

- Is GV in the events business? Has this been done before?
- If yes, what is the policy exists that can be used to easily determine what events are possible. Without a standard, every request would require significant discussion and opinion.
- Does COVID 19 have any impact on the decision-making process?

This is your meeting, have at it . . .

Residents Committee Attendees Comments:

How can we control these events? We have discussed as a group in the past with NAI Keystone regarding events, use of the pavilion, fields, etc., with the conclusion that there is no way to enforce these events. We have no policy on events. There are sometimes 5-7 events going on in the park by groups that have not obtained permission to use the common areas. How do we approve and don't approve? There is no way to enforce this. With the police enforce?

Is there a parking lot? Yes.

- There have been complaints about noise and the kids using the basketball courts; loud music, etc.
- Small group? How many people?
- Clean up – who is going to do that? How are they going to do that in the dark?
- We allow people to use the park already – because we aren't stopping them, they just use the facilities
- LGBT organization has a certificate of insurance
- Soccer Groups and Basketball Groups use the fields without permission or certificates of insurance
- Biggest question is “How could we enforce a decision?”
- If we weren't able to have this event or any other event, and the group shows up to have event, what are we going to do to enforce it? Call the police? Are they going to respond? This is private property
- Specific to this event - they are watching a G- Rated movie
- How many people are we talking about?
- Bathroom usage – where?
- Where is the group obtaining electric from to use their equipment?

There are several things to discuss:

1. What is the size of this group for the event? How do we manage that? Group needs to be below 250 people due to COVID.
2. COVID-19 issue
3. Homeowner needs take liability for some of this
4. Would we allow this type of use going forward?
5. Where are we going to put 50 – 100 cars?
6. No bathrooms? Where are guests going to go to the bathroom?
7. Need to develop an events policy. Currently no policy in place. Who enforces the policy?
8. Attendance estimate: need a cap on the number of people allowed. There is a management issue and no enforcement policy
9. Where are they obtaining electric from?

This event or future events can't be compared to the fireworks event. People that attend the fireworks display primarily live in the development

Enforcement Policy:

- We have NO enforcement policy
- How can we enforce?
- How can we sign off on this and have no idea how many people are coming to the event?
- this would be our first time granting permission to outside people, is this something we want to do?
- need an enforcement mechanism
- permits
- need to keep groups who use the parks to a certain size
- should contact Lower Heidelberg Township to see what leg we have to stand on if a group goes over a certain amount, will they enforce it?
- Security deposit, who collects? Where does it go? Does it go to the Trust?
- Reach out to the Lower Heidelberg Police to see what our options are
- Can reach out to the police to supervise and keep things from getting out of control
- What happens if someone is drinking and someone gets hurt? Liability issues.

What enforcement does Spring Township have at their parks?

- Permits, security deposits, police
- Spring Township has the Parks Department to manage their parks. The Trust owns this park, private property – hard to get the Township to enforce
- how are the police going to enforce when they don't know who lives there or not?
- Are we going to start carding people that use these areas?

What is the capacity that we can handle?

- 25-50 people max?
- No groups over 25 people?
- With regards to the deposit – do they forfeit the deposit if they go over the maximum number of people?
- return the deposit after the event

Are we going into the rental business?

- Who keeps track of the calendar for usage of the parks?
- Who gets a precedence? Homeowners? Outsiders?
- Who maintains the calendar/reservations/deposits?
- Community Grounds Space is privately owned
- point person in the Residents Committee to manage this policy, etc.

Maybe we should have a posting board in the area?

- 2 week in advance notice for use of the park/pavilion/etc.
- Electronic mechanism for a posting board?

Events Policy:

- Who do they contact to use the property?
- Who do they ask permission of?
- Has there been any issues in the past?
- There have been problems at the park. Police have arrested people several times.
- Need to be considerate of people who live along the park
- Do we want to allow outside people to use the park. Park is for the enjoyment of the resident of Green Valley
- Homeowners are paying fees for the common grounds. Outsiders do not

Can we donate the playground/park to Lower Heidelberg Township?

- Let them manage it?
- Are there legal issues with this?
- Just letting everyone use the park if we do this
- Do not let everyone use the parks, just Wilson and Spring Township residents and Wilson related activities.

Can this event be held in his back yard?

- Most likely asking permission to use the park due to social distancing and being able to put 6 feet between people; can't do that in their yard
- Not cramming 50+ people into a yard
- Can not do social distancing with a large group in their backyard.

Conclusions on the acceptability of this event:

- Event cannot occur right now as there are too many unanswered policy questions
- No policy in effect
- Need to put a policy in effect before we can allow groups to use the space
- Not enough time to get a policy in place before this event
- Need an attorney to help draft an events policy
- Not comfortable letting the park being used without an events policy in place
- Park not meant for outside use, meant for resident's use
- Need to come up with an event policy and see if the police will enforce it
- Kress Schwartz (NAI/Keystone) will reach out to the GV resident and let them know we're unable to permit usage of the field at this time.

Also mentioned at this meeting:

- Little Cacoosing Creek Restoration Zoom Meeting with Berks County Conservation District on September 16, 2020.
- Someone from the Board needs to be on the Zoom Meeting to get details; Kress volunteered to be one the Zoom Meeting with another Board Representative
- Danielle is resending them email from the Berks County Conservation District to the Board members for review.