

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Department of Parks & Recreation

Merion Botanical Park
Document & Plan Review: 12/11/2013

2012 Lower Merion Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan

Goal #1: Enrich parks and recreation facilities as community destinations where residents can have fun, experience nature, socialize and exercise.

Objective #6: Ensure that all parks include an environmental component as part of the park, design operation and programming.

Objective #7: Evaluate, design and upgrade of parks with consideration for safety and security of users.

- Follow the principles of CPTED (Crime prevention Through Environmental Design):
 - ❖ Maintain clear site lines in the parks from public streets and sidewalks.
 - ❖ Locate recreation facilities for safety; avoid conflicts between park users and pedestrians and vehicles
 - ❖ Limit vehicle penetration into the park, as much as possible to avoid pedestrian/vehicle conflict and safety issues.
 - ❖ Provide trails of adequate width for the intended users.

Objective #8: Provide accessible trails, viewing areas and other accommodations to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- Develop trails within all parks to provide accessible routes from parking areas and sidewalks to recreation and support facilities.
- Provide site amenities that accommodate persons with disabilities.

Objective #9: Design, plan and implement a Township-wide signage system for parks and recreation facilities.

- Build upon the Township's signage system to establish a readily identifiable signage system for wayfinding, park and facility name, directions, rules and regulations, interpretation and information.

Objective #11: Create destinations in parks where people can gather and socialize.

- Add pavilions of all sizes in parks for general picnic use.
- Consider the development of a scenic area for wedding locations for ceremonies or photography.

Goal #2: Conserve our natural resources by using best management practices in the parks for conservation, public education and partnerships.

Objective #3: Establish a philosophy of environmental sustainability in the parks.

- Consider applying Sustainable Sites Initiative Guidelines to park’s design and future improvements.
- Incorporate landscapes for learning (interpretive signs, demonstration projects, habitat areas).

Objective #4: Improve Lower Merion Township’s parks for environmental sustainability.

Objective #5: Address environmental issues in the Township’s parks.

- Manage stormwater and enhance water quality through infiltration of runoff.
- Continue to plant trees in the park.
- Stabilize the streambank of the creek that runs through the park.
- Develop and implement a plan to remove invasive species from the park.

Objective #6: Develop strategies for solving environmental problems through solutions in the parks.

- Develop a strategic plan for stormwater management and streambank stabilization in the parks in collaboration with the Public Works Department.

2012 ADA Title II Compliance Audit

- Does not reference Merion Botanical Park.
- Apply general criteria from audit where possible.

Examples:

- ❖ Install pads at benches that allow wheelchairs.
- ❖ Provide accessible stream access points.
- ❖ Ensure water fountain is accessible.
- ❖ Install accessible walking paths.

1996 Natural Areas Stewardship Study

- Consider feasibility of applying NA Stewardship study criteria to stabilize parkland on the other side of the creek.

Examples:

- ❖ Cut large vines to re-establish tree canopy
- ❖ Remove invasives
- ❖ Stabilize streambanks
- If this part of the park is ultimately determined to remain natural area, include in the forthcoming NA Study Update.

2004 Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan Update

Natural Resource Protection

- Work with neighboring municipalities to create a riparian management plan for the Indian Creek Watershed.

2003 Bicycle & Pedestrian Network Plan

Bicycle Network

- Merion Botanical Park is on a Priority Bike Route (Merion Rd. from Latches Lane to Highland Ave).
 - ❖ Confirm width of Merion Rd. for possible shoulder striping – **40'**
- Merion Botanical Park is adjacent to the Merion Train Station, recommended in the plan as a transit link.
 - ❖ Determine existence of bike racks at the train station.

Pedestrian Network

- Sidewalk exists along Merion Rd. and Civic Circle.
 - ❖ Evaluate condition of walk to determine if blocks need to be replaced, handicap ramps upgraded.
- Stone dust path through the park from the far end of the park closest to City Ave. down along the creek to Civic Circle.
 - ❖ Used by people walking to the train station.
- Pedestrian access points :
 - ❖ Civic Circle at the Train Station
 - ❖ Across from N. Latches Lane
 - ❖ Between Latimer Rd. and Greystone Rd.

October 12, 1944 John H. Weaver Trustees / Township of Lower Merion Agreement @ 4.509 acres

- Develop site as a botanical garden and public park
- No buildings or other structures other than tool house or other similar small structures necessary to maintain the park or provide shelter for persons using the park.
- Park cannot be used for a playfield, playground, swimming pool, place of commercial entertainment, or playing of any competitive games that would attract large crowds of people.

November 8, 1944 Botanical Society of Lower Merion / Township of Lower Merion Agreement of Sale @ 5.672 acres

- Property to be developed and maintained as “a botanical garden and public park for the beautification of the Township of Lower Merion and the education and quiet enjoyment of its residents.”
- No buildings or other structures other than tool house or other similar small structures necessary to maintain the park or provide shelter for persons using the park.
- Park cannot be used for a playfield, playground, swimming pool, place of commercial entertainment, or playing of any competitive games that would attract large crowds of people.

2012 Environmental Action Plan

Stormwater Management:

- Increase use of stormwater controls.
- Increase use of porous pavement.
- Increase riparian buffers in Township parks.

Miscellaneous Environmental Initiatives:

- Implement Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan
- Increase the availability of “mutt mitts” and trash cans for disposal of dog waste trash cans for disposal of dog waste resulting in less pollution to streams.

Misc. plans & drawings

May 7, 1953 Philadelphia Suburban Water Company / Township of Lower Merion Easement Agreement

- Allowed for installation of 16” cast iron water main through the park.