

# Robinson Park

## Wetland and Stream Restoration Project

September 24, 2024, 7:00pm

**Purpose:** To communicate Cheltenham Township's updated concept for enhancing Robinson Park.

### Agenda:

- Current conditions
- Activities to date
- Public comment summary
- Future park use and maintenance
- Next steps

### Presenters:

**Alyson Elliott**, Cheltenham Township Manager

**Nathan Walker, AICP**, Water Resources Planner





## Current conditions

- 4.4-acre neighborhood park
- Community garden
- Historic landscape
- Ornamental pond and gazebo
- Wetlands and channelized stream
- Woodlands





## Activities to date

- Cheltenham Township Pollutant Reduction Plan
  - Submitted to PADEP - 2022
  - Approved - 2023
- Successful grant applications
  - Commonwealth Financing Authority - Act 71 Local Share Account - 2022
  - ARPA H2OPA: Water, Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater Projects - 2022
  - USDOC, NOAA, Coastal Zone Management Grant - 2023
- Site topographic survey - 2023
- Wetland delineation - 2024
- Concept Plan - 2024
- Public meeting - June 11, 2024
- Public comment period
- Concept Plan revisions
- PA Historic and Museum Commission review - Sept 2024

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- Public meeting - Sept 24, 2024





## Proposed future use

**Goal:** To enhance the green infrastructure within Robinson Park to balance neighborhood use with multiple community benefits:

- Public access and recreation
- Native habitat
- Water quality
- Flood mitigation

ID	Project Activity
1	Naturalize existing ornamental pond to include emergent wetlands to filter runoff, provide habitat, and reduce peak flows during storm events
2	Eradicate Phragmites and replace with native wetland plants
3	Convert existing turf lawn into riparian buffer and native meadow
4	Daylight enclosed stream to reconnect to its floodplain and reduce peak flows during storm events
5	Improve access and function of community garden





# Native wetland meadow examples





# Native wetland meadow examples





# Drainage Area to Robinson Park (approx. 100 acres)



**Discharge to Tookany Creek**  
under Glenside Ave across from SEPTA  
parking lot



## Summary of Public Comments

- Nearly 40 comments received by July 14 deadline
- Common topics:
  - Benefits of naturalized landscape
  - Desire to continue use as a community recreational space
  - Community garden improvements
  - Long-term maintenance needs
  - Pollutant and flooding concerns

**Public comments integrated into  
a revised Concept Plan ...**





# Public comments:

- Naturalized landscape
- Community recreational space
- Community garden





## Public comment: *Park and green infrastructure maintenance*

Feature	Current maintenance	Future maintenance
Lawn areas	Mow 3 acres every 2 weeks	Mow 1½ acres every 2 weeks
Pond	Treat with pesticide Operate groundwater pump	Inspect for debris, erosion, and sedimentation Manage invasive species until desirable species establish Additional details in <i>PA DEP Stormwater Manual (§3.6.6)</i>
Gazebo/Grotto	Inspect and maintain landscaping	Inspect and maintain landscaping to pond
Community Garden access	Replace woodchips to gain access across wet areas	Maintain boardwalk
Stream corridor	Inspect for debris	Inspect for debris, erosion, and sedimentation Manage invasive species until desirable species establish
Wetland meadow/ Wetland forest	Brush-hog Phragmites semi-annually	Brush-hog warm-season grass annually Manage invasive species until desirable species establish
Loop path	N/A	Inspect for erosion



# Public Comment: *Spills, leaks, and illicit discharges*

- Spill and Illicit Discharges Detection and Elimination Program
  - Periodic outfall inspection to look for dry-weather flows
  - Federal permit requirement
  - Defined response to spills (vehicle accidents, concrete washout, dumping, illicit connections, etc.)



*Cheltenham MS4 outfalls to Wissahickon Creek from Fenton Rd.*

## ILLICIT DISCHARGE DETECTION & ELIMINATION PLAN Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania



April 2018



# Public Comment: *Non-point source pollution*

- Non-point Source Pollutants:
  - Nutrients from fertilizers, grass clippings, and yard waste
  - Sediment from soil erosion
  - Road and sidewalk salt
  - Bacteria from animal waste
  - Urban runoff from the transportation network and land uses\*



\*Select resources provided by PA DEP:

- ***Are Rain Gardens Mini Toxic Cleanup Sites?*** (Sightline Institute, [www.sightline.org/2013/01/22/are-rain-gardens-mini-toxic-cleanup-sites/](http://www.sightline.org/2013/01/22/are-rain-gardens-mini-toxic-cleanup-sites/))
- ***Pollutant accumulation and microbial community evolution in rain gardens with different drainage types at field scale*** (Zhang, Z., Zhang, Y., Li, J. et al., [www.nature.com/articles/s41598-023-48255-6#citeas](http://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-023-48255-6#citeas))





## Public Comment: *Flooding*

- Township Stormwater Ordinance
  - **New development:**
    - Required to maintain or reduce stormwater runoff
  - **Re-development:**
    - Required to reduce stormwater runoff (§290-23)
- Robinson Park project:
  - **Volume of runoff:** No change anticipated
    - Soils, wetlands, and groundwater limit infiltration.
  - **Rate of runoff:** Some improvement anticipated
    - Storage and slow release of runoff is limited due to existing conditions (sanitary sewer lines, topography, park outlet) that limit excavation.

### TOOKANY/TACONY-FRANKFORD WATERSHED ACT 167 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN



#### VOLUME I - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FINAL REPORT  
OCTOBER 10, 2008

MONTGOMERY AND PHILADELPHIA COUNTIES,  
PENNSYLVANIA

BLE PROJECT NO. 2004-1621-00



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# Robinson Park

## Wetland and Stream Restoration Project

### Next steps

- Post tonight's presentation to Township website
  - Continue standard park maintenance
  - Present Concept Plan to Board of Commissioners
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- Prepare a Preliminary Design
  - Apply for environmental/cultural permits:
    - PA Dept of Environmental Protection
    - PA Historic and Museum Commission
    - PA Fish and Boat Commission
    - Montgomery Co Conservation District
    - US Army Corps of Engineers
  - Prepare Final Design and cost estimate
  - Request authorization from Commissioners to advertise for construction bids

