



A Case for Preservation

of Clarence Schock Memorial Park at Governor Dick

Lebanon County Commissioners' Workshop
Wednesday, 19 April 2023

1:30pm | Lebanon County Municipal Building | Room 207

Friends of Governor Dick Representatives

We represent a loose alliance of lovers of the park with widely disparate interests and concerns, united by a common desire to retain Governor Dick as a healthy community park that can be enjoyed by Lebanon County residents and visitors for generations to come – following the wishes of Clarence and Evetta Schock.

- ▶ Ryan Fretz, Landscaper/Artist, Self-Employed
 - ▶ Old Mine Road, Lebanon; Life-long resident
- ▶ Cavi Miller, Old Furnace Road, Cornwall; 15-year resident
- ▶ Mike Sherman, Environmental Professional/Forest Ecologist
 - ▶ Lancaster Avenue, Mount Gretna; 22-year resident
- ▶ Deb Simpson, Business Systems Analyst, Penn State University
 - ▶ Lebanon Avenue, Mount Gretna; 3-year resident

Our Argument

- ▶ Per the deed establishing the park, the stewardship logging of Governor Dick is only permissible if the outcome is the improved health of the forest. We contend that this criteria is not being met, that negative impacts of these activities are detrimental to the health of the forest, and that the current logging operations are not justifiable.



Recent timber harvest site carpeted in invasives; canopy of invasives in timber harvest areas—princess tree, devil's walking stick, lantern fly breeding grounds direct result of stewardship activities.

Our Asks of You, the Park Trustees

1. We ask that you prove our argument wrong

- ▶ Is the forest stewardship plan improving the health of the forest?
 - ▶ The deep forest is a threatened ecosystem, only pockets of this native ecosystem remain, and they need to be protected, much of the green understory seen driving around the county are invasive plants that don't support native wildlife
 - ▶ Native forest is being replaced with invasive plants and breeding the spotted lantern fly in the timber harvest areas
 - ▶ The sapling trees planted mostly don't survive, drought stress, smothered by invasive's, deer repeatedly inside fences
 - ▶ Oak decline—dramatic die off of mature trees left to re-seed forest; drought stress and soil compaction caused by timbering being major factors
 - ▶ Compare mortality rates of mature trees with area next to be logged

Our Asks of You, the Park Trustees, *continued*

2. Reform of the parks board of directors
 - ▶ Composition of the park's board
 - ▶ Relationship between the board and the park's forester
 - ▶ The park ranger
 - ▶ Park administrative staffing
 - ▶ Treatment of the mountain biking community
 - ▶ Criminalized use of fence maintenance trails
 - ▶ Possible disruption of a bald eagle's nest during nesting season
 - ▶ Clear cutting around the tower
 - ▶ The tower security project
 - ▶ Park aesthetics

Our Suggestions

- ▶ Place a moratorium on logging while the stewardship plan is re-evaluated
- ▶ Hire independent conservation organization to have a forest ecologist evaluate the objectives of the stewardship plan versus its outcomes
- ▶ Hire a consultant to review the board of directors for any possible ethics violations and the relationship they maintain with their forester
- ▶ Make reforms to the park's board of directors: establish term limits, add members representing the diversity of park users and the community at large
- ▶ Involve the Lebanon Valley Conservancy
- ▶ Develop a countywide Department of Parks and Recreation for professional management of parks providing full-time employment and benefits to employees

Our Suggestions *, continued*

- ▶ Place the Clarence Schock Memorial Park at Governor Dick under conservation easement and work to enroll it in the Old-Growth Forest Network. The mission of the Old-Growth Forest Network is to identify and help protect at least one forest (old growth or future old growth) in each county of the United States—Governor Dick is a prime candidate to represent Lebanon County within this national network.
- ▶ Develop a carbon sequestration project that would provide an alternate revenue stream
- ▶ Manage the deer herd—deal directly with the root cause of forest regeneration problem. There are alternatives to the public hunting that Clarence Schock didn't want in the park such as private firms that cull overpopulations of deer.

Our Next Steps

- ▶ Our intentions are to maintain a public awareness campaign through events, outreach and social media, building community support for needed reform
- ▶ Continue this dialog between the Friends of Governor Dick and the County Commissioners in their role as trustees of the Clarence Schock Memorial Park at Governor Dick

"The portion thereof which is now forest or woodland shall be maintained and preserved forever as forest and woodland ..."

–Clarence Schock Memorial Park at Governor Dick Deed



Thank you!

We thank you for your time and look forward to continuing this conversation

www.friendsofgovernordick.com