

**FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE
NORTH PENN USARC LRA
CONCERNING THE REUSE OF THE NORTH PENN USARC
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP, PA**



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FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTH PENN USARC LRA

A. SURPLUS PROPERTY DECLARATION AND FORMATION OF LRA

During the spring of 2006, the Board of Supervisors of Worcester Township was informed that the North Penn U.S. Memorial Army Reserve Center, located in Worcester Township, had been declared surplus property and was to be disposed of by the Army in accordance with applicable federal law.¹

At a public meeting held on April 19, 2006, the Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 06-07,² establishing the North Penn USARC Redevelopment Authority for the purpose of formulating a recommendation for the reuse of the site. The LRA's duties included supplying information about the property to interested parties and the public; receiving public input; holding public hearings; and making a final recommendation concerning the reuse of the property.

Pursuant to this resolution, the following residents of Worcester Township were appointed to the LRA: John Harris, Chase Kneeland, and Arthur Bustard. All three LRA members are elected members of the Worcester Township Board of Supervisors.

A certified copy of Resolution No. 06-07 was submitted to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and that office was asked to recognize the North Penn USARC LRA as the official body responsible for preparing the necessary land use plan and recommendation. Subsequently, the Office of Economic Adjustment, Office of the Secretary of Defense, designated the North Penn USARC LRA as the recognized agency for reuse planning.³

The political jurisdiction comprising the LRA is Worcester Township, a municipal body organized and operating as a Township of the Second Class under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The LRA established a planning time frame and, as part of the time frame, established a six-month screening period for interested public benefit organizations to file a Notice of Interest (NOI) to reuse the property. This screening period extended from June 9, 2006, to December 8, 2006.

In May 2006, the LRA members attended an informational meeting with Liz Gabor, Project Manager with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment. Ms. Gabor reviewed with the LRA the procedure and requirements for screening for this property.

B. PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND SITE TOUR

As part of the public planning process, the LRA held a public workshop on June 29, 2006, to provide public benefit organizations with the opportunity to become familiar with the property, and to answer any questions about the NOI process. This workshop was advertised in the local newspaper, *The Times Herald*.⁴ The notice of this workshop was also sent to the following public agencies and organizations, including those that provide, or propose to provide, homeless and supportive housing and services in the area:

¹ The notice of surplus property is included in Appendix I.

² Resolution No. 06-07 is included in Appendix I.

³ The Federal Register notice of recognition of the North Penn LRA is included in Appendix I.

⁴ A copy of the local newspaper notice is included in Appendix II.

- Montgomery County Housing Coalition (POC for the Homeless Continuum of Care in Montgomery County)
- Worcester Volunteer Fire Department
- Montgomery County Board of Commissioners
- Methacton School District

Representatives of several of these organizations attended the public workshop.⁵ The LRA assembled a packet of informational material on the property and the NOI process. This packet was distributed to all participants at the June 29 workshop and was also available to the general public.⁶ This packet has been distributed to any individual or organization requesting a copy.

As an additional part of the planning process, the LRA held a public tour of the facility on September 27, 2006. This site tour was advertised in the local newspaper in the legal notices section and the front section.⁷ The information packet that was distributed at the public workshop on June 29 was also made available at the public site tour on September 27. Representatives of several public benefit organizations attended the site tour, along with township residents and officials.⁸

C. HOMELESS ASSISTANCE SUBMISSION

1. Information about Homelessness

Outreach efforts by the LRA resulted in no homeless provider interest in the property. The Montgomery County Housing Coalition is the homeless Continuum of Care point of contact for Montgomery County. This organization brings together a diverse group of people from community-based organizations, local government leadership, businesses, human services organizations, government agencies, financial institutions, builders, and faith-based organizations.

The Housing Coalition is a model of private and public sector partnership, with the common goal of reducing barriers to affordable housing, which is one of the most pressing needs of the homeless in Montgomery County. The Coalition members work to identify different populations of individuals who make up the homeless as well as the supportive services they need. Monthly Coalition meetings facilitate communication and nurture partnerships, cooperation, and joint ventures.

Periodic assessments of the needs of the homeless population performed by the Continuum of Care for Montgomery County have provided data to identify the needs of this population. In January 2005, the Montgomery County Housing Coalition's Homeless Continuum of Care Committee on Shelter and Transitional Housing, in cooperation with the County Homeless Action Team, conducted a one-day point-in-time count of the homeless population in Montgomery County. The survey counted homeless persons when they received or requested shelter during a 24-hour period. Twenty-one agencies and shelters participated in this count. In addition, a one-night street count was performed in the boroughs of Lansdale, Norristown, and Pottstown to count persons visually.⁹

⁵ A listing of workshop attendees is included in Appendix II.

⁶ The information packet is included in Appendix II.

⁷ A copy of the newspaper notices is included in Appendix III.

⁸ A list of attendees at the site tour is included in Appendix III.

⁹ A copy of the point-in-time count tally is included in Appendix IV.

For the 2005 count, the homeless persons in Montgomery County totaled 629. Of these, 374 were counted in emergency shelters, 202 were in transitional shelters, and 53 were unsheltered. There were 152 families with children, totaling 468 individuals. All of these families were sheltered in either emergency or transitional shelters. Single individuals or persons in families without children numbered 161, 53 of whom were not sheltered. Homeless subpopulations were identified as shown.

Homeless Subpopulations

Homeless Subpopulation	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
Chronically homeless	57	5	62
Severely mentally ill	89	0	89
Chronic substance abuse	47	0	47
Veterans	8	0	8
Persons with HIV/AIDS	1	0	1
Victims of domestic violence	49	0	49
Unaccompanied youth under 18	0	0	0

2. Needs and Priorities of the Homeless

Other assessments have provided additional information concerning the needs of the homeless in Montgomery County. The services most frequently requested by the homeless population are affordable child care, jobs that pay a livable wage, affordable housing, and public transportation. A county-wide needs assessment study released in October 2006 identified two immediate priorities for serving the homeless population: expanding the capacity of supportive transitional housing programs, and increasing the stock of affordable housing. This report noted that without sufficient transitional housing, the homeless often were unable to overcome other problems—mental illness, drug and alcohol problems, domestic abuse, or poverty—which had caused them to become homeless.

A county-wide housing inventory conducted from January 2005 to January 2006 tallied the beds available in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. The chart below shows the number of beds available and the unmet need for each type of housing. The inventory counts beds in two categories: individual beds and beds for families with children.

Continuum of Care – Housing Gap Analysis

	Current Inventory	Under Development	Unmet Need/Gap
<u>INDIVIDUAL BEDS</u>			
Emergency Shelter	82	0	53
Transitional Housing	39	0	40
Permanent Supportive Housing	33	10	57
<i>Total</i>	154	10	150
<u>FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN BEDS</u>			
Emergency Shelter	148	0	147
Transitional Housing	269	0	116
Permanent Supportive Housing	104	0	71
<i>Total</i>	521	0	334

Many services for the homeless are provided in Norristown, which is the county seat for Montgomery County. Some services are also provided in the towns of Abington, Pennsburg, Lansdale, and Pottstown. However, a lack of public transportation serving much of the suburban area in Montgomery County makes it difficult or impossible for many homeless persons to access these services.

Another barrier to the homeless obtaining needed services is the lack of coordinated information. The 2006 county-wide needs assessment study indicated that the lack of adequate information on where and how to get services was a significant problem. In the North Penn area of the county, churches are the most common source of outreach and information for the homeless. In addition to providing some emergency shelter and food kitchens/food banks, churches often act as clearinghouses to refer the needy to organizations that can provide additional services. Finally, Montgomery County is working toward the goal of establishing a 211 telephone system, which is a centralized information and referral source for all social services, including services for the homeless. This goal is a funding initiative of the Southeastern Pennsylvania United Way.

In Montgomery County, the majority of the homeless are families with children. The immediate need for this population is access to housing of all types – emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. Additional needs include affordable child care for these families, jobs that pay well enough to provide adequate economic support, and transportation to jobs and child care.

3. Inventory of Facilities That Provide Services to the Homeless

The following inventory includes facilities providing emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and supportive services for the homeless in Montgomery County.

Facilities and Services for the Homeless

Facility	Emerg. Shelter	Transitional Housing	Permanent Housing	Supportive Services
Indian Valley Housing Corp.	x	x		
Interfaith of the Main Line	x			
Interfaith Housing Alliance	x	x		x
Laurel House	x	x		
Morning Star Ministries		x		
Salvation Army Pottstown	x	x	x	x
Salvation Army Norristown	x	x	x	x
Sisters of Charity	x			
CADCOM				x
Community Housing Services		x		
Eldernet				x
Mental Health Association	x	x		x
Office of Aging & Adult Services		x		x
Open Line				x
Baptist Children's Services	x			
Cradle of Hope		x		
Big Brothers/Big Sisters		x		x
Our Lady's House		x		
Family Services			x	
Hedwig House			x	x

4. Efforts to Document Homelessness in Worcester Township

Homeless statistics are kept for Montgomery County as a whole. Since the jurisdiction of the LRA is Worcester Township, the LRA focused its efforts on identifying homeless persons in Worcester Township. The following organizations were contacted to determine whether they serve clients from Worcester Township:

- Coordinated Housing Outreach Center
- Methacton School District Home & School Visitor
- Montgomery County Department of Housing & Community Development
- Montgomery County Housing Coalition
- Montgomery County Office of Aging & Adult Services
- Salvation Army of Norristown

Each of these organizations informed the LRA that they had no record of serving any homeless clients from Worcester Township.

Information concerning the property and the public workshop was sent to all of the member organizations of the Montgomery County Housing Coalition.¹⁰ Two homeless services providers sent representatives to the public workshop and the site tour: Genesis Housing Corporation and Habitat for Humanity. After the public site tour, Genesis Housing Corporation advised the LRA that it would not be submitting an NOI. The LRA received no further communication from Habitat for Humanity.

One homeless services provider, the American Legion Housing for Homeless Veterans, contacted the LRA for information concerning the site and sent a representative to the site tour. Following the site tour, the LRA received no further communication from the American Legion Housing for Homeless Veterans.

D. OUTREACH TO PUBLIC BENEFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The LRA received inquiries concerning the possible reuse of the site from four local organizations – Animal Welfare Project, Methacton Community Theater, Methacton United Soccer Club, and Methacton School District. Information concerning the property was provided to each organization.

1. A representative of the Animal Welfare Project (AWP) attended the public workshop and site tour and met several times with a representative of the LRA regarding possible uses of the site. AWP was not able to submit an NOI for the property, but the organization expressed interest in the possibility of co-using portions of the site along with Worcester Township, if the township applied to acquire the property for public park and recreational purposes. Ultimately it was determined that since the majority of AWP's proposed activities at the site would not be open to the public, these activities would not be compatible with public park and recreational uses. In March 2007, AWP withdrew its expression of interest in the property.
2. Representatives of Methacton Community Theater (MCT) expressed interest in creating a permanent home for the organization, including a community theater, rehearsal rooms, and storage facilities, in the main building at the site. Several MCT board members attended a tour of the building. Following that tour, MCT presented a proposal to the LRA regarding building

¹⁰ A list of the organizations to which this information was sent is included in Appendix IV.

a community theater in the main building. This proposal is described in a separate section below.

3. The Methacton United Soccer Club expressed interest in acquiring the site for the development of private playing fields for its member teams. The organization was informed that since it is a private sports club, it is not eligible to apply for reuse of the property as a public benefit organization. No further communication was received by the LRA from the Methacton United Soccer Club.
4. Representatives of the Methacton School District attended the workshop and site tour and submitted a Notice of Interest to reuse the site as a parking and maintenance facility for the district's fleet of school buses. This NOI is discussed in more detail in a separate section below.

The Worcester Volunteer Fire Department was invited by the LRA to tour the site and consider the property for the possible relocation of the fire company. Following the site tour, Fire Department officials informed the LRA that the site was not suitable for their needs.

The Skippack barracks of the Pennsylvania State Police was invited to tour the site and consider the property for the possible relocation of this barracks. The LRA received no further communication from representatives of the Skippack barracks of the Pennsylvania State Police.

The Montgomery County Fire Academy was invited to tour the site and consider it for the possible expansion of the Fire Academy's programs. After Fire Academy representatives toured the site, the LRA received no further communication from the Fire Academy.

The LRA was contacted by three companies interested in development opportunities at the site. The LRA included these entities on the contact list for all meetings and communications.

On October 24, 2006, the LRA sent a notice to all homeless services providers and public benefit organizations that had expressed interest in the reuse of the property. These organizations were invited to make a brief presentation to the LRA concerning their possible interest in using a portion of the property in cooperation with Worcester Township's proposed acquisition of the site for public park and recreational purposes through the National Park Service's Federal Lands to Parks Program. The Animal Welfare Project and the Methacton Community Theater indicated their interest in making such presentations. Accordingly, a public meeting was scheduled.

On November 15, 2006, the LRA held a public meeting at which the Animal Welfare Project and the Methacton Community Theater made presentations indicating their interest in using a portion of the site in cooperation with Worcester Township, if the township were to acquire the site for public park and recreational purposes under the Federal Lands to Parks Program.

As of December 8, 2006, the deadline for submission of NOIs to the LRA, the LRA received one NOI, from Methacton School District, for the reuse of a portion of the site. The LRA also was aware that Worcester Township was interested in acquiring the property for public park and recreational use under the Federal Lands to Parks Program.

E. PUBLIC PLANNING MEETINGS

In January 2007, the LRA scheduled a series of three public meetings to identify community goals and vision for the site, to review the NOI that was received, and to review other proposals for the reuse of the property. In preparation for these meetings, the LRA notified all public benefit organizations, interested residents, and other entities of the meeting schedule. The meeting schedule was also posted on the Worcester Township website and listed in an article in the winter 2007 issue of the Worcester Township newsletter.¹¹

Residents living within approximately 0.75 miles of the property were notified of the meeting schedule by letter.¹² Three community-based organizations in the township (the Farmers Union Horse Company, the Friends of Worcester, and the Worcester Historical Society) were contacted by letter and invited to submit their comments concerning reuse of the site to the LRA.¹³ The Worcester Township Planning Commission was asked to submit its recommendations concerning reuse of the site.

1. First Public Planning Meeting – February 21, 2007

On February 21, 2007, the LRA held a public meeting to identify community goals and vision for the site. The meeting began with a powerpoint presentation that included information about the property and the surrounding area. Representatives of three community organizations then presented their comments concerning the future use of the property. Two of these organizations also sent letters to the LRA with their comments.¹⁴ The Worcester Township Planning Commission submitted a memorandum containing its evaluation and recommendations for the site.¹⁵

Following the presentation, LRA members and residents asked questions and offered their comments.¹⁶ Additional comments from residents were received after the meeting.¹⁷ This presentation was also given at the Meadowood Retirement Community in Worcester Township for the benefit of those residents who were unable to travel to the public meeting on February 21.

2. Second Public Planning Meeting – March 21, 2007

On March 21, 2007, the LRA held a second public meeting. At this meeting, representatives of Methacton School District presented their NOI to use a portion of the property as a parking and maintenance facility for the district's fleet of school buses. Following the presentation, comments and questions from the LRA and the public were received.

3. Third Public Planning Meeting – April 18, 2007

On April 18, 2007, the LRA held a third public meeting to consider other possible reuses of the site. A presentation was made concerning the township's possible acquisition of the property for public park and recreational uses under the Federal Lands to Parks Program. Methacton Community Theater, a local nonprofit organization, made a presentation concerning their proposal to build a community

¹¹ Copies of the website posting and the article in the Worcester Township newsletter are included in Appendix V.

¹² The letter to residents is included in Appendix V.

¹³ The letters to community organizations are included in Appendix V.

¹⁴ The letters submitted by community organizations are included in Appendix VI.

¹⁵ The memorandum from the Worcester Township Planning Commission is included in Appendix VI.

¹⁶ The minutes of the February 21, 2007, meeting are included in Appendix VI.

¹⁷ Additional comments from residents following the February 21 meeting are included in Appendix VI.

theater in the Assembly Hall of the main building, in cooperation with the township's proposed use of the site for park and recreational uses. The LRA and residents asked questions and offered comments on these proposed uses.

At the conclusion of this planning process, the LRA had under consideration (1) the NOI from Methacton School District to use a portion of the site for a school bus facility, and (2) Worcester Township's proposal to acquire the site for public park and recreational purposes, including a community center.. Methacton Community Theater proposed to partner with the township on the public park proposal, contributing funding, expertise, and labor to construct a community theater in one room of the main building on the property. No proposals for reuse were received by homeless services providers.

F. LRA DECISION ON RECOMMENDATION FOR REUSE

The LRA held a public meeting on June 4, 2007, to make its recommendation for the reuse of the property. This meeting was advertised in the local newspaper¹⁸ and on the Worcester Township website.

The LRA reviewed the two proposals for reuse – (1) the NOI from Methacton School District, and (2) the proposal from Worcester Township to acquire the property for public park and recreational use under the Federal Lands to Parks Program. There was no interest in the property from homeless services providers. The LRA discussed the positive and negative aspects of each proposal.

1. Methacton School District NOI

The school district proposed to use approximately two-thirds of the property, not including the main building, for a school bus parking and maintenance facility. No use was proposed for the main building and the remaining one-third of the property.

The school district's proposal involves over 200 school buses and employees' cars entering and exiting the property twice a day, including during morning rush hour, when the local roads are already clogged with pass-through traffic. The LRA noted that members of the public had expressed their concern about the inability of the local road system to handle this increased traffic, and also about the presence of so many large buses at the two intersections closest to the site, both of which are narrow and dangerous. It was noted that many expensive road improvements would be required to handle this increase in traffic, including the addition of several traffic signals, road widening and straightening, and the construction of turn lanes. Finally, neither the township nor the school district would receive any economic benefit from this proposal, since local and school taxes would be abated on a site owned by the school district. The LRA received no positive comments from the public, from community groups, or from the Worcester Planning Commission regarding this proposal.

The positive aspects of this proposal, from the viewpoint of the school district, were:

- The school bus parking and maintenance facilities have insufficient space at their current location at the high school. There is no room to expand these facilities, and in fact the space now occupied by the buses is needed to provide additional parking for staff and students.

¹⁸ Copies of the newspaper advertisements are included in Appendix VII.

- The existing parking facilities and maintenance building on the Army Reserve property could be used by the district with little additional expenditure for renovation or improvement.
- The cost of the property would be discounted 40%, saving the district some of the cost of land acquisition.

2. Worcester Township Proposal – Federal Lands to Parks Program

From the beginning of the planning process, Worcester Township expressed interest in acquiring the property for public park and recreational uses under the Federal Lands to Parks Program. In the fall of 2006, the LRA contacted the sponsoring agency for this proposed reuse, the National Park Service. An LRA representative spoke with Mr. William L. Huie, Program Manager of the Federal Lands to Parks Program, Southeast Region, to discuss the proposed reuse of this property as a public park. Mr. Huie explained the opportunities and requirements of the FLP program. As the LRA worked through the reuse planning process, Mr. Huie advised the LRA and the township as to which co-uses would be appropriate under the guidelines of the Federal Lands to Parks program.

Throughout the planning process, township residents expressed support for a park at this site. At the February 2007 public planning meeting, it was noted that the portion of the township in which the Army base is located has no neighborhood park where residents can walk, jog, bicycle, or ride horseback. Many of these activities are no longer safe to pursue on the township's narrow roads because of the amount of pass-through traffic on these roads.

The 2006 Worcester Open Space Plan indicated that the township's needs for park facilities are barely being met by its current park system. The township's population has grown considerably in the past 25 years and is expected to continue to grow, creating a need for additional park facilities, and particularly for indoor facilities. The township currently has one community park, Heebner Park, at the center of the township. This facility includes a tot lot, several soccer and baseball fields, several short walking and bridle trails, and outdoor tennis and basketball courts. There are no indoor recreational facilities at this park, nor are any planned at this time.

The township has three smaller neighborhood parks, each less than 10 acres in size. One is located at the far eastern edge of the township and includes several ballfields and a tot lot. The second is located at the western edge of the township and includes one ballfield and a short walking trail. The third is currently undeveloped due to environmental issues. A park owned by an adjacent municipality is located in the northern corner of the township. It includes ballfields, picnic pavilions, and walking trails. A county-owned historic site is located near the center of the township and provides walking trails. A state park located on the western edge of the township provides trails for walking and horseback riding.¹⁹

The Army base property already contains the basic infrastructure necessary for a public park – water, on-site septic, outdoor lighting, adequate parking, and security fencing. An overview of the outdoor recreational opportunities at the site concluded that the internal road and sidewalk system at the Army Reserve base could be converted into a paved loop trail for various active recreational opportunities. These trails could be made accessible to persons with disabilities. Portions of the large paved parking areas could be converted into tennis, volleyball, and basketball courts, and an outdoor ice skating rink. The site has good possibilities for future off-road trail connections to the township's municipal park system and to two proposed multi-use trail corridors.

¹⁹ A map of the existing park facilities in the township is included in Appendix VII.

The township currently has no facility at which evening classes, summer camps, and indoor cultural activities can be held. Methacton Community Theater (MCT) has expressed interest in partnering with the township to build a community theater in the main building's large Assembly Hall. MCT's productions, as well as other community activities, could be held in this facility. The classrooms in the main building would be usable for community education offerings and meeting spaces for community groups.

A Facilities Assessment was commissioned by the township to assess the current condition of the buildings on the site, in order to assist the LRA in its decision-making process. The Facilities Assessment concluded that the main building is well built and reasonably well maintained. The value of the building was estimated to be much greater than the cost to demolish it or renovate it for use as a community center. The report included recommendations and cost estimates for the renovations necessary to conform this building to current code requirements for public occupancy and ADA accessibility.

The LRA discussed the fact that there will be maintenance and renovation expenses associated with developing this property as a public park. The schedule and budget for renovating and using the site infrastructure and the buildings will be included in the township's Federal Lands to Parks Program application to the National Park Service, which is currently being prepared for submission to the NPS.

Township officials recognized that there may be environmental contamination on the site resulting from its years of use as a Nike missile base and an Army Reserve Center. The township is aware of the information presented in the Environmental Condition of Property report, and also of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's position that further testing is needed to assess the type, location, and extent of any contamination. If the township's proposal under the Federal Lands to Parks Program is approved, the township expects to work with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the Army, and the Army Corps of Engineers to address any site contamination in a manner that will be appropriate for the anticipated recreational uses of the site.

3. Public Comments and Reuse Decision

Following the LRA's summation of these two reuse proposals, public comments were received.²⁰ A member of the Methacton Community Theater's Board of Directors confirmed the organization's desire to partner with the township to construct a community theater in the Assembly Hall of the main building. The LRA noted that the majority of public sentiment, both at this meeting and at previous public meetings, supported the reuse of this site as a park. After careful consideration of the options, the LRA voted unanimously to recommend to the Office of the Secretary of Defense that the property be transferred to Worcester Township for public park and recreational use under the Federal Lands to Parks Program.

The township's application to acquire the property under the FLP program is now being prepared and is expected to be submitted to the National Park Service shortly. At this time, the township envisions an initial five-year implementation plan, during which the facility is proposed to be renovated and reconfigured for public use, including a loop trail system, outdoor tennis and basketball courts, a picnic area, and an outdoor ice skating area. Interpretive signage will commemorate the historical significance of the former Nike missile base on the property.

²⁰ The minutes of the June 4, 2007, public meeting are included in Appendix VII.

The main building is envisioned to be developed as a community center, to be renovated and phased into use in stages. The first floor is proposed to include a community theater, classrooms, a multipurpose room, and offices to house the township's Parks and Recreation Department. The maintenance building will be used by the township's Public Works Department to house its parks maintenance equipment.

G. PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF DRAFT BASE REUSE PLAN

The draft Base Reuse Plan was presented to residents at a public meeting on June 20, 2007. This meeting was advertised in the local newspaper pursuant to public notice.²¹

At the meeting, the LRA presented a review of the public outreach process, including the homeless assistance submission, and an analysis of the two reuse proposals that were received for the property. The pros and cons of each proposal were reviewed. Proposed park and recreational uses for specific areas and buildings on the property were presented.²²

The LRA summarized its recommendation that the property be transferred to Worcester Township for public park and recreational use under the Federal Lands to Parks Program, and noted that this option has been discussed with the National Park Service's Southeast Region office. The LRA is expected to rezone the property AGR (agricultural), in accord with the current zoning of surrounding properties, with an intended municipal use for public park and recreational purposes.

Many members of the public who commented on the plan indicated their support for the decision to take advantage of the opportunity to add this property to Worcester's municipal park system, and to acquire a facility that can be used in the future as a community center.²³ A representative of Methacton Community Theater confirmed the organization's desire to work with Worcester Township to build a community theater in the main building at the site.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Resolution No. 07-15 was passed to adopt the recommendation as presented in the Base Reuse Plan.²⁴

H. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Environmental Condition of Property report noted numerous environmental issues at the site, including underground storage tanks that were not properly closed and multiple areas of possible environmental contamination as a result of the property's use as a Nike missile site. The report also identified some areas of the property where additional testing will be needed to identify and characterize possible soil and groundwater contamination. The property was previously identified as a potential contributor to the soil-to-groundwater TCE contamination in the area. In addition, asbestos- and lead-containing materials were reported to be located in the buildings.

A review of the Environmental Condition of Property report was prepared for the LRA. This review indicated several additional areas of concern.²⁵ The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection also reviewed the Environmental Condition of Property report and submitted their

²¹ A copy of the newspaper advertisement is included in Appendix VIII.

²² A site plan showing proposed uses at the property is included in Appendix VIII.

²³ Detailed notes of the public comments received at this meeting are included in Appendix VIII.

²⁴ A copy of Resolution No. 07-15 is included in Appendix VIII.

²⁵ A copy of this report is included in Appendix IX.

comments to the Army.²⁶ Among other issues, some areas of the property with potential for contamination were not addressed in the Environmental Condition of Property report. In addition, several reports that were previously prepared concerning environmental issues at the site have not yet been obtained and reviewed. The history of uses at the property indicates that a comprehensive schedule of environmental testing should be established for the site, in order to identify and characterize areas of contamination.

The Army and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Federal Facilities for the Land Recycling Program are parties to a Cooperative Multi-Site Agreement to address contamination at former Nike missile sites across Pennsylvania. As a starting point, the scope of work for a standard Nike site should be reviewed to determine the types of contamination that might be found on the Nike portion of this property.

DEP's Land Recycling Office is expected to be involved in the remediation and redevelopment of the site under the Pennsylvania Land Recycling Act. It is expected that representatives of the township, the LRA, the Army, and DEP will work together throughout the site investigation, choice of remedy, and remediation processes to assure that the site investigation is complete and that cleanup standards are chosen which are protective of human health and the environment for the recommended future use of the site.

²⁶ A copy of this letter is included in Appendix IX.

Appendices to Base Reuse Plan

Appendix I – Surplus Property Declaration and Formation of LRA

Federal Register Notice of Availability of Surplus Property
Resolution No. 06-07
Federal Register Notice of Recognition of North Penn USARC LRA

Appendix II – Public Workshop

Newspaper advertisement of public workshop
List of attendees at public workshop
Information packet distributed at public workshop and provided to individuals and organizations upon request

Appendix III – Site Tour

Newspaper advertisement of site tour
List of attendees at site tour

Appendix IV – Homeless Assistance Submission

Point-in-time homeless population count, 1-26-05
Homeless services providers in the Montgomery County Continuum of Care to which notices of the availability of surplus property, public workshop, and site tour were sent

Appendix V – Outreach to Public Benefit Organizations

Notice posted on Worcester Township website
Article in Worcester Township newsletter
Letter mailed to residents living near Army Reserve Base
Letters mailed to community organizations in Worcester Township

Appendix VI – Public Planning Meeting

Letters received from community organizations
Memorandum submitted by Worcester Planning Commission
Minutes of February 21, 2007, public meeting
Comments from residents received following public meeting of February 21, 2007

Appendix VII – LRA Decision on Recommendation for Reuse

Newspaper advertisements of June 4, 2007, public meeting and reuse decision
Map of public parkland in Worcester Township
Minutes of June 4, 2007, public meeting and reuse decision
Resolution No. 07-15

Appendix VIII – Public Presentation of Draft Base Reuse Plan

Newspaper advertisement of June 20, 2007, public meeting and presentation of draft
Base Reuse Plan

Site plan showing proposed uses at the property

Detailed notes of public comments at June 20, 2007, public meeting

Appendix IX – Environmental Considerations

Review of Environmental Condition of Property Report – Memo to LRA

Letter from Federal Facilities Section, Bureau of Waste Management, Pennsylvania
DEP, regarding Environmental Condition of Property Report