

Williams Township Land Preservation Board (LPB)

Minutes August 22, 2023

Williams Township Community Building

655 Cider Press Rd., Easton, PA 18042

Present: Bob Schmidt, Ken Kodama, Lorraine Mineo, Tom Heilman, and Lori Cox; Alternate Polly Clark and Michael Cortright; Supervisor Ray Abert; and township residents

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Bob Schmidt at 7:02 PM.

He called for the Pledge of Allegiance, then a review of the July 25, 2023 minutes. Motion to approve the minutes made by Kodama, seconded by Heilman. Approved 5-0.

Updates on Preservation Projects:

- 2022-2-Morgan Hill: Property owner was present. LPB, Heritage Conservancy (Heritage), and Northampton County (NORCO) had a site visit with the owners on August 10, 2023 to discuss moving forward with preserving the lower parcel, which needs to be rescored. LPB discussed adjusting the score based on wetlands and public road access, which would be 125 points. This score is comparable to previous properties which have been approved. Mineo made a motion to recommend the lower parcel of the property to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) for appraisal by The Frederick Group, Kodama seconded, and it was approved unanimously. The turnaround time for getting appraisal will be tight as Heritage's committee meets September 27, 2023 but they would like the appraisal report by September 20, 2023 (and their next meeting will not be until January 2024). The township's BOS meets September 13, 2023 so a special meeting would need to be requested. Schmidt will check with the township office.
- 2023-1 Steely Hill: The agreement of sale (AOS) was signed by all parties. Regarding the powerline easement width, MetEd is in agreement in principle but not on paper; however, this should not be an issue. Heritage is working on the application to NORCO for funding and the approval process can take time. LPB cannot request to have a survey done until the approval process with NORCO is complete.
- 2023-2 Raubsville Road: LPB, Heritage, and NORCO had a site visit with the owners on August 10, 2023. The geological question Schmidt had was discussed with Kodama at the site visit, there is a sliver of limestone on the property. The property owners are not in agreement to the suggestions made regarding the fence and wetlands buffer. Motion made by Mineo to deny moving forward in the land preservation program for this property, seconded by Heilman, approved unanimously.
- 2023-3 Morvale Road: LPB, Heritage, and NORCO had a site visit with the owner on August 10, 2023. LPB discussed scoring for the property. The property appears to be within 300 feet of other properties with wetlands. Schmidt will check on this which would give the property up to 20 more points and could bring it up to about 130 points. Next step would be to get price quotes for appraisal and then ask the BOS for approval. Schmidt will get appraisal quotes and bring them to the next LPB meeting. Heritage also asked NORCO if they are interested in buying the property as county park land but has not heard back yet. Additionally, properties get points for being adjacent to preserved properties so there was also discussion about a neighboring preservation project. There are concerns about that property being preserved in perpetuity. The township would be the holder of the easement for the adjacent property and LPB could ask if the township will be signing it over to Heritage. Mineo questioned if LPB could pay for the baseline study. The BOS are not involved in the conversations regarding the adjacent preservation project, the attorneys are.

Old Business:

- LPB discussed the preservation sign for the Russell property. Schmidt had shared examples of other signage from other townships/counties for preservation. The Russell property sign would need to have acknowledgements for the township, Heritage and NORCO. Heritage has their new logo now. Mineo will ask the Russells how they would like their name noted.
- LPB discussed map options for display of the township's preserved properties. LPB prefers the block style map used by Heritage. Schmidt will check with the township office about getting the map printed.
- Regarding the forestry management plan, BOS approved it in their last meeting, there were no objections from anyone present at the meeting.

New Business:

- Treasurer's Report: Mineo shared the LPB Financial Report for July 2023. Checking account \$5,862.62, savings account \$473,918.71, CD \$1,300,000.00, total \$1,779,781.33. LPB discussed Land Preservation funds and options for future funding. LPB will discuss further in the next meeting.
- BOS approved Michael Cortright as LPB alternate.
- LPB reviewed letter of interest from resident Nurit B. Baron for LPB alternate. Baron attended the meeting. LPB had an opportunity to learn more about Baron. Baron shared her background and interest in land preservation, as well as her relevant experience.

Announcements: None

Comments from audience: None

Meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM. Cox moved, Kodama seconded. Unanimous approval.

Next meeting September 26, 2023 @ 7:00 PM, Williams Township Community Building. Executive Session to be held @ 6:40 PM on September 26, 2023.

Submitted,

Lori Cox, Secretary