

Williams Township Land Preservation Board (LPB)

Minutes September 26, 2023

Williams Township Community Building

655 Cider Press Rd., Easton, PA 18042

Present: Bob Schmidt, Ken Kodama, Lorraine Mineo, and Tom Heilman; Alternates 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 August 22, 2023 minutes. Motion to approve the minutes made by Kodama, seconded by Heilman. Approved 4-0.

Updates on Preservation Projects:

- 2022-2-Morgan Hill: Property owner was present. This is the south/lower parcel. The appraisal estimate from The Frederick Group was in error and they gave a new price of \$3,500. Indian Valley's quote is \$2,600 and turnaround time is four to five weeks. The Frederick Group said that if they appraised two different properties for LPB, they would have been \$3,200 each, which is still more than Indian Valley's quote of \$2,600. There is no time crunch at this point since Northampton County (NORCO) had their meeting. Mineo made a motion to recommend the lower parcel to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) for appraisal by Indian Valley, Kodama seconded, approved 4-0.
- 2023-4 Morgan Hill: Property owner was present. This property is the north/upper parcel and has its own application now so a new number was assigned. LPB discussed scoring the property in the meeting since a site visit was already done. It scored 150 points. Kodama made a motion to recommend the north parcel of the property for an appraisal, Mineo seconded, approved 4-0. Schmidt will contact Indian Valley and a few others about an appraisal.
- 2023-1 Steely Hill: Matt Babbitt of Heritage Conservancy (Heritage) had shared that all parties have agreed to the issues regarding the Met-Ed easement and the owners growing mushrooms and taking firewood to their home at a different location. Owners can take 200 feet in circumference of wood per year (about 10 trees). This is only good for the current owners to do. Additionally, a resolution from the BOS is needed to finalize this. Issue of the Met-Ed right of way (ROW) is now with the landowners' lawyer and Met-Ed. Babbitt sent the application to NORCO. LPB needs to hold on getting survey quotes since we are waiting for NORCO to approve the application and for the Met-Ed ROW issue to be resolved.
- 2023-2 Raubsville Road: Schmidt told the BOS that the LPB is not going forward with the preservation project for this property.
- 2023-3 Morvale Road: Property owner was present. Schmidt confirmed wetlands are within 300 feet of this property, which gives a possible 20 points. Property is 292 feet to the edge of the pond near the corner of Morvale and Wottrings Mill Roads. This property should get all 20 points bringing it up to 150 points. Schmidt had the price quotes for appraisal. The Frederick Group is \$3,500 and Indian Valley is \$2,600. Kodama made a motion to recommend the property to the BOS for appraisal by Indian Valley, Mineo seconded, approved 4-0. Discussion of the "in perpetuity" which is on our deeds and we have three co-holders of the deed (Heritage, Township, and NORCO) that makes it legally very difficult to overturn. The concern Mineo raised is in relation to the adjacent land that is being preserved by Chrin. Apparently, Heritage will do the baseline study but only the Township will be the holder of easement.

Old Business:

- LPB discussed the preservation sign for the Russell property. The Russells would like their names to read as “Walter and Ligaya Russell” on the sign. Heilman will go to Fast Signs to get an estimate and pick a design.
- For a map of the township’s preserved properties, the Township’s large format printer is up and operational. LPB will use the map from Heritage. Kodama will contact Heritage to get the file to print the map of Williams Township Conserved Land.
- Regarding LPB alternate board position, Mineo moved to propose Nurit Baron to BOS as an alternate member of LPB, seconded by Heilman, approved 4-0.

New Business:

- Treasurer’s Report: Mineo shared the LPB Financial Report for August 2023. Checking account \$4,343.33 savings account \$475,164.45, CD \$1,300,000.00, total \$1,779,507.78.
- LPB had a discussion about putting a referendum on the ballot to levy a tax to raise money for LPB. Audience member Baron suggested that we send off a mailer to advertise what we do on the LPB and why we need money. Or we can put together a sub-committee to work on building up to a referendum.

Announcements: None

Comments from audience: None

Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 PM. Heilman moved, Mineo seconded. Unanimous approval.

Next meeting October 24, 2023 @ 7:00 PM, Williams Township Community Building.

Submitted,

Lori Cox, Secretary