

Williams Township Land Preservation Board (LPB)

Minutes August 26, 2025

Williams Township Community Building

655 Cider Press Rd., Easton, PA 18042

Present: Ken Kodama, Tom Heilman, Lorraine Mineo, Michael Cortright, and Lori Cox; Board of Supervisor (BOS) Ray Abert; township residents; Matt Babbitt of Heritage Conservancy

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ken Kodama at 7:03 PM. He called for the Pledge of Allegiance, then a review of the July 22, 2025 minutes. Mineo made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Cortright. The motion was approved 5-0.

Updates on Preservation Projects:

- 2022-2 (south parcel) and 2023-4 (north parcel): Kodama and Babbitt reported that the survey is still pending. Once completed, the Baseline Documentation Report will be prepared, approximately one month before the expected October 2025 closing. Met-Ed is continuing internal assessments for the right-of-way easements. Since there are two types of powerlines, there are two departments at Met-Ed that handle the easements. Babbitt has requested updates from Met-Ed many times.
- 2023-3: Babbitt and Kodama reported that the survey for this project is still being finalized.
- 2025-1: An application has been received for this project. Heilman and Babbitt conducted a site visit, and Heilman scored the property at 160 out of a possible 220 points. Babbitt noted that the property is 19.3 acres, consisting of two parcels split by the road, and includes steep slopes, open fields, and woods. There is an old stone home, outbuildings, a garage, and an old well on the property. If preserved, it would become the third preserved property in a continuous line, as it is adjacent to existing preserved properties. The owner wishes to place a conservation easement on the property through a 100% donation, which means funds will be needed to cover project costs. The owner does not wish to allow public access. Babbitt stated that no appraisal is required for closing, though the owner will need one for tax purposes. Mineo made a motion to recommend to the BOS that the township move forward with the agreement of sale and cover project costs. The motion was seconded by Heilman and approved 5-0.

Old Business:

- Regarding the Earned Income Tax (EIT) referendum, Kodama reported that the EIT committee, Preserve Williams, printed and mailed informational brochures to township households with a registered voter. The Facebook page is active, and canvassing will begin. A public workshop to explain the referendum will be held on September 18, 2025 at 7:00 PM at the Williams Township Municipal Building. The referendum question has been submitted to the Board of Elections. Kodama will ask the Township Manager whether the LPB members may answer residents' questions at the workshop and participate in canvassing.
- For the Township website, Heilman shared that he spoke with the Township Manager about clarifying the "contact us" link to make it easier for residents to reach the LPB. He also noted that the map of preserved properties and EIT referendum brochure are available on the website.
- Mineo updated the board on contacting landowners without signage for past preservation projects. One landowner requested a sign, and another is considering it. For the property requesting a sign, Wildlands was a partner; Mineo is awaiting a usable logo from them. Babbitt noted that Heritage Conservancy can enhance low-resolution images for a small fee so they can be used on signs.

## New Business:

- Mineo previously raised concerns about whether the LPB has access to an updated parcel list that includes current owners, parcel numbers, and the organization involved in the preservation. She also asked how the township is notified when properties change ownership. She reported that the Township Manager explained the current process. The Township Manager uses [ncpub.org](http://ncpub.org) for current tax maps and maintains updated lists. Each year, the Township Manager writes to the school district identifying preserved farmland owners and conservation easement holders by tax parcel, with taxation rates frozen at the year of preservation. The Township Manager also receives monitoring reports from Heritage Conservancy. Reports from other organizations, such as Wildlands, do not currently go directly to the Township Manager, though improvements are being worked on. Easement infringements that occur between annual monitoring may sometimes be reported by residents. The Township Manager offered to attend a future LPB meeting to review this process, or alternatively, meet separately with two LPB members. It was recommended that two LPB members meet with her prior to the EIT referendum workshop.

Treasurer's Report: Mineo shared the June and July 2025 LPB financial reports:

June- checking account \$18,290.32 and savings account \$1,505,097.38, total \$1,523,387.70.

July- checking account \$16,108.67 and savings account \$1,507,379.56, total \$1,523,488.23.

Announcements: None.

Comments from audience: None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM, following a motion by Cox, seconded by Heilman. The motion was approved 5-0.

Next meeting September 23, 2025 @ 7:00 PM, Williams Township Community Building.

Submitted,

Lori Cox, Secretary