

**East Pikeland Township
Open Space Committee**

**Meeting Minutes
January 23, 2018**

Meeting called to order by Rusty Strauss, at 7:03pm

Present: Rusty Strauss, Betsy Burns, John Schott, Martin Sheehan, Stock Illoway, and Kersten Appler.

Absent: Lori Beck

Guests: Michelle Rubin (EPT Rep)

Minutes from November, 2017 meeting were approved as read.
It was reported that the current budget is \$4.6M.

New Business:

- Re-Organization
 - John nominated Rusty as chair, Stock as Vice Chair, and Kersten as secretary. All accepted the nominations and all were approved.
- New OS Maps & Documents
 - Michelle shared a few new documents including an updated open space map and property map key, and a list of properties owned by the Township and under conservation easement.
 - Comments on the documents:
 - Documents should be checked against a document in dropbox that has parcels that were included in the covenant connected to a grant. Should be double checked.
 - John asked if we should have some limitation on the Township building property in order to protect French Creek. Is it possible to put it under a conservation easement to protect it? Can we protect it while still leaving room for the Township to expand its buildings but can't sell it in the future?
 - Rusty said that the open space referendum ensures that the Township can't sell property purchased with Open Space funds.
 - The Committee will make a list of recommendations of properties that they would like to have protected.
- Board of Supervisors February Update
 - Michelle will be giving an Open Space update at the February Board of Supervisors Meeting. She asked for suggestions of topics she should mention:
 - General summary of OSC situation; Easement on Graham; Brimful

Farm; See that other areas around the French Creek are under easement; summary of minutes from previous year; land that was protected/purchased; mention park and rec future partnership and working together to acquire right of ways and land to complete trails, connect to regional trails, and expand parks.

- 2018 Committee Goals—For the Strategic Planning Meeting
 - Committee members in attendance at the strategic planning meeting have been asked to state their goals for 2018. Open Space goals are:
 - Protect land along the French Creek
 - Preserve the property surrounding the Kimberton Fair Grounds/KYAL/Kimberton Park
 - Work with Park and Rec to acquire land for parks and trails

Old Business:

- 724 Corridor Update (John Schott)
 - Economic development along the 724 corridor is the focus of the committee. Our Township looks good and we are ahead of other areas because we've already thought about what's missing and what we need to look attractive to buyers. The committee is focused on complete streets including increased trails and sidewalks.
 - Stock asked if this committee would be counter to OSC interests to protect open land in the northern part of the Township. John explained that so far this group is only looking at properties directly along the 724 in the MU district.
 - Kersten asked if anyone had seen the Landscapes 3 map which have been recently put online. Landscapes 3 is the county comprehensive plan. She had heard that they may have changed areas in East Pikeland from rural to suburban, which could impact funding.
 - John mentioned that the conflict between marketing and conservation is still being discussed on the committee.
 - Betsy asked if the committee has any rights or control in our Township. Stock explained that it's just a planning group. John said that they can't control what we do but they do have funds that could help us get projects funded.
- Update on Township Open Space spending options
 - Michelle informed the committee that she read through the Open Space Law and that there was no mention of money or how much we could spend on a property. However, it is mentioned in the Second Class Township Code that we are only able to pay the appraisal value or the average of two appraisals.
 - The committee is still interested in pursuing the option to use OS funds for maintenance. Stock and Michelle reported that at a meeting with French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust. A land lawyer mentioned that we could try to amend our ordinance

which would not require a vote. Rusty mentioned that if our referendum references the law then we would have more room to propose the use. Rusty asked for a copy of the referendum. The committee would like to have this cleared up this year.

- Property Updates:
 - Crouse/Pikeland Glen: Michelle reported that she, Kim Moretti, and Ron Graham met with Jacob to explain the history of the property and an appraisal was ordered.
 - Davis: Stock reported that the Davises don't have any offers at the moment on the property and they gave us their appraisal from 2015. John said we need to find out if they would be interested in our offer of \$2M. Stock will reach out and ask if they would be willing to consider our offer. If they aren't willing he will suggest that they get a new appraisal (which might be higher) and then we can talk about splitting the difference.
 - Steimer: Michelle reported that it sounds like they want to continue on as they have been, letting the Fire Co. use the property but now own it. Stock asked if we can get a right of first refusal which would give us assurance that they can't sell it without our knowledge. John said we would need to probably talk to them to do it—we still need to set up a meeting with them. We will wait to set something up until Stock is back from his trip and then we'll connect with them. Michelle will see if she can find a number
 - Meyer Sale: Rusty reported that the home property and an adjacent lot went up for sheriff sale, but the home property was re-purchased by Meyer. Not sure about the adjacent lot.
 - Graham: Michelle reported that an appraisal was ordered in order to show the community the value of the land, then the land will be placed under conservation easement.
 - Wagner: Rusty reported that Harold Wagner may be interested in selling us the property. Michelle sent him our appraisal, waiting to hear back.
 - Brimful Farm: Michelle reported that we do have a deed of easement for a portion of the property. The committee agreed that we should take the easement sooner rather than later. What if any steps need to be taken to enforce this? We may need to get a legal opinion. John made a motion and Stock seconded to exercise our right to take the easement on Brimful Farm property that was granted in 2006. This request will be sent to the Board of Supervisors

With no further business, Martin moved and Stock seconded the adjournment of the meeting at 8:45pm.

Next Meeting February 20, 2018.