

**East Pikeland Township
Open Space Committee**

**Meeting Minutes
May 23, 2018**

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm

Present: Rusty Strauss, Betsy Burns, John Schott, Stock Illoway, Lori Beck, and Kersten Appler

Absent: Martin Sheehan

Guest: Jonathan Gayl

Staff: Michelle Rubin

Minutes from the April meeting were approved with no changes.

Michelle reported that the budget is at \$4.78M and is estimated to bring in \$300k more this year.

- Committee members asked Michelle to discover how the township's new investment policy is going to impact Open Space funds.

Old Business

1. Appraisal price update

- Stock reported that French and Pickering Creek Conservation Trust (FPCCT) is signing an agreement with Charlestown to be the Township's conservation consultant. Charlestown will then be in a position to give FPCCT a grant for conservation projects--an indefinite amount from the open space fund that can only be used in their township. FPCCT can also receive other funds from private donors into that fund. This fund will be used to make the township more competitive when their appraisal is considerably lower than a property owner wants to accept. FPCCT would then be a joint holder.
 - This has gotten legal review from the highest conservation lawyer in the state. The Open Space Committee would need to discuss this option with the Board of Supervisors.
 - FPCCT would consider purchase of property for other projects, not just conservation or ag easements
 - Pam Brown from FPCCT is willing to sit and talk with the Board of Supervisors and go over East Pikeland's options. The Committee could also get a legal opinion from the attorney they have been using. The Committee would have to have the East Pikeland solicitor to approve this idea.

2. Database work

- Fill in top 5 priorities
- 6-10 priority properties
 - The Committee decided to fill these in as they go along, focus will remain on top 5 at this time.

3. Brief property updates:

- Pikeland Glen:
 - Michelle reported that the township has received an appraisal for the land and that it is competitive. However, she was not able to give the official sum at this time because the Township solicitor has asked us not to discuss it publicly due to ongoing litigation.

- Graham
 - Michelle reported that the Graham property was appraised at \$1,517,500 (\$25,000/acre)
 - Stock explained that we got the appraisal so that the Township would know what value they were giving up by putting a conservation easement on the land
 - Rusty mentioned that the referendum states that we can only spend money in East Pikeland, so that may exclude the section of this property that is in West Vincent.
 - The committee voted unanimously to put the graham property under conservation easement, this decision will be sent to the Board of Supervisors
- Kolb
 - A few committee members did a walkthrough on Sunday, May 20 of four parcels owned by the Kolb family. The family is interested in putting the land under conservation easement.
 - The committee discussed the property and completed the priority matrix for the land.
 - The committee directed Michelle to send specific instructions to the appraiser, which Rusty will right up in more detail.
 - The committee voted unanimously to make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that we pursue an appraisal for the specified Kolb parcels.
- Davis
 - John talked with Kyle Davis and discovered that they have received a written offer for the purchase of the property with down money and it's in his attorney's hands. Davis said there is no way he will sell to the Township because he can get so much more money elsewhere. As soon as he gets a signed agreement, he will let the township know.
 - John specifically expressed interest in protecting the park, KYAL, and the firehouse, but Kyle said that it wasn't up to him but that he would pass the info along. John suggested that we approach the developer directly if we want to discuss the property and/or creating a buffer between development and the park etc.
- Steimer
 - John is working on getting in touch with John Steimer Jr.
- Wagner
 - Michelle reported that she received an appraisal from the township, but that it was not something that we will accept due to the fact that it is based on old, unapproved sketch plans, and not current zoning. In addition, there were no comps, sewer and water was discussed as if they were already present (which they are not), among other issues.
 - The committee voted to reject the appraisal based on the above reasons. Rusty will follow up with their lawyer.
- Dixon
 - Rusty will follow up
- Dougherty
 - John reported that the property sold for double our appraisal. He asked Michelle to send him property owner information.
- Waterworld
 - No updates
- East Pikeland Elementary
 - Michelle reported that the school district is looking at Phoenix Crossing for a new elementary school. The school district knows that the Township is interested in the old East Pikeland Elementary School property. They are sending the township their appraisal, and Michelle will continue to report back to the committee.
- Brimful Farm

- Michelle will continue to look into the legality of the document that states the township's rights over the open space in that subdivision.

New Business

1. Save Stoneleigh
 - Stock gave a report on this property, which is under conservation easement, but being considered for eminent domain for a new school. He encouraged the committee to keep an eye on what happens here.
2. Northern Federation--Spotted Lantern Fly
 - Rusty asked Michelle to report on what the township is doing about the spotted lantern fly. She reported that the township is currently focused on education and eradicating the tree that provides habitat for this invasive species.
3. Right of First Refusal
 - A legal, recorded document that may or may not require money
 - How/Why would the open space committee/township use this?
4. Joint P&R/OSC Meeting
 - Michelle reported that the Park and Recreation Board will not be ready for another joint meeting until at least September. They will evaluate the park and recreation survey responses and form a rough park and recreation plan, and until that happens there is no point in meeting.
 - The Committee asked if they could see a draft of the plan before the joint meeting

Public Comment

None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40