

West Vincent Township
Environmental Advisory Council
Final Minutes-July 5, 2017

Attending: Don Cook; Jim Deisinger; Jane Helm; Vic Laubach; Pieter Ouwerkerk; Suzanne Roth; Harriet Stone.

Also attending: Carol Armstrong (Charlestown Township); Erica Batdorf; Brian Curry; Kur Bonak; Sara Shick; Beth Uhler (Cedarville Engineering); Tom Wargo (Township Building Code Officer); Davey Waters.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 P.M.

Approval of the minutes with changes from Harriet/HRC.

1st: Harriet Stone; 2nd: Pieter Ouwerkerk

All approved

Board of Supervisors (BOS)- still working with Natural Land (NL) on the Bryn Coed property. Chester County has a GIS department to do Historic Identification Designations (HID). A very long and involved discussion was had about historic bridges and culverts. Our historic bridges were included in the original HID inventory of 1990. PRESERVATION News letter has new guidance on historic bridges. The Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission (PMHC) and PennDot have information on historic bridges.

Northern Federation – Bernie Couris and his team explained their work plan to the group. Carol de Wolf talked about the Schuylkill Highlands project to designate Route 23 into a PA scenic corridor.

Regional Planning Committee – held a workshop as part of the update to the Regional Comp Plan on 6/22/17. West Vincent was well represented. The Phoenixville Regional Planning survey will be held open until the end of the year.

Sustainability – continues working on their Fair for October 14 and other initiatives.

Parks & Recreation – continues work on mapping trails and what to do about trails in the future. Ken Alan has offered to help improve the state of the School House Park and has been connecting with others interested in the same.

Planning Commission – Sunderland Avenue and its culvert that goes over a protected stream with severe drop-offs was discussed with recommendations of a 22-foot roadbed sitting on top of a 60-foot culvert, a more improved structure and a better rip-rap system to go to the BOS. There was no discussion of the Kling property. His plan is being revised. Discussed plainer language in ordinances.

Open Space – Bryn Coed funding. New member: Jeff Goldberg.

Ad hoc Zoning Ordinance Changes – Erica, Sara and Vic met with Rick Trailles to suggest improvements to ZO. This will be an on-going effort.

Old Business (priorities/goals):

Jane, Sara and Vic will meet with Erica on July 11 at 3:30 P.M. to discuss forest protections, heritage/significant tree protections; this will be an on-going effort.

Suzanne will prepare an overview of the 2015/16 EAC meetings to serve as our annual report to the Supervisors.

Historic Resources Committee will change their meeting time to the 4th Monday of the month at 6:30 P.M. Meeting (7/27/17) with Tom Wargo, Bob Wise, Peter Benton and others needs to be rescheduled.

Tom Wargo explained that there is no permit required for demolition. All HID's are now in the township database. Tom must respond to a home-owner within 15 days when a request for building or remodeling is made and 30 days in the case of a commercial application. The HRC has established a Rapid Response Team (RRT) made up of Bob Wise, Peter Benton, Kate Farnham, Isabelle Traviligni, Barb Quinter and Karen Oncay could make a decision within a week regarding permit applications. Tom Wargo must get a yea or nay, with specific comments, to place a stay or hold to the state on commercial property for 30 days and 15 days for residential. The HRC is a sub-committee of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC). A meaningful review must be made promptly for Tom to request a stay. The RRT should give the Zoning Officer bullet points for his letter. The township must submit a letter to the home-owner or developer to stop the clock. When a response is received the clock starts again. Tom is working on a checklist. Larger issues will come to the EAC. We need to establish a formal procedure. Tom Wargo will clarify the townships Zoning Ordinances to the HRC. Point person for the HRC to the EAC will be Harriet Stone and Jane Helm.

MOTION: The HRC has one week to respond to the Zoning Officer when building permit applications are received on an identified HID property.

1st: Harriet Stone; 2nd: Jim Deisinger

All approved

Mr. Marc Duey wants to purchase 10 acres and the dairy buildings within the 72-acre parcel the township will acquire from NL to hold an HRC museum and a hydroponic vegetable and fish operation.

The Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) allowed the applicant to place the new storage building on the stream buffer but did restrict any development on the other side of the Pine Creek in the future.

New Business

Beth Uhler, Cedarville Eng., spoke to us about the changes that the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) is making to flood plain management. We will not have any changes to our maps but we must conform to the FEMA regulation. Fifty percent of our fees will be reimbursed by Chester County (CHESCO) Department of Community & Economic Development. Chesco views has flood plain maps. A model ordinance was provided; we included model language in our Zoning Ordinance (ZO) as appropriate. No major changes were made. Only nationally-listed historic buildings in flood plains are protected in this Flood Plain section of our ZO. Township, county and state listed historic buildings which are outside the flood plain area will not lose local protection.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

1st:Harriet Stone; 2nd: Pieter Ouwerkerk