

WVT EAC minutes - May 4,2016

Present: Suzanne Roth, Don Cook, Jane Helm, Vic Laubach, Christy Martin, Harriet Stone (members). George Graham, Brian Curry (guests). Sara Shick, Bill Dietrich (liaisons to/from other committees).

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Suzanne Roth at 5:35. In order to get to some important and possibly lengthy topics, we skipped some of the standard parts of the agenda and went directly to the discussion of the Benner Farm on Eagle Farm Road and the work of the Historic Resources Committee (a subcommittee of the EAC) in 1) their comments to the township Board of Supervisors about the plans of a restorer of the Benner farmhouse and 2) the protocol of having input from the EAC.

There was discussion of the history of the Benner farm and the background of protection the township wanted to have for it; the land around the farmstead is being developed by Toll (Orleans was involved earlier). An agreement among Toll, Orleans, and the township provided for a façade easement for the house only, though reports from the Army Corps of Engineers and the PA Historical and Museum Commission recommended protecting the full farmscape. Part of the problem is that when the man who wants to renovate and then sell the house applied for a building permit, that triggered a 30-day window for the BOS to make a decision on the permit; the timing of this window does not allow for a proper investigation and for meeting with the EAC.

The issues that came up were the authority of the HRC to make recommendations to the BOS without consulting with the EAC, the protocols that should be used in communicating between the committees, the changes that are needed in the SALDO and the Zoning Ordinance (Section 2410) for us to be effective, the signals that township employees should have so the EAC and HRC are notified in a timely manner of changes which will affect historic structures. (We discussed if we should have a HARB or are they too restrictive? How can you have teeth without being restrictive?)

For the future, we need to have tighter regulations for our historic resources. Any permit should require (we didn't say who would do this work) 1) taking current photographs, 2) an inventory of flora and buildings, and 3) insurance on all of the property so that any repairs will be made routinely to guarantee structural integrity.

Actions:

- Christy will call Peter Zimmerman for his reactions to the façade easement.
- Vic will contact Karen Marshall for advice.

Motion: When historical properties are involved in any building permit or subdivision/development application, the EAC and HRC should be notified as soon as possible for the purposes of review and oversight in a timely fashion,

1st: Harriet Stone; 2nd: Christy Martin Passed by all.

Motion: Ask the Board of Supervisors and the township manager to instruct Dave Gottier to mulch trees 3" deep, 3" from the trunk of the tree, 3' from the tree and to mow the area around the township building and pond at 3 inches in height for April, May, and June and at 4 inches for the rest of the mowing season.

1st Christy Martin; 2nd Harriet Stone Passed by all.

Suzanne Roth offered to talk to Dave to explain why the mulching and mowing are important.

Not a motion, but we ask Parks & Rec to keep the non-playing field parts of the park at 3" so the grass will not die out too easily.

Jane reported on a community forestry course she had in April; she also provided a handout of selected materials from the 3-day program.

The next meeting of the HRC will be May 9th, at 6:30; the EAC June 1st, at 5:30. Meeting adjourned at 7:10.

Minutes by Victoria Laubach and Harriet Stone