

West Vincent Township

Joint Workshop Meeting of the Board of Supervisors and the Open Space Advisory Committee

March 26, 2018

7:30 p.m.

Attendance: John Jacobs, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, Mike Schneider, Vice – Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, Bernie Couris, Member of the Board of Supervisors, Erica Batdorf, Township Manager, Jody Reinbold, Open Space Advisory Committee Chair, (OSAC), Katie Weidner, OSAC Member, Jeff Goldberg, OSAC member, Don Cook, OSAC Member, Dave Weber, Sustainability Committee Liaison.

Ms. Reinbold called the Joint Workshop Meeting of the Board of Supervisors and Open Space Advisory Committee to order at 7:30 p.m. Ms. Reinbold provided an overview of the committee structure and purpose, provided background with regard to the Township's open space referendum, and described the processes and procedures the committee has followed in reviewing properties considered for the Township's open space program. Ms. Reinbold explained that the committee has worked to develop a property ranking spreadsheet including criteria to help evaluate properties in the Township. Property rankings are kept on file and upon committee review and consideration, recommendations may be made to the Board of Supervisors after taking into account additional information, discussions with landowners, and other factors. Ms. Reinbold indicated that one goal of the meeting is to communicate how these efforts take place in hopes to collaborate on future open space projects.

Ms. Weidner made a motion to approve the December 20, 2017 and February 27, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goldberg and carried unanimously.

Ms. Batdorf presented an accounting of the open space funds to date. Ms. Batdorf indicated the total open space fund balance is \$2,170,047.50. Ms. Batdorf indicated of this total amount, \$950,000 is committed for the Bryn Coed land acquisition, while \$653,659.06 is set aside for the Bryn Coed development, including demolition costs associated with this project. Ms. Batdorf explained that the Township collects approximately \$66,000 a month in dedicated Earned Income Tax for the open space program. The Township is paying down debt service on a general obligation bond with two payments made per year, totaling \$566,995 in 2018. Ms. Batdorf explained that after the debt service payment is made, the projected net income to the open space fund of approximately \$233,000 at 2018 year end. Ms. Batdorf further indicated that as of December 31, 2017 the estimated net income, to the open space fund was \$364,479.68. Apart from Bryn Coed project commitments estimated at this time, a total of \$597,479.68 may be available for future projects at year end, December 31, 2018.

Mr. Schneider asked the committee if property owners have recently approached them regarding the open space program. Ms. Weidner indicated that the committee used a previously drafted list of properties used by the Township in previous years, and started with this information to begin assessing the properties and understand the desires of property owners.

Joe Antellocy, 21 Gregory Lane, asked the committee if there is a solid budget with regard to the Bryn Coed demolition costs. Ms. Batdorf indicated that the Township has quotes in hand provided by Natural Lands. The Township will need to begin developing their own specifications and develop an updated project estimate.

Bob Casciato, 1769 St. Matthews Road, commented that the Township could save considerable funds if Natural Lands managed the Bryn Coed demolition project. Mr. Casciato stated the Township should explore this concept further. Mr. Jacobs indicated that the Township is moving forward in managing the project.

Ms. Reinbold explained that the committee has been working with the Township staff to develop a map which depicts the parcels in the Township that have been conserved as open space. The map will help serve as a tool to begin understanding where there may be additional opportunities for the committee to analyze and consider as part of the open program.

Ms. Reinbold indicated that the committee has developed preliminary rankings for some parcels, and there may be more once the map is finalized. Ms. Reinbold explained that the discussion of those rankings may occur as an executive session as these projects are a matter of real estate.

Mr. Jacobs stated that this information is very helpful and he would like to see the rankings on a more regular basis.

Mr. Schneider commented that there are other properties in the Township that may be a candidate for consideration. Mr. Schneider indicated that there is a higher distribution of open space funds north of Horseshoe Trail in the Township. He also provided the OSAC with 2 handouts: Open Space & Owen J Roberts School Tax Analysis and a TDR Analysis.

Mr. Schneider commented that there are properties in the Township such as the Wheeler Aman parcels along Pughtown Road to be considered.

Jim Helm, 2563 Veronica Drive, asked the committee if they had only vetted their existing property list. Ms. Reinbold stated the map will help the committee update this list.

Maria Jacobs, 2351 Beaver Hill Lane asked if the committee has a percentage goal in mind in the total Township area that is targeted to be preserved. Ms. Jacobs stated that if the Township spent open space funds annually you may not be able to save funds for a future project requiring more substantial resources.

Chip Farnham, 988 St. Matthews Road, commented that the key to analyzing the use of funds moving forward is for the committee to work on establishing a priority list and keep the Board informed of these efforts.

Harriet Stone, 1645 Birchrun Road, indicated that it would be prudent to review what areas of the Township are especially significant environmentally and historically in conjunction with the review of open space lands.

Pam Brown, 1075 Jaine Lane, commented that through a Transferable Development Rights transaction, there are no environmental protections attached to the property. Conservation easements may include these protections. Ms. Brown indicated you cannot leverage public funds without an open space plan that incorporates a conservation easement.

Julie Foster, 1682 Hilltop Road, asked the committee if Natural Lands has a grant through the state for the Bryn Coed project and if there are restrictions imposed on the proposed Township land as a result of this funding. Ms. Batdorf indicated that in the preliminary discussions with Natural Lands that a PA DCNR grant was going to be applied to our purchase, and as a result certain restrictions would be imposed on the property. Natural Lands was able to use these grant monies elsewhere on their preserve and in turn plan to protect the park property through a conservation easement. Ms. Batdorf indicated that the purchase price has not changed.

Ms. Reinbold mentioned that the committee has put forth a number of motions recommending action to the Board of Supervisors related to Bryn Coed and the Cutler property located on St. Matthew's Road.

Pam Brown stated that the Township's investment in the 16 Years, LLC project was a significant help in leveraging funds through other stakeholders. Ms. Brown stated that this type of participation is crucial in solidifying open space deals.

Jim Helm, 2563 Veronica Drive, commented that the committee should establish goals moving forward. Mr. Helm noted that he is concerned with the density of development south of Horseshoe Trail in proximity to the Byers Station development.

Ms. Reinbold thanked everyone for attending the meeting and providing this valuable public comment.

Ms. Reinbold announced an Executive Session of the committee and Board of Supervisors at 8:45 p.m. to discuss real estate. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica L. Batdorf
Township Manager

WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PROGRAM			
WVT Open Space Fund Account Balances as of March 26, 2018			
	Account	Balance	
	DNB - OPEN SPACE CHECKING ACCOUNT	\$1,516,388.44	
	DNB - OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE FUND ACCOUNT	\$653,659.06	
	<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$2,170,047.50</u>	
Outstanding Open Space Commitments			
	Bryn Coed Open Space Acquisition (72 acres)	\$950,000.00	Not yet under agreement
	Bryn Coed Demolition of Buildings	\$653,659.06	Project must be let for bid
	<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$1,603,659.06</u>	

Projected Dedicated Open Space Earned Income Tax Revenue 2018

	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar - 18 (Estimated)	Apr - Dec -18	Total Projected EIT Revenue 2018
EIT Monthly Disbursement:	\$66,866.00	\$69,043.76	\$66,000.00	* Projected additional \$598,090	\$800,000.00

Township Debt Service 2018 Budget (Funded through Earned Income Tax Revenue)

	Jun-18	
Interest Payment	\$117,595.00	
	Dec-18	
Principal Payment	\$449,400.00	
Total:	\$566,995.00	
Projected Net Income to Open Space Fund at 12-31-2018:	$\$800,000 \text{ (Total EIT revenue)} - \$566,995 \text{ (debt service)} = \$233,005.00$	

**Unaudited Figures

Open Space Fund Balance as of 12-31-2017

Total Open Space Checking Balance	\$1,314,478.68
Bryn Coed Acquisition (Committed funds)	<u>\$950,000.00</u>
Net Income to Open Space Fund	\$364,479.68

*Open Space Maintenance Fund for demolition of bldgs for Bryn Coed is in separate dedicated account