

Richland Township Preservation Board Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2019

Submitted by Rich Sadler

Members Present

In attendance were Kathy Fedorocsko, Dale Henninger and Rich Sadler. Staff member present was Rich Brittingham.

A. Minutes

March's minutes were approved as reported. Dale motioned, Kathy seconded, unanimous approval.

B. **Financial Report:** Our funds were sufficient to make settlement on the Bonk property; we did not have to borrow from the General Fund. As of May 7, 2019, our fund balance stands at \$170,994.32. Assuming the income from the tax & non-easement expenses remain the same thru 2023, we will have approximately \$1,800,000 to spend on preservation thru June 2023.

B. Property Reports, Active:

1. **Clymer (36-45-27) 225 Axe Handle Road, 55 acres:** In January, we received an application for preservation; after walking the property, we decided to move ahead with an easement. Kathy and Laura Baird have been working with them; their application for inclusion in the Ag Security Program will be considered at the May 13 meeting. Rich B ordered an appraisal. We have secured \$1500/ acre from the county as a bargain sale, & the Calvin Ruth fund contributed \$50,000. We plan to close in December.
2. **Shelmire (36-45-28-001 and 003) 95 Axe Handle Road, 50 acres:** In February, we received an application. These properties are adjacent to Clymer. We have walked this property; we'll see how it ranks with our current applications. Kathy will contact Larry Shelmire. We will also have him apply to the County Ag program and we will see if there is other funding available.
3. **South Mine Road (36-05-26) Lichtenstein, Donated property:** Since our funds are finite, we were hoping the Trails Committee would step up & pay the legal fees, but they're not interested.

C. Property Reports: Pending Contact / Action:

1. **New properties;** No answers from any of these property owners contacted in January; Swartley, Zavitsanos, Sames, and Schracht. Laura will contact Dr Zavitsanos and Mr. Sames again. We would like to have a ranking of applications by June, so we can decide which projects we will pursue.
2. **P Sulkowski 36-029-046 290 Raub Rd. 12 acres.** They applied for preservation & are already in Ag Security

D. New Business

1. **Baseline Monitoring:** The BOS approved signing a contract with Heritage for future monitoring for 2018. Dan has forwarded a monitoring schedule that covers several parcels every Tues and Thurs for 2 months. Kathy and Rich S have accompanied Dan

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on the early monitoring visits. Left from last year's monitoring problems: Burkey had some dumping. Neil reported problems with the Lisbon tract. 27, 29, & 31 Essex Court are encroaching on Lisbon. There is trash scattered, bushes cleared & 4-wheeler tracks, The County has been notified & hopefully will go after the offending parties. Coby needs to move a manure pile to a 22 x 27 pad, which will be followed up with.

2. **Preserved Property Signs- NO CHANGE;** The BOS approved \$7200 for 12 additional signs to be installed in the spring. Rich B has contacted property owners to let them know they are getting a new sign or an old one will be replaced. Seven property owners have responded so far and the rest will be re-contacted.
3. **Village signs- NO CHANGE:** Kathy got samples & estimates for 4 village signs, \$220 each for two sided signs. We chose the blue on white background sample. We can go to the supervisors to see if they will give approval.
4. **Finances - tracking for the future -** As of May's meeting, we are still receiving just a summary of our finances rather than having them tracked by project as we requested. We should be able to get a monthly statement with such. Rich B said Paul informed him that the township employees' time would be tracked but not deducted from our EIT funds for preservation. However, the consulting costs of Heritage will now be deducted from our funds. It is possible that consulting services can't use these funds.
5. **No Hunting Signs on Romano NO CHANGE;** We would like to get NO HUNTING signs thru the same channel that Tom Marino, chair of Parks and Rec gets them for Veteran's Park, rather than making our own like we had to last time. Rich and Kathy will post sometime in the spring.
6. **Finalize map for Boucher and James -** Joe will finish discussing our recommendations with Judy Stern-Goldstein of Boucher and James. We will order 6 laminated copies.
7. **Rail trail; No Change -** The trail will be 12' wide (20' wide with shoulder). There are also plans for another walking trail circling Veteran's Park and through the floodplain. Presently, there is a 38-acre private property blocking the extension of the trail thru the park. There has been no action as far as we know by the County to amend the deed restrictions on the Kelly property prohibiting the cutting of trees, despite Ann Rhodes' recommendations not to cut any trees, as this property was preserved with Natural Areas funding and is deed restricted for tree cutting.

E. Closing - Open Discussion

1. **Freeze on Taxes for County Ag preserved lands- NO CHANGE;** Kathy had been discussing this concept with Kris Kern of Heritage. The process is still unclear, and it will take some research on our part. We like the idea as an incentive, but Joe and Dale expressed concerns with the effects of taxes being frozen in perpetuity. Solebury and Palisades have done this. Mgr Paul Stepanoff is anxious for us to move forward with this and told Rich B there could be a budget from the township for Heritage to work on this for us. We are tabling the subject until we can discuss it in more detail.
2. **Schracht property (36-06-17) -** Hallmark builders wants to put 97 homes on RA zoning, which is 4x the density of RA zoning. We also need to see the fate of the LS1 historic home on this property. Kathy spoke at the last BOS meeting to let supervisors know our opposition to changing RA zoning for intense development. So far, the fate of this project is in Limbo.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 10, 2019 7:00 PM

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