

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OPEN SPACE BOARD

June 22, 2022

4:00 P.M.

Montgomery County Planning Commission

Norristown, PA

Hybrid Meeting (both Virtual & In-House Attendees) via Zoom

DRAFT MINUTES

Board Members Present

Bruce D. Reed, Chair

Mark Vasoli

Michael Stokes

Staff Present

Bill Hartman, Trails & Open Space Planning Manager,
MCPC

Brian Olszak, Senior Trails & Open Space Planner, MCPC

Donna Fabry, Senior Trails & Open Space Planner, MCPC

Yvonne Montgomery, Solicitor, MCPC

Ann Marie Meehan, Exec. Admin., MCPC

Samantha Zrillo, Intern, OS&T, MCPC

Board Members Absent

Kim Sheppard, Vice Chair

Gail Farmer

Other Attendees

Philip A. Smith, Lower Frederick Township

Dulcie Flaharty, MCPC Board Member & Marlborough Township Resident

A. Call to Order, Chair Recognition & Meeting Protocol

Bruce D. Reed, Chair, who was virtually present at the meeting, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Ms. Yvonne Montgomery of the County Solicitor's Office said that this public meeting is being held as a "hybrid" meeting— with both physically-present and virtually-present attendees. In addition, at least one Board member must be present. As Chair and virtual attendee, Bruce designated Mike Stokes to chair the meeting, as he was physically present, therefore satisfying the County's current public meeting requirements. Prior to the meeting, the agenda was published on the county website and included a phone number, meeting access code and password, along with instructions to allow the public to participate via phone or Zoom.

Mike called the roll; three of the five board members were in attendance. It was determined that a quorum was satisfied.

Bill Hartman called the roll for staff and asked that the members of the public present

identify themselves for the record. The names of members of the public who attended are noted above.

B. Approval of the May 25, 2022 Minutes (Action)

Mike called for a motion to approve the Open Space Board’s May 25, 2022 minutes.

***Motion:** Bruce D. Reed moved to approve the minutes; Mr. Mark Vasoli seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.*

C. Open Space Fee Acquisition Recommendation (Action)

Evans Property, Rahns Road, Perkiomen Township

This potential fee simple acquisition project has been discussed with the Open Space Board at prior meetings, and Donna Fabry reminded the Board that the Evans Property, located at 465 Rahns Road in Perkiomen Township, sustained significant damage from Hurricane Ida in September 2021 and was identified as a possible fee simple acquisition by the county last fall.

The 1.07 acre parcel is located adjacent to the Rahns Road Trailhead, the Perkiomen Trail and the Perkiomen Creek. The site is located in a “greenway corridor” per Montco 2040, is located adjacent to existing preserved county open space to the north and east, and has potential for ecological restoration and use by the public as open space. MCPC staff is asking the Open Space Board to recommend to the County Board of Commissioners that the property be acquired in fee using funds from the county open space and park expansion line item of the 2022 capital budget.

Donna also reiterated that MCPC submitted a C2P2 grant application to PA DCNR in the spring of 2022 to assist with funding the acquisition of this parcel as well as the two parcels to the west if acquired.

Donna added that the county obtained an appraisal of the Evans Property indicating a “post-flood” (“post IDA”) valuation of \$194,000. The property owners subsequently obtained an independent appraisal in May 2022, at the county’s expense, which indicated a “post-flood” (“post IDA”) valuation of \$256,500. Following the receipt of the property owners’ independent appraisal, the county’s real estate negotiator made a verbal offer of \$256,500 to the property owners, which they verbally accepted. Prior to executing an Agreement of Sale, the County Board of Commissioners must approve the proposed fee purchase. If the Open Space Board recommends the purchase of the property, staff would present the proposed acquisition to the Commissioners at their July 7, 2022 meeting.

***Motion:** Bruce D. Reed moved to approve the Open Space Board recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to acquire in fee the Evans Property, tax parcel 48-00-00228-13-8, in Perkiomen Township; Mr. Mark Vasoli seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.*

D. Public Comment

Mike called for public comments.

Philip A. Smith, a resident of Lower Frederick Township, shared some information on a piece of property that he thought might be of interest to the county as open space acquisition. He said the property, located along Swamp Creek near Zieglerville Village, is shown on county Board of Assessment mapping but doesn't appear to have a parcel identification number or owner. He added that because of its proximity to existing open space, acquiring this property might align with the overall goals of the county and could be part of the future Sunrise Trail alignment.

Bill said he would begin to talk about this internally and asked Phil to contact the township solicitor and ask him to forward the information collected relating to the property to him and he would consult with a county solicitor and report back.

E. Adjourn

Mike Stokes adjourned the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

Next Open Space Board Meeting: Wednesday, July 27, 2022 at 4 p.m.