

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
AD HOC PROPERTY COMMITTEE
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 18, 2021

The regular meeting of the Ad Hoc Property Committee of the Township of Lower Makefield was held remotely on November 18, 2021. Mr. Steadman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Those present:

Ad Hoc Property Committee: Dennis Steadman, Chair
Fred Childs, Vice Chair
Bette Sovinee, Secretary
Sarah Daubert, Member
John Mohan, Member
James Nycz, Member (left meeting in progress)
Jim Scott, Member

Others: James McCartney, Supervisor Liaison
Frederic K. Weiss, Supervisor Liaison

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Sovinee moved, Mr. Nycz seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of October 4, 2021.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Mr. Steadman stated tonight there will be a presentation by Helen Heinz who will discuss the historical significance of the four houses that are part of the assignment that the Ad Hoc Property Committee has. He stated he believes that there will be follow-up from the Historical Commission as represented by Mr. Nycz.

Mr. Steadman stated Spaziano Real Estate has been asked to conduct some Real Estate property analysis to try to get objective numbers in terms of market value which is one of the considerations that is part of the analysis. He stated they toured two of the houses – the Slack House at the Makefield Highlands Golf Course as well as the Satterthwaite House at Patterson Farm off of Mirror Lake Road. Mr. Steadman stated there was a preliminary meeting with Spaziano Real

Estate and Fred and Bette joined him and the Township Manager, Mr. Ferguson, to hear some of their initial thoughts and discussions. He stated they will be providing a more detailed report in the future.

Mr. Steadman stated also this evening the Committee will discuss an Executive Summary document that Ms. Sovinee has taken leadership on in terms of putting down the potential new uses we see for the various properties.

Mr. Steadman stated the Committee will then discuss the current situation and potential next steps and activities. There will be an open forum for Other Business from the Committee and the opportunity for any public comment.

Historical Significance of Four Houses – Helen Heinz, Chair, LMT Historical Committee

Dr. Heinz reviewed her educational background including completing her PhD in Early Colonial American History in 2008. She stated she has been interested in Lower Makefield history since she moved here in 1984, and was involved with the Historical Society eventually becoming President of that Society. She stated she joined the Historical Commission in 1986, and she is currently Chair of that Commission.

Dr. Heinz showed a map which she and Mr. Ralph Thompson did for a project that the Township supported in 1992, and they found the original Grants of all the original Grantees to Lower Makefield Township. She stated this map was created off of a 1798 Tax List. She reviewed various Grants which go up various roads in the Township.

Dr. Heinz stated the Slack House is on the original Thomas Bond Grant which she showed on the map. Dr. Heinz discussed the genealogy research she did with regard to the property, and those who owned the parcel over the years. She discussed the various dates that sections of the house were built. She showed a window on the house where there was a date stone of 1767. She showed a close-up of stone work on the house. She showed a back section of the house that would be early 19th Century and another section that is late 19th Century/20th Century. She stated the windows are unique at nine over six, which is a Slack characteristic as all the Slack houses have nine over six windows. Dr. Heinz showed a large well at the back of the house which has been noted in a document dated 1856 which indicates that

“the well is to be open to all friends and neighbors because it is a never-failing well.” Dr. Heinz noted a portion of the building where the date stone is missing, but the estimate is that it is from 1767/1768.

Dr. Heinz showed a small barn which is across the parking lot. She stated if any use is going to be made of the property, the end of the parking lot would need a “Quaker shed for cars to park or they will be bombarded by golf balls.”

Dr. Heinz stated there is a complete change of Title for the Slack House, and she reviewed those who owned it through the 19th Century and when certain additions were made. She noted the kitchen entrances as well as an entrance on grade to the large living room downstairs which is unusual for Colonial houses. She stated she feels this could be an excellent entertainment space.

Dr. Heinz stated Mr. Dalgewicz purchased the property in the early 1950s, and he installed a number of items which could be restored. She stated the house has over five bathrooms which is unusual for a Colonial house. She stated with the Golf Course proximity this house would be an ideal candidate for an Airbnb with a live-in apartment for a Manager. She stated this is one of the only Colonial houses she has been in that has a bathroom on the third story, a bathroom in the basement, and closets in every room.

She stated that other than TLC and restoration skills the other necessity is the covered Quaker shed for the vehicles and possibly a screen on the back patio to make that useful. She added that another possibility would be a twenty-year plus long Conservatorship with someone living in the property, which would have to be administered by Township management or delegated to one of its Commission, and a reduced rent would be balanced by a schedule of required maintenance tasks and improvements to be taken on or at least partially paid for by the Lessee.

Dr. Heinz stated with regard to the Patterson Farm, there are three residences, three large hay barns, one greenhouse ruins, and multiple outbuildings for crop storage, etc. She stated the property is already Certified Eligible for the National Register. She stated she helped write the last National Register Nomination with Jeff Marshall. She stated it was rejected because the Committee decided that since we were putting it up not on the basis of who lived in the houses, but on the basis of a continuity of agriculture, that we needed to do more work on the uses of historic agriculture on the property and what kinds of things were actually grown.

Dr. Heinz stated there are two springs, a seasonal stream, a woodlot, and multiple fields of State-wide and cultural significance.

Dr. Heinz again showed the Grant map as it relates to the Patterson property specifically the Grant of Thomas Janney. She showed where the existing buildings are located. She discussed the history of Thomas Janney and others who lived in this area.

Dr. Heinz showed a picture of the caretaker's house. She stated there are overgrown weeds and it needs painting, but it has been pretty well kept up. Mr. Steadman asked Dr. Heinz when she believes it was built, and Dr. Heinz stated it was 1696 or earlier. She added that would make it the oldest existing house in Bucks County. She stated getting wood borings done would be useful. She showed a later addition that was done and the well house. She showed a picture of the view from the caretaker's house toward the Janney-Brown house.

Dr. Heinz discussed the history of those who owned the various properties on the Patterson Farm and surrounding properties. A picture was shown of the farmland which she stated is some of the most prime farmland in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Heinz showed a picture of the pack house which at one time was a residence, but she understands that they are not counting that as a residence.

Dr. Heinz showed an aerial photograph from 1937, and she described the various properties and property owners.

Dr. Heinz showed a picture of the Janney-Brown house and discussed the various additions/renovations that were put onto the structure. She showed the date stone of 1837 for a portion of the Janney-Brown house she noted on the picture. She discussed the history of those who owned the Janney-Brown house over the years and what improvements were made by the various owners. She noted a wall of the house which has been modified inside, and added that Mr. Patterson put steel supports in so this house is probably the best supported house of all the Colonial houses and it could be rated for fire and load capacity more than the other houses.

Dr. Heinz showed a pictures of the dormers which were added probably in 1860 around the time of the Civil War adding that across the field Satterthwaite added a house using almost the same dormers.

Dr. Heinz showed a map from 1890 showing the various property owners. Two springs are shown as well as the houses. She also showed an aerial from 1976 showing what is left in the area.

Dr. Heinz stated with regard to the name for the Janney-Brown house, she feels they should go back to the original name, Locust Grove, which was on a lot of the Deeds and maps in the middle of the 19th Century.

Dr. Heinz showed a photograph of what she calls the Bailey house (listed as the Satterthwaite house on the Ad Hoc Property Committee list). She noted the Tax Map of 1778 and the accompanying Tax List of 1798 adding it was one of the most taxed houses in the Township. She stated noted an area between the wall and the end of the shed which had been taken out and stated the lean-to back wall is stone on the inside and has a walk-in fireplace which is an early 18th Century fireplace, possibly from the 1730's. She noted a fireplace which is inside the kitchen buried inside the wall. She stated other than the stone wall, the rest is a frame building.

Dr. Heinz reviewed the history of those who owned the Bailey house and the surrounding acreage including William Satterthwaite. She showed a picture of the three-bay house with the dormers. She stated the house is Greek Revival and there is not another house in the Township like it other than one off of Dolington Road which is similar. A picture of the carriage house was shown.

Dr. Heinz stated she feels AOY is keeping the house safe by having people there although there are concerns about fire safety and safe waste disposal. She stated there is a major issue with the stone on the west side of the house which is "lacing" because someone used portland cement, and at some point someone should remove the portland cement and re-point the house. She stated there could be structural failure if this is not addressed.

Dr. Heinz stated she worries about interference with the farmer's equipment, spraying, trucking, and off-site parking. She stated we need to do all we can to encourage our farming families to continue farming through the next

generation. She stated she has heard that the younger generation wants to experiment with more crop variety, but that is not possible without an operating pack house and possibly housing for seasonal pickers. She stated equipment storage is another issue to be worked out with the Township. She stated Patterson used the pack house for his pickers' housing.

Dr. Heinz stated the Bailey/Satterthwaite house needs re-painting to stabilize the wood and to prevent extensive replacement. She stated as with most houses, this house needs a human presence to stave off animal invasion. She stated fireplace stone should be re-installed and the property should be painted inside and out. She stated there should also be an assessment made for locations for modern bathrooms and a kitchen to comply with uses identified. She stated the best use would be a conservatorship with a farm family. She stated possibly there could be public meeting space on a limited basis or a location. She stated a historic conservation volunteer group could offer useful preservation/restoration lessons, fundraisers, training for young people, or any combination of those things. She stated one of the close outbuildings might serve this purpose as well.

Dr. Heinz stated with regard to the Carriage house and barn storage she feels that everyone in the Township is looking for storage/work spaces to keep boats, antique cars, bikes, etc. especially in areas that are heated and lit. She stated she feels they should be rented out to the highest bidder. She stated if the Township cannot handle this, they need a part-time Property Manager.

Dr. Heinz showed pictures of a number of other historic houses in the area. She added that it is felt that the Satterthwaite house is probably the oldest frame house in the Township.

Mr. Steadman thanked Dr. Heinz for making the presentation. He added that it will probably be up to Mr. Nycz, as the Historical Commission's representative on the Committee, to consider how to best collate the historical significance of the homes into a report that could be considered by the Committee and then passed on. Dr. Heinz agreed to send her information to Mr. Nycz. She stated she collated everything she could to come up with her presentation. Dr. Heinz stated there is a lot of potential and with the celebration coming up in 2026 and the Revolutionary connection with Lower Makefield which is "amazing," the farm or the Slack hose could be the center part of a Township celebration/re-enactment and would be a tourist magnet.

Discussion of Assignments for the Ad Hoc Property Committee

Mr. Steadman showed the list of five items that the Committee was assigned. He stated the first was to identify the properties that were to be addressed, and the Board of Supervisors had identified those properties. Mr. Steadman stated currently the Committee is focused on potential uses as that needs to be done in order to establish what kind of preservation efforts and expense is necessary, and then to do the financial reviews and the prioritization. He added that in that area, they have discussions with a lot of potential users including Spirit Golf which runs Makefield Highlands. Mr. Steadman stated they are very interested in the Slack house as a key element to attract weddings and special events. A restored Slack house would fit into their plans. Mr. Steadman stated he has asked the individuals who run Spirit Golf to develop a proposal and financial scenario for how they would utilize the Slack house and the kinds of money they would be willing to put into the Slack house in exchange for its use with a longer-term Lease. He stated they would need a long Lease in order to take advantage of any investments.

Mr. Steadman stated he has had initial conversations with Sam Stewart who owns Charlann Farms. Mr. Stewart is the farming tenant on all the property around the Patterson buildings, and he has expressed interest in at least one of the large bank barns for equipment storage as well as storage of straw bales which are produced from their grain crops. Mr. Steadman stated Mr. Stewart's interest is largely motivated by the fact that it is very difficult to move farm equipment and straw bales on our Lower Makefield roads; and since he has a lot of activities at Patterson Farm, if he can increasingly store equipment and materials there, it would reduce the congestion and hazards that are created by moving those materials on and off Patterson Farm. There will be further discussion with Mr. Stewart about his potential use of one or both of the barns. Mr. Steadman stated he would welcome anyone who would like to join him in those discussions.

Mr. Steadman stated we know of Preserve Patterson Farm, Inc., which is a non-profit. He stated there has also been a discussion about Township Office or meeting space as well as Public Works storage as a potential use.

Mr. Steadman stated Jay Spaziano Real Estate is working on some scenarios for two of the homes – the Slack house and the Satterthwaite house.

Mr. Steadman stated the initial reaction was that it would be very difficult to have those properties developed into private residences for a variety of reasons.

Mr. Steadman stated we are looking at comparable properties in the area, and the Real Estate Assessment is undergoing. Mr. Steadman stated as this is discussed, we should recognize that any values we have and the utilizations will be driven by the four homes and the two bank barns. He stated the Committee should consider setting a deadline to issue a report on the list of potential uses including pros and cons possibly by year end. Mr. Nycz stated he agrees with the idea of setting a deadline, and year end sound reasonable.

Ms. Sovinee asked if the information that the Township shared with the Committee on the condition of the Satterthwaite House has been shared with Jeff Hirko, the Patterson Farm Preservation group, and Helen Heinz. Mr. Steadman stated he believes they recognize it is not in good condition. Mr. Steadman asked Ms. Sovinee if she is referring to the engineering report, and Ms. Sovinee agreed adding that she believes it was done in 2008.

Mr. Mohan stated that Mr. Majewski had updated the numbers for inflation. Ms. Daubert stated she feels that some work must have been done to the house since 2008.

Mr. Steadman stated when the Spaziano Real Estate group toured the Satterthwaite house they had Chance Worthington with them who is a local expert in restoring historical homes, and he has asked Mr. Worthington to give us his assessment of both of the homes. Mr. Steadman stated that informally Mr. Worthington's assessment of Satterthwaite was that it may not be able to be saved. Mr. Steadman stated as Dr. Heinz noted wood frame houses are very different from stone homes in their ability to last.

Ms. Sovinee asked if they went into the back of the lean-to section, and Mr. Steadman stated that he and Mr. Worthington did walk back there. Ms. Daubert asked if they saw the stone there as Dr. Heinz had indicated, and Mr. Steadman stated he did not see the back wall since there is no lighting. He stated to understand what is behind what can be seen would take some effort.

Mr. Childs stated with regard to the timeframe, he agrees that we need a deadline; however, he feels the end of the year would be tight since there has not been a lot of discussion about potential uses. Mr. Steadman agreed that there is not a lot of time. Mr. Childs asked if they could consider that the deadline be moved to the end of January.

Mr. Scott stated he feels the end of January seems reasonable. He added that it does not seem that there are many re-uses for the property that would be a public amenity such as a private residence, office, etc.; and he asked if there is a justifiable cost to restore the house when it is really the charm and character of the house from the street which is all that 99% of the Township residents will ever see. He stated possibly there is a re-build that could be done that would keep the façade.

Ms. Daubert stated it seems that Mr. Worthington felt the house was almost unsavable, and it would be better to take it down and re-build the exact same house from scratch. Mr. Steadman stated often with very old homes that are beyond being fixed, they keep the two side walls and the front so that it will look the same, and behind it they build a functional, usable house. Mr. Steadman stated Mr. Worthington had indicated that even under that plan, he would probably re-build the façades with modern materials because what is there is too far gone to use the materials even if it is just a façade. Ms. Sovinee stated he will be providing a more-formal assessment, and Mr. Steadman agreed.

Mr. Scott suggested that Spaziano Real Estate be asked to also give us a land value. He stated someone could possibly acquire the ground conditioned upon replicating the façade of the home. Mr. Scott stated if the mandate of restoring the house were removed, it would be much simpler as far as the re-use. Ms. Sovinee reminded the Committee that the five-acre Satterthwaite parcel has already been sub-divided.

Mr. Steadman stated Spaziano's assessment was that as someone who lives in an Early American home with an outbuilding, a barn, etc. and has worked in the Real Estate business selling and marketing those, he indicated a number of times "less is more," as people do not want the barns or the buildings because it is "more deployment of capital" that the homeowner would have to put out to maintain them.

Mr. Steadman stated there are also location issues with both of the properties as residences since an individual who could afford to restore such a property would probably not want to live on the same driveway as a Golf Course and have no privacy; and the same is true for the Satterthwaite house since it is directly in the path of Mercer County Airport as well as being close to the road.

Ms. Daubert asked when all of the information being discussed will be provided to the Committee so that we have the opportunity to review it. She also asked if the Township will be providing the Committee what their public use needs are. Mr. Steadman stated he has asked the Township for that, but they do not have a plan that would indicate the amount of additional square footage they would need over the next five to ten years. He stated he has not heard back from the Township when they might take a position on that. Mr. Steadman stated with regard to Spirit Golf, which manages Makefield Highlands, he did ask for their proposal at least by the end of the year; and they indicated that would not be a problem. Mr. Steadman stated it is difficult to talk to Mr. Stewart during harvest time; but after Thanksgiving, he believes Mr. Stewart will have more time to have a discussion. Mr. Steadman stated he is willing to set up a meeting with Sam Stewart and his nephew, Tim, with anyone from the Committee wishing to attend to discuss their potential uses of the buildings in a more serious way.

Mr. Scott asked if the contractor provided any input with regard to the Slack house as to what walls inside might be load-bearing. He stated the property may be a good location for a professional office, but there would be a challenge with the floor plan given the multiple levels, room sizes, etc. and it is possible that the floor plan could be opened up for a more contemporary lay-out. Mr. Steadman stated he did not provide any explicit information on what was load-bearing. Mr. Steadman stated there seemed to be a fair amount of latitude on the second floor compared to the first floor.

Mr. Scott asked if there are any uses which we believe would be not looked favorably upon. He stated in the past he has seen a process where there is a Request for Proposals, and that Request would give some parameters of what uses would be entertained and what would not. Mr. Mahon stated an example would be whether the barn could be used as a wedding venue. He stated a number of people he has discussed this with suggested that the barns be used for wedding venues, and he asked if that is allowed. Mr. Steadman stated he

understood from the Board of Supervisors that the Committee was not constrained, and everything is on the table. Mr. Steadman stated if the Township decides they are going to develop the Slack house as an event venue or a Commercial use, because they are a Government entity, they would be putting out a Request for Proposals and going through a transparent Bidding process to select the highest Bidder. Mr. Steadman stated at this point the Committee is considering potential uses, and the Township will decide what uses they want to entertain.

Ms. Daubert stated the Committee has been told multiple times that they had no constraints. She asked if a final decision has been made as to the timeline. She asked if much of the information is not being received by the Committee until the end of December, would the Committee be able to meet a January deadline. Mr. Steadman stated he feels that the end of January should be the deadline at this point.

Discussion of Executive Summary Potential New Uses

Ms. Sovinee showed the format created by Mr. Steadman noting pages have been provided for all of the major buildings.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the Slack house, and potential uses have been listed as an event space for Makefield Highlands, sell it to a private homeowner, and convert to Township offices, which are the major uses they had come up with.

Ms. Daubert asked if Spirit Golf intends to use the house for an event space; and Ms. Sovinee stated they do adding that Spirit Golf had talked about building a large barn to serve as a wedding venue with the Slack house used as a staging point for the bridal party, etc. She stated currently they are using a tent. Mr. Steadman stated they put up the tent as their event space, and they have had around forty to forty-five events this year. They feel if the house were renovated it could serve as a space for the wedding party. The second floor would be event planning office space and office space for Makefield Highlands since they currently have no office space. Mr. Steadman stated Spirit Golf has indicated that if the house is renovated, they feel it will

attract a lot more events. He stated they could then build an event space to hold the events. Mr. Steadman stated he is in favor of this idea as he does not feel there is enough event space in the area. He stated being on the Golf Course, that use would be consistent with the location.

Mr. Scott asked if Spirit Golf would be the only entity that would have the parking needed that would go with this use, since if another operator were to build something, they would probably have a parking issue. Mr. Steadman stated that he feels that will be a function of the relationship between Spirit Golf and the Township. He stated if that were the final use, he believes that the Township would put it out to competitive Bid; and possibly someone might out Bid Spirit Golf on running the Course. He stated Spirit Golf would certainly have an inside track given the relationship they have with the Township.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the Janney house, which she feels is being well used and well cared for.

Ms. Sovinee stated she has no comments on the well house.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the Caretaker's house which is currently being used as an artist's studio. She stated Dr. Heinz had indicated that it is very significant as perhaps it is one of the oldest properties in the Township. She stated the Township is getting rental income from this property. Ms. Daubert stated it is possible that someone could live in this house.

Mr. Steadman stated with regard to the Janney house, he feels the use by the Artists of Yardley is "terrific." He stated if that grows more into an artists' community, the Caretaker's house might become a residence for a visiting artist staying a few months at a time. He stated if the Caretaker's house is actually the oldest home in Bucks County, it might also be preserved as a home that people could tour when visiting the artists' community. He stated if it is associated with an artists' community, it might be able to take on a few other uses from what it has today. He stated maybe having it more open and available so that people can understand the history of it as opposed to just an art studio which it is now, may be a better use.

Mr. Nycz stated he needs to leave the meeting at this time; however, he will be back in the area on December 6, and between then and January 10 would be the best times for him to meet; and possibly there could be one or two

meetings during that time. He stated he has looked at the Executive Summaries and will make additions if he has anything to add. Ms. Sovinee asked Mr. Nycz to e-mail her any additions. Ms. Nycz left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Scott asked if the Caretaker's house could be an annex for gallery space; however, Ms. Sovinee stated it would be too small for that use. Mr. Scott stated he feels it would be nice to have it open to the public. Mr. Steadman stated the Artists of Yardley are open to the public, but the Caretaker's house would be good for a historical tour/museum.

Mr. Mohan stated he did send over some edits, and Ms. Sovinee asked that he send them again. Mr. Mohan stated he felt that some of the buildings should be taken down to provide more parking for AOY. He stated some of the buildings seem to need serious work and he was not sure what could be done with them. Mr. Scott stated he would agree that "less is more." Mr. Mohan stated he and Mr. Scott had toured the buildings with Mr. Majewski and Mr. Hucklebridge; and it had been suggested that if some of the buildings that were falling apart were taken down, they could re-use the wood to shore up the other buildings that we want to keep and then sell any extra wood. Ms. Sovinee stated that would pertain particularly to the equipment barn at Satterthwaite since that has nice barn wood.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the pack house which is a concrete structure that AOY is looking to acquire as additional educational space. She stated it was also included that Public Works may need that space.

Mr. Steadman stated with regard to estimated costs, when the Committee gets to the point that they are making recommendations they need to consider how we will get to the point where there is a credible estimate and not TBD for the improvement expense.

Ms. Sovinee stated AOY has been in touch with a local engineering firm, and they are going to start costing out what the improvements would be for the pack house. She stated they need to consider if public utilities are going to be brought in which would open up a lot of options. Mr. Steadman stated he agrees that public water and sewer need to be run to these locations in order to use them on a larger scale. Ms. Sovinee added that Mr. Majewski

had provided initial costs for renovations, but he had indicated that those did not include utilities. She stated the initial estimate for renovation of the pack house that the Committee was provided was \$60,000, but she does not know what that included; and she would like to get more details on that.

Mr. Mohan asked Ms. Sovinee how often the current septic system has to be emptied adding that if there is going to be more use with more people, that will have an impact on the septic system. Ms. Sovinee stated she understands that at some point the pack house had its own septic system as Dr. Heinz indicated field workers lived there. She stated there was plumbing, and there is still electric and an alarm system. She stated she has been unable to find out from Mr. Majewski if the plumbing works, and she has been unable to get into the building to take measurements. She stated she also does not know if there is a functioning septic field. She stated if public sewer is installed, that would solve that problem.

Mr. Scott stated he feels they should be able to get an estimate on public sewers per linear foot off of the roadway so that a determination could be made whether it would be less expensive to replace the septic as opposed to having public sewer. Mr. Scott agreed to make some calls to try to get a placeholder. He stated the challenge is that contractors are very busy currently, and most are not in position to provide a quote when they do not believe that there will be work at the end of it; but he will look into this.

Mr. Steadman asked Ms. Sovinee to let the Committee know how she makes out with the engineer that she is looking into working with as that might be an organization the Committee could tap for other purposes. He added that he believes that the Committee will be asking the Township to spend money with engineering firms to get estimates for some of these expenses once there is an idea what the use might be for the different buildings.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the Patterson barn. She stated the upper floor, which is on the right side, has a pretty good roof and floor. She noted Prallsville Mills in Stockton, NJ which was renovated through the Delaware Canal Commission as a rustic venue. Ms. Sovinee stated another use listed for this barn would be for use by the farm and equipment storage. She stated they would need to confirm the weight-bearing capacity and the structural integrity of the entire structure. She stated the lower level could be opened up to tell the history of farming.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the Satterthwaite house. Possible uses have been listed of selling to a private homeowner, converting to Township offices, and creating a historic living farm museum. She stated they could add sell to a private developer for Commercial use if that is something recommended by Spaziano. Mr. Mohan recommended listing the use as sell to a private entity. Mr. Steadman stated they could also list a use of convert to offices, and it could be either a private entity or the Township.

Ms. Sovinee stated Spaziano had indicated that spending money on these renovations was not a good use of Township money, and it would be better if it was done by a private entity.

Ms. Sovinee asked if the Committee would still like to leave in the historic living farm museum. Mr. Mohan stated the Committee was advised that that type of use loses money, although he understands that this is something that Ms. Doan from the Patterson Preservation group is interested in. Mr. Childs stated he feels it should be left on the list at this time. Ms. Daubert stated while it may not be feasible, it is an option. She noted the earlier discussion about having the front of the building look the same, but then re-doing the back of the structure; and she asked if that would pertain to both an office and a residence. Mr. Steadman stated it could be a private entity that would take on the property under certain Easements and restrictions and put it to a good use whether that is a residence or an office. Ms. Daubert stated if they are only keeping the front, the possibilities for a use would be greater. Mr. Mohan stated the house could be bundled with the barn, and it could be a bed and breakfast or a wedding venue. He stated this would be S1 to S5 as a group. Ms. Daubert stated she is concerned that they are going to get information back that the building cannot be saved, and she would like to see if there is a way to preserve the front and re-do the back which would open up the opportunities for use. Mr. Steadman stated the first two uses could apply to S1 or S1 through S5, and they will have to consider how to best capture that idea in the recommendations. Ms. Sovinee stated they may have to include a narrative.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the well garage. She stated she has included a workshop as a use, but renovations would be needed and the concrete floor is not intact. She stated the issue of having a structure to protect the well goes away if public utilities are installed.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the small barn which was discussed with regard to re-use of the barn wood. Mr. Mohan stated he feels they should sell the wood as the roof is falling apart and the beams are not structurally sound. Ms. Daubert stated they may also be able to use the wood at some other public area that the Township owns. Ms. Sovinee stated Mr. Worthington had indicated that this was very nice barn wood, and he provided prices as to how much the wood could be sold for so that would be a Revenue source.

Mr. Steadman asked if anyone on the Committee would be willing to take on the responsibility of doing an Internet search to find contractors/dealers in barn wood who would be willing to look at this. Mr. Mohan agreed to do that. Mr. Mohan stated the proceeds from selling this barn wood would provide revenue to put toward renovations of other structures. Mr. Steadman stated if there are going to be some outbuildings that are going to be taken apart, it would be good to find out what the salvage value would be.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the small barn, but no uses have been shown for that.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the main barn, which she stated is “enormous and nice inside.” She noted work that has been done including reinforcing a wall and redoing the roof. She stated the second floor looks stable. She stated it is much larger than the Patterson barn. She stated it is a hay barn, and the flooring is separated by approximately 1” to allow for air circulation.

Mr. Steadman stated they need to know the weight capacity. Ms. Sovinee state the lower level could be used to tell the history of farming because the structure of the lower level is very interesting.

She stated she understands that the Township has not yet filled in all of the holes because they are still dealing with the cats on the Patterson side.

Ms. Sovinee stated with regard to the Satterthwaite properties, they could discuss bundling them or not bundling them for sale for re-use; and this was acceptable to the Committee.

Ms. Sovinee showed the page for the tool shed/garage in the back. She stated it is a nice concrete block structure, and the Township is currently using it.

Ms. Sovinee stated with regard to the Patterson side, she asked Mr. Mohan if he is suggesting that they take down some of the garages; and Mr. Mohan agreed. He stated he put that option down for a number of the buildings. He noted the well house, and stated if there is a connection to public water, that building could be taken down or it could be renovated for a one-person artist's studio. Ms. Sovinee stated the electric panel is in the well house so that would have to be moved. She stated she feels that they could leave the well house. She stated the tenant garage is also useful for AOY for storage although the structure is just corrugated plastic. Mr. Mohan stated he feels they could find something different for AOY for storage possibly using the reclaimed wood and use that area for additional parking for AOY. Ms. Sovinee stated they would rather use the other garage across the parking lot as opposed to the tenant garage since it is not very structurally-sound.

Ms. Sovinee stated a "person door" could be put on the other garage since currently it is heavy to get into.

Mr. Mohan stated for a few of the structures he did suggest demolition, and the space be used for parking. He stated if they want to do something with the barn, there needs to be a place to park. Ms. Sovinee asked Mr. Mohan what he felt should be done with the Patterson Farm equipment barn; and he stated he feels there could be storage below and walk-up for a couple of artist's studios or some other kind of workshop on the second floor. He stated the other alternative is to take it down and sell the wood. Mr. Steadman asked if an artist studio would require plumbing, and Mr. Mohan stated that would need to be discussed. Mr. Mohan stated that there is also going to be the need for more toilets, and Ms. Sovinee agreed. Mr. Mohan stated he does not know what plumbing would be required recognizing that an artist would need to wash paint brushes. Ms. Sovinee stated they would need plumbing although they would not need a kitchen in there. Mr. Steadman stated they would not want to end up with one building and a parking lot, and you would want the look and feel of the country, a farm, and the history. He stated if a building has history to it, that has appeal in and of itself; however a 1945 corrugated metal structure would not have a similar cultural history. Mr. Mohan stated while the corn crib is beautiful, he does not see how they could make it usable for an artist; and Ms. Sovinee stated they could not, but it could be kept as a historic farm building. Mr. Mohan stated it might also be able to be moved toward the edge of the farmable land so that the space is better utilized. He added if it is decided to take it down, they could sell the wood.

Mr. Steadman stated we may need to define a use as a historical outbuilding since even if it does not have an explicit function, it contributes to the character. Mr. Steadman added that if the small outbuildings contribute to the history, they would not be expensive to keep up compared to the larger structures. Ms. Daubert stated we should come up with an estimate for what the annual maintenance would be on these smaller structures if it is decided they could be retained.

Discussion of Next Steps/Activities

Ms. Sovinee stated there has been discussion about the dates for upcoming meetings. She also noted that re-sale is being looked into. Mr. Scott will be looking into an estimate for public utilities. Ms. Sovinee stated she will make edits to the Executive Summary and asked the other Committee members to send her any edits that they have for this document.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Childs stated he has had discussions with Mr. John Nadig who owns the property across Mirror Lake which he has restored. He has been in the property for over forty years and has re-built the barn and other buildings on the property. Mr. Childs stated he feels it would be interesting to get the perspective of an individual who has gone through the process of restoring a historic home from the early 1800's as well as the outbuildings. Mr. Nadig indicated his willingness to meet with the Committee and for the Committee to visit his property; and Mr. Childs stated he would be willing to set that up if anyone on the Committee is interested.

Mr. Steadman asked that Mr. Childs advise him of the date if something is set up, and he will come if he is able. Ms. Sovinee stated Mr. Nadig has restored the whole house inside to a classic Colonial period. Mr. Steadman stated he may be able to advise the Committee of things they had not considered with regard to restoration of historic properties.

Mr. Childs stated he would also be interested in meeting with Mr. Stewart when that is scheduled by Mr. Steadman.

Mr. Mohan asked who he would need to contact to make arrangements for someone to come out and look at the buildings, and Mr. Steadman stated that should be through Mr. Ferguson, the Township Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Kathleen Hirko stated she is interested in seeing that the buildings on the Farm are preserved, adding she lives in a preserved home in Lower Makefield. She stated she feels it is an “awful idea to knock down any of the buildings they are talking about” as they are an important part of the history of the Farm. She stated she does not agree with all the buildings being used for artists, although she understands that the Artists of Yardley are on the Farm and “that is a great use for it;” but she feels they should be thinking of other uses other than everything being used for artists. She stated there are a lot of other uses for the buildings, and she feels a lot of them should stay. She stated barn board does have some value, but not a lot of value “like you are thinking.” She stated she feels they should keep as many of the buildings as they can and possibly letting the farmer use them is a much better idea than knocking them down.

Mr. Steadman stated at this point they have not yet come to any conclusions or final recommendations, but they have to discuss all options. Mr. Steadman asked Ms. Hirko for her recommendations for uses as she has indicated she was not in favor of so many of the buildings being used for artists. Ms. Hirko stated the small cottage could be kept as a place for people to visit and learn about the history of the Farm. She stated she feels the barn behind Satterthwaite could be used for events. She stated she feels there could be many ideas other than knocking down the buildings as there will not be a lot of value in the barn wood. Mr. Steadman thanked Ms. Hirko for her input.

FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

It was noted the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Property Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, December 8 at 7:30 p.m. In light of the January deadline, there was discussion of tentative dates of January 6 as a working session, the regular meeting being held on January 13, and a potential date of January 27 if needed. Mr. Steadman will contact the Township’s Administrative Assistant about the January dates.

November 18, 2021

Ad Hoc Property Committee

Mr. Childs asked if the final report being discussed to be submitted by the end of January would be the final set of recommendations from the Committee. Mr. Steadman stated he felt it would be just be the final report on the potential uses. He stated the Committee would then consider expenses, revenues, and the financial analysis which would lead to the final set of recommendations which the Township had indicated they would like by the end of the first quarter of 2022. Mr. Steadman stated they still need the proposal from Spirit Golf as well as details from the Real Estate agent.

There being no further business, Ms. Sovinee moved, Mr. Mohan seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bette Sovinee, Secretary

