

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
AD HOC PROPERTY COMMITTEE
FINAL MINUTES – NOT APPROVED
JANUARY 11, 2024

The regular meeting of the Ad Hoc Property Committee of the Township of Lower Makefield was held remotely on January 11, 2024. Mr. Steadman called the meeting to order. He stated the Committee completed the assignment they were given, which was developing a Master Plan for the Patterson Farm.

Those present:

Ad Hoc Property Committee: Dennis Steadman, Chair
Fred Childs, Vice Chair
Bette Sovinee, Secretary
Joe Camaratta, Member
John Mohan, Member
Ron Schmid, Member

Others: James Majewski, Community Development Director
Daniel Grenier, Supervisor Liaison (joined meeting in progress)

Absent: Jim Scott, Ad Hoc Property Committee Member

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 14, 2023 MEETING MINUTES: Ms. Sovinee

Mr. Schmid moved, Mr. Camaratta seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of December 14, 2023.

STRUCTURAL CHANGES AT COMPLETION OF PATTESON FARM MASTER PLAN:
Mr. Steadman and All

Thank You to Invited Stakeholders

Mr. Steadman thanked all of the invited stakeholders who were active in the Patterson Farm Master Plan Planning Project which was a large undertaking. He stated he hopes that they will continue to participate in the meetings along with the general public. He thanked Ms. Bette Sovinee who was not only on the Committee, but was also representing AOY. He thanked Sam Stewart and

Tim Stewart from Charlann Farms, adding there were a number of discussions with them during the period. He thanked Kevin Gallen from the Environmental Advisory Committee and Stephen Heinz from the Historical Architectural Review Board. Mr. Steadman thanked Joe Camaratta who was not only on the Committee but was also representing the Historical Commission. He thanked Jeff Hirko representing Patterson Farm Preservation, Emily Hiller who represented the resident ambassadors, and Colleen Attara who is a tenant at the Farm.

Mr. Steadman stated he hopes all of the stakeholders continue to follow the progress of Patterson Farm and the Ad Hoc Property Committee.

Thank You to Community Outreach & Engagement Sub-Committee

Mr. Steadman thanked Ron Schmid for heading up the Community Outreach & Engagement Sub-Committee as well as Fred Childs and Bette Sovinee who served on this Sub-Committee. Mr. Steadman stated we recognized in the public planning process the importance of the community outreach and engagement, and the Sub-Committee did an excellent job and had a number of initiatives that had an impact on the process.

DISCUSSION OF STRUCTURING OF THE AD HOC PROPERTY COMMITTEE AND WELCOMING OF NEW BOARD OF SUPERVISORS LIAISON: Mr. Steadman and All

Mr. Steadman stated it is assumed that the Ad Hoc Property Committee will continue as it is structured and chartered, and that the Board of Supervisors will be giving the Ad Hoc Property Committee a new assignment to address a property in the Township that needs some strategic looks and alternative attention to try to decide a direction. He stated we do not have that assignment yet, but it has been a topic of discussion by the Board of Supervisors although there has not been any definitive conclusion.

Mr. Grenier joined the meeting at this time, and he was welcomed as the new Supervisor Liaison to the Ad Hoc Property Committee.

Mr. Grenier stated he understands that the Board of Supervisors will be discussing what the next steps are for the Ad Hoc Property Committee and whether it will be a single assignment or a broader assignment as was originally considered.

He stated there may be some re-structuring based on what those assignments might be and what the needs are. He stated he feels they will also look at what comes out of the recommendations in terms of next steps specific to the Patterson Farm Plan and future potential Committees. He stated there has not been much feedback yet from the Township staff about a potential 501(c)(3) whether existing or newly-formed. He stated all of that will come into play in terms of the Ad Hoc Property Committee or an offshoot of this Committee.

Mr. Steadman stated at the December meeting the Committee discussed two options one of which was to transition the Ad Hoc Property Committee into what had been recommended earlier as an Implementation Committee to help support the implementation of Phase 1 of the Patterson Farm Master Plan. He stated that Committee would be phased out as soon as a Non-Profit to manage the property is identified. He stated they had recommended that the property be managed by a community-based non-profit with a historical preservation orientation. He stated they felt keeping a Committee engaged with the Township as Phase 1 was implemented would be a good way to transition to the non-profit. Mr. Grenier stated he feels that would be logical.

Mr. Steadman stated because of the experience that the Ad Hoc Property Committee had gone through, the Ad Hoc Property Committee could transition into the Implementation group. Another scenario would be to keep the Ad Hoc Committee as a group to take on another property assignment unrelated to Patterson Farm. The Implementation Committee would take on the implementation role. Mr. Steadman stated the members of those Committees could change depending on the decision. Mr. Steadman stated this was discussed with Ms. Blundi in December, and Mr. Grenier stated she did share that with the Board.

Mr. Grenier stated we need to get feedback from the staff and the Township solicitor in terms of the existing Committee versus a new non-profit set-up for this purpose and what the overlap may be. He believes the Board of Supervisors will be discussing this over the course of the next few months.

Mr. Steadman stated the Committee will wait for direction from the Board of Supervisors.

DISCUSSION OF OFFICERS, 2024: Mr. Steadman and All

Mr. Steadman stated since it is the beginning of the new year it is important to have election of new Officers for 2024. He added that he had previously indicated that he is willing to continue to serve, but did not want to serve in a leadership role. He asked for nominations/volunteers for Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee for 2024.

Mr. Childs stated they would all like to thank Mr. Steadman for taking this on which took on a lot more of his time than he probably originally felt it would over the last few years. He stated they appreciate his work and feel he has done an excellent job over the years in keeping this moving forward and overseeing all of the various elements and perspectives involved.

Mr. Childs stated in terms of election of Officers, Mr. Mohan and Mr. Scott have indicated that they are stepping down from the Committee so there will be two vacancies on the Committee. He stated there were spots that they filled in terms of finance and Real Estate expertise. He stated he also feels that the original Resolution called for a member from the EAC. He stated while there was a member from the EAC as an invited stakeholder, he believes that the Committee was to have a member of the EAC or someone who has had that experience. Mr. Childs stated given those vacancies and Mr. Steadman wanting to step back from serving as an Officer, he would propose holding off on Elections until we see if there are other potential members who could fill those key roles on the Committee. Mr. Childs stated in terms of continuation for the coming of month or so, he would be willing to continue as Vice Chair, and he asked if Ms. Sovinee would continue as Secretary during that time as well.

Mr. Steadman stated both Mr. Mohan and Mr. Scott have stated their intention to step down, but are both willing to stay one for a month or two. Mr. Mohan stated he would agree to stay on until a replacement is found to make sure that there is a quorum, and we can keep the process moving. Mr. Steadman stated that while Mr. Scott could not be here this evening, he has also indicated that he would be willing to stay on for a month or two until we can find a replacement. Mr. Steadman stated in the founding Resolution it is very specific that there be two individuals who are qualified as financial professionals, and he and Mr. Mohan fit that bill so one of those boxes would be open with Mr. Mohan's departure. Mr. Steadman stated another specific element in

the Resolution was a Real Estate Agent or Broker or someone equally qualified who is a Lower Makefield resident, and Mr. Scott as a Real Estate attorney fit that for our Committee. He stated we have to fill those two specific slots unless the Committee is re-defined in some way. Mr. Steadman stated he would also support having someone from the Environmental Advisory Council serve.

Mr. Grenier stated those interested in stepping down should advise the Township Manager by e-mail, and that allows the Township Manager to publish that we have specific positions to fill. Mr. Grenier stated the Board of Supervisors would hold interviews and then make appointments to the Committee. Mr. Grenier stated according to the Resolution, we are also supposed to have someone with an environmental professional background on the Committee as well. Mr. Steadman stated we have that in that Ms. Sovinee worked for the New Jersey DEP her entire career. Mr. Grenier stated he did not realize that Ms. Sovinee had professional credentials as an environmental scientist, and Ms. Sovinee stated it was not as an environmental scientist but as an environmental planner. Mr. Grenier stated he does not believe that is how the Resolution was written. He stated we should look into all those boxes to make sure that we check them all correctly. He added that if we are re-constituting, that may be revised as well.

Mr. Childs stated he believes that he speaks for a number on the Ad Hoc Property Committee who are more interested in progressing Patterson Farm; and if there were to be a separate Committee or a sub-set of the Ad Hoc Property Committee, there may be a number of members who would prefer to focus on the Patterson Farm property rather than whatever other properties that the Board of Supervisors may ask them to focus on.

Mr. Schmid stated they need to consider if the Implementation Committee would be a separate Committee, which is what he would advocate for, from the Ad Hoc Property Committee; and therefore two separate sets of leadership would be required. He stated he feels that the skill sets would be different and the assignments would be different. He stated implementation will be a lot about the Plan that was submitted and moving that forward including getting the 501(c)(3) in place whereas an Ad Hoc Property Committee will be thinking about what the Ad Hoc Property Committee considered a year and a half ago, and he feels that requires a different skill set. Mr. Schmid stated he does not know how the Board of Supervisors would feel about that.

Mr. Grenier stated the Township has a lot of Committees. He stated one of the issues with having a lot of Committees is making sure that we can fill the seats as sometimes there are difficulties with having a quorum, and that is a common issue with some Committees. Mr. Grenier stated the other properties involved may require different skill sets depending on the properties. He stated he anticipates that the Board of Supervisors will be considering this fairly quickly as they want to move forward as much as they can. He added that the Board is trying to proceed in a way that is efficient and Budget-friendly given the Budget items that have come up over the last several months.

Mr. Steadman stated Mr. Childs has made a proposal that we hold off on the election of Officers until the future Committee vacancies are filled. Mr. Schmid stated he feels there are two separate groups and there should be leadership for two separate groups unless there is a Sub-Committee of the Ad Hoc Property Committee which would be the Implementation Committee. He added there could be an issue with having too many Committees for the Supervisors to be managing and bringing proposals forward. Mr. Camaratta stated he agrees that there are separate skill sets for the two Committees especially for the Implementation Committee since that would require a set of skills with regard to setting up the 501(c)(3) and items that were included in the Plan with regard to remediation, painting, etc. He stated that would also require people with a historical background so that those properties are treated as historical properties should be treated.

Mr. Camaratta stated leaving the Chair position open might be beneficial since it would allow the Township to indicate that they are looking for a Chair for the Committee which might attract a different type of person than just the professional credentials positions.

Mr. Steadman stated with regard to the Charter of the Ad Hoc Property Committee and whether there needs to be a separate Committee it is undecided at this point, and he would support postponing the election of Officers and continue as we are currently configured until such time as we get specific direction from the Board of Supervisors. He stated there may be a different set of requirements for one Committee or another in terms of professional backgrounds/capabilities.

Mr. Grenier stated the Committee would not be breaking any rules by doing that. He stated they can vote on this at any time; and while it is customary

to do it at the beginning of the year, there is nothing in the Charter that he understands that requires that. He stated only the Board of Supervisors is required to do that at the beginning of every year.

Mr. Steadman stated he would not have a problem with continuing with the Officers in place at this time; and he will step out as Chair once the Committee is formed and the replacement found.

Mr. Grenier stated he understands that Mr. Mohan and Mr. Scott will be leaving the Committee which would result in two vacancies. He asked Mr. Steadman if he is planning to step away entirely or would he still like to be a member but not the Chair. Mr. Steadman stated he would be willing to serve as a member, but not the Chair. Mr. Grenier stated officially two seats would be open so we would need to advertise for two positions which would technically be the roles filled by Mr. Mohan and Mr. Scott according to the Resolution. Mr. Grenier stated once those seats are filled, the Committee could then hold Elections. He added that the Board of Supervisors would not choose the Chair, and that would be voted on by the Committee. Mr. Steadman stated the Chair could be one of the new members or a current member could step up to be Chair. Mr. Grenier stated the Board of Supervisors will be meeting on Wednesday, and he believes they will officially vote to accept the Plan that has been recommended for approval at that meeting.

Mr. Steadman stated he feels more critical than filling the positions for the Ad Hoc Property Committee is a decision on the Implementation Committee because we have momentum on the Patterson Farm project, and he feels Committee involvement in that would help it move forward and help build the bridge to the 501(c)(3). He stated if the Ad Hoc Property Committee did not take on a new assignment for six months, he does not feel it would matter; but if the Patterson Farm project were to languish for six months, he feels that would matter.

Mr. Schmid stated his interest would be to serve on the Implementation Committee.

Mr. Grenier stated at this point the Officers will stay in their current role.

January 11, 2024

Ad Hoc Property Committee

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Steadman asked that those interested in making Public Comment call in at this time.

Ms. Sovinee asked that the Committee be provided a copy of the Resolution from 2021 when the Committee was founded. Mr. Steadman agreed to provide that to the Committee. Mr. Childs stated he also believes that it was updated or modified at some point with regard to dates and scheduling. Mr. Majewski was asked to send out the updated Resolution to the Committee, and Mr. Majewski agreed he will send out both the original and the updated Resolutions.

Mr. Childs asked about the status of the testing at Patterson Farm, and Mr. Majewski stated he believes that is to be completed in the next week or two; and as soon as he receives that he will send it to everyone. He noted this was the additional soil sampling that was done.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one from the public wishing to speak at this time.

There being no further business, Mr. Schmid moved, Mr. Camaratta seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bette Sovinee, Secretary