

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
AD HOC PROPERTY COMMITTEE
MINUTES – APRIL 13, 2023

The regular meeting of the Ad Hoc Property Committee of the Township of Lower Makefield was held remotely on April 13, 2023. Mr. Steadman called the meeting to order.

Those present:

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

Others: James Majewski, Community Development Director
Jennifer Stark, Avison-Young
Candace Ly, Avison-Young
Doug Seiler, Seiler+Drury
Stephen Heinz, Historical Architectural Review Board
Jeff Hirko, Patterson Farm Preservation
Fredric K. Weiss, Supervisor

Absent: Ron Schmid, Ad Hoc Property Committee Member

OPENING COMMENTS: Mr. Steadman

The assignment from Lower Makefield Township is to create a Master Plan for the Patterson Farm. The Sub-Committee on Community Outreach and Engagement did a good job of trying to define the problem that created the Committee to find a solution. The buildings at Patterson Farm are currently at a crossroads. Many of those buildings are unused and many of those unused buildings are in major disrepair and unsafe for anyone to enter at this time. They will also be expensive to repair and maintain particularly the historic buildings which come with their own set of challenges and expenses. If the Township, the owner of the property, does not act soon, the repair costs are only going to increase and the risk, which we want to avoid, is that some buildings may not be salvageable.

The problem translates to the Township and Township taxpayers since even cursory estimates are clear that to salvage all of the historical buildings and bring them into a usable condition, millions of dollars will have to be invested. They need to consider which buildings, the priority they should be tackled, and how can the buildings be put to a good use. As has been noted many times previously, a building without a use cannot be maintained so there would be no sense in investing significantly in historic/old buildings and not have a use for them when the investment is over. This problem is particularly acute because the Township does have a commitment to historic preservation and there are historic buildings on this valuable Patterson Farm.

There is also a commitment to keep Patterson Farm in farming as it has been for over 300 years. Most of the land is in Agricultural Preserve Easements and will stay in farming. The problem right now at Patterson Farm is not farming as it is being productively used by a very high-quality, local tenant farmer; rather the problem is the buildings.

Lower Makefield decided before making such major investments in any buildings, that we need to know how those buildings will be used to the benefit of the community in order to support the long-term maintenance and survival. Part of the solution was that the Board of Supervisors formed the Ad Hoc Property Committee to analyze the condition of the buildings, consider potential expenses associated with them, and recommend potential future uses. The summary of those recommendations was presented in March, 2022 and included three items: Patterson Farm should remain in agriculture as a top priority, the historical buildings should be preserved where possible as they are historically important and also important to the character, culture, and aesthetic beauty of Lower Makefield Township, and that without a use a building dies and cannot be maintained. The Committee is to identify productive uses/reuses so that these buildings can bring some utility/value to the community to support their maintenance. With the exception of two or three small outbuildings, the barns and other outbuildings are obsolete as farm buildings as they were built many years ago when agriculture looked very different. The barns in particular are obsolete by today's standards.

With approval of funding by the Township, the Ad Hoc Property Committee conducted a review of outside agencies through an RFP (Request for Proposals) and recommended the hiring of Seiler+Drury, and this was approved by the Board of Supervisors in March, 2023. This firm which is a knowledgeable, local firm familiar with Bucks County will conduct engineering, architectural site reviews,

evaluate alternative building uses, and propose designs as input to a Master Plan. The Master Plan will include building uses and the estimated cost to make those buildings suitable to those uses. How the building is to be used will impact its cost for repair/restoration. It will also include the cost associated with site infrastructure. By doing this, intelligent investment decisions can be made most likely in a staged fashion.

As part of the Master Plan process, community input is sought on potential uses as well as input on the magnitude of the investment dollars that the community is willing to spend to save these buildings. Funds are not limitless and decisions will have to be made. The hope is to deliver a Master Plan to the Township by September to guide decision making.

Early on a skilled expert architect/project manager, Jennifer Stark, was hired who is in attendance at all meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Sovinee

Mr. Mohan moved, Mr. Camaratta seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of March 9, 2023 as written.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Community Outreach & Engagement Sub-Committee: Mr. Childs

There was a Sub-Committee meeting held last week and there was discussion with Bill Collins of Seiler+Drury as to how to engage the community and get public input. More information will be provided tonight to see where Seiler+Drury is in terms of scheduling some of the meetings. In-person and remote presentations to interested community members were discussed at the Sub-Committee meeting as well as some interactive open forum meetings. Focus groups were discussed as well as identifying how to reach out to specific groups within the community that already exist including the immediate neighbors who might be the most impacted. Part of the discussion included the fact that the Township is going to put together a letter to some of the immediate neighbors to get their input and notify them that information is readily available on the Website now and that the Township will continue to expand that information. They will be advised that meetings will be held in the future to get their input. The Township Website already has information on the background of the Farm and developing a Master Plan.

At the Sub-Committee meeting there was also discussion about developing a survey in conjunction with Seiler+Drury, and some initial questions were drafted. This will be pursued in conjunction with the consultant and the Township to reach out to the community to get more input on their thoughts on the Farm and what they might be interested in.

Mr. Steadman asked Mr. Childs to advise where people can go to get information, and Mr. Childs stated there is a page on the Imt.org Website for Patterson Farm under Community Links. This also links to a number of the documents including the Ad Hoc Property Committee's recommendation, the Master Plan proposal from Seiler+Drury, the Avison-Young Management Proposal, slides from the presentation of November of last year, and the Board of Supervisors news release in terms of the Contract to Seiler+Drury. He stated there are also a number of studies and presentations that have been made over the last ten years that are available. Mr. Majewski stated the information can also be reached from the Ad Hoc Property Committee page under Board and Commissions. He stated this has the link directly to the Patterson Farm page. He added as we continue to progress, we will add information including meeting dates.

Mr. Childs stated they are also working with the Township on Frequently Asked Questions so that we can respond to a lot of questions that have come up already. That will be posted once that document is finalized.

Seiler+Drury Project Process & Progress Update and Current Timeline Exhibit: Mr. Seiler

The project has been started and they have integrated where they are to date with the discussions about public meetings and the different tasks. They are working on the potential uses of the buildings from a physical building factor and an economic viability point-of-view including the costs and what is involved so that the Committee can make decisions.

The schedule was shown. There are five tasks involved. The first was started at the last Ad Hoc Property Committee meeting a month ago. There were interviews with stakeholder groups on March 31 when they had an all-day session at the site beginning with the Artists of Yardley including Ms. Sovinee and Ms. Attara who they met at the Caretaker's House. Time was also spent with Sam and Tim Stewart of Charlann Farms. They also met with Township representatives including Mr. Majewski, Mr. Kratzer, and representatives from Public Works and Park & Rec.

They also met with Mr. Camaratta representing the Historical Commission and Mr. Heinz discussing the mission of HARB although this site is not within the HARB boundaries.

Mr. Seiler stated he wanted to bring Bill Collins from Simone Collins, landscape architect/Master Planners, onto the team Bill Collins from Simone Collins, who will put the buildings into context as to how they relate to parks, how people use them in a landscape, and how the natural landscape, water flow, etc. impact the property. He stated he also brought in Bob Powers, a regional historical preservation specialist who will make sure we get chronologies and material descriptions. He added that he feels the chronology that has been assembled to date seems excellent, and there have been two National Register nominations made which describe a lot about the buildings. Mr. Powers' purpose is to corroborate that and set it up so that if there are future funding sources available, the groundwork is usable. Todd Poole, a land use economist from 4ward Planning, was brought in as he is quite familiar with not only rural and farm re-use but also the use of buildings and their economic impacts in general. He stated almost everything that is being done is so that Mr. Poole can answer those economic questions; and everyone else is analyzing the buildings and the physical context of the site, the historical/cultural history, and the fabric of the buildings to see what is feasible from a structural load size, etc. Mr. Poole will be provided that data and will tell what are the costs and feasible uses based on where the Township is in this part of the region.

Mr. Powers started this process the Monday after the Friday interviews, and he has shared some ideas. He should have some preliminary findings around May 10 that can be discussed with the Committee.

Task One is to survey the buildings, create base drawings, make a historic statement, understand the site context, and have Mr. Poole's Market Analysis Phase 1 which is what the market can bear and see what is appropriate.

Task One will end with a meeting with the Ad Hoc Property Committee. The meetings have been scheduled around the monthly Ad Hoc Property Committee meetings so the preliminary findings are scheduled to be presented to the Ad Hoc Property Committee at their next meeting on May 11, and the first public meeting to share the preliminary findings and a summary of what came out of discussions at the May 11 meeting could be held on May 22. All dates are subject to approval by the Committee and the Township. This process will be repeated for the next tasks.

Once there are findings about the physical, structural, cultural context, etc. they will start to develop the program which is what are the uses for the buildings. They will develop the programmable functions of the buildings which are tested. This would end with a meeting with the Ad Hoc Property Committee in June and a public meeting soon thereafter. The feedback from those two meetings would lead into physically planning the uses for each structure. From that they develop the costs to do those things.

This leads to the most important task which is Mr. Poole's Market Analysis Phase 2 which is the economic viability for the buildings in this place and time for the uses that seem appropriate regionally and seem appropriate to the community. He stated this will show what the cost will be for a use in a particular building including restoration and what is the financial performance that could be expected.

The last task has an Ad Hoc Property Committee meeting in September and a public meeting which is visualized to be at the Board of Supervisors after that.

Mr. Scott stated he feels this has been well thought out, and he appreciates that a lot of the details are being done at the front end since the buildings' systems and structural will dictate everything else.

Mr. Childs stated he understands the structural and building evaluations are ongoing this month. Mr. Seiler stated they will be starting surveying of all of the buildings next week, and they expect to do a combination of hand-surveying with tapes and for the exterior, digital surveying where they are scanned. This could lead to 3D models of the structures for marketing and outreach in describing the site and also to get accuracy on some of the features. Once there are base plans, Charlie Timbie, the structural engineer, will put be on site with

Mr. Seiler's team; and they will go through the buildings listening to Mr. Timbie's focus.

Mr. Childs asked where they are in terms of outreach to the stakeholders. Mr. Seiler stated they will be on site with different experts, and some of the interviews they had with the stakeholders discussed if anyone would mind that they spent some time having discussions on different focuses. He stated he understands that if they were to speak to the Ad Hoc Committee at large, it would have to be an advertised meeting. Mr. Seiler stated the public comment per their current Contract is primarily through the public meetings and the Ad Hoc Property Committee meeting discussions.

Mr. Childs asked if there were any other specific individuals or groups that they had plans to speak with. Mr. Seiler stated they will be speaking to each of the stakeholders again including Ms. Sovinee. He stated the group that he has not had an opportunity to meet with was the Patterson Farm Preservation group, and he was hoping that someone from that group could be on the site when he is there with Mr. Powers. Mr. Steadman stated there were two identified stakeholders who were invited to the meetings who Mr. Seiler did not have an opportunity to meet with, and Patterson Farm Preservation was one, and that needs to happen. He stated the other was the Lower Makefield Environmental Advisory Committee.

Mr. Seiler stated he will provide the dates that Mr. Collins, the landscape architect, is coming out to the site; and when he is on site perhaps someone from those groups could be present.

Mr. Steadman stated he understands that Mr. Seiler's team do not feel that we are going to run into incompatibility between putting some of the unused buildings into use and maintaining smooth agricultural operation on the land; and that the site can be managed so that there is no interference with the agricultural production and some non-agricultural uses of the buildings. Mr. Seiler stated he agrees. He added that one of the reasons he wanted Simone Collins on the team was so that we would be sure that whatever is considered on the re-use of the buildings will not conflict with the agricultural use and allows for the best way for the public to enjoy the property. He stated even though this is not a Park Master Plan, the steps being taken will allow the Township to do a Park Master Plan since we have a planner/landscape person advising us on these recommendations. Mr. Seiler stated he is trying to lay the groundwork so the Township does not have to backtrack.

Mr. Camaratta stated several members of the Historical Commission are interested in meeting with Mr. Powers when he is on site, and he asked that he be advised when Mr. Powers will be there so that Mr. Powers will have all of the information that the Township has with regard to the site. Mr. Seiler stated Mr. Powers was asked to provide a schedule as to when he will be on the site, and he will let Mr. Camaratta and others know when that is going to happen. He added that there is a fairly short timeline before the Task One public meeting which is tentatively set for May 22, and he would like to know from the Committee when that should happen and what time of day.

Mr. Camaratta stated with regard to the public meeting tentatively scheduled for May 22, he asked if it has been considered when that would be announced and how we would do the outreach to people. Mr. Seiler stated he needs feedback from the Committee tonight as to whether he should be presenting to the Ad Hoc Property Committee at large at their monthly meetings; and if so, how soon thereafter could we do a public meeting and how it would be advertised. He stated he assumes that would all be handled though the Committee and Mr. Majewski. He stated he would not know how to do the outreach and schedule it best for the community, and he was hoping others would schedule that and announce it.

Mr. Steadman stated in terms of the regularly-scheduled, monthly public meetings, he feels Mr. Seiler should presume that he should be presenting at each one between now and completion. He stated with regard to the public meeting shown on the calendar for May 22, that will need to be coordinated with the Township and the Sub-Committee on Community Outreach to make sure that we are well prepared for that and that there is adequate publicity and awareness of that meeting if that is in fact the date it will be held.

Mr. Heinz stated the public meeting venue might be a critical issue; and while we could have it at the Township Building, only ten people may show up. He stated he would be interested in developing public interest as well as having public input where we can get support behind any efforts since if it is going to be a big cost if people do not know anything about it, they will vote it down. He stated we could put up a tent and provide refreshments and have the meeting on site adding the Art Center does similar types of things. He stated it could be done near the barn and have it well advertised during the beginning or the middle of the process. He stated the information that is provided could include a history of the Farm with experts present including the architect and his team and someone from the State Museum Commission to discuss other projects that have happened.

Mr. Steadman stated generating interest is critically important, and people need to understand the issues and what the opportunities are so that they become interested and willing to support an activity or possibly become a "Friends Of" group. He stated it is that kind of community interest that we will need to support the kind of investment that they will be looking at or it will be hard for the Township to justify the expenditures if the community seemingly does not care. He stated while he does not believe that is the case, he believes that of the 33,000 residents in the Township, there is a large number of them who do not think about Patterson Farm; and we need to try to improve that situation.

Mr. Hirko stated Patterson Farm Preservation will gladly meet with Mr. Seiler at the Farm when he sets up the meeting.

Mr. Seiler stated he will let Mr. Majewski know when he will be on the site, and he will try to develop a visit schedule with himself and others on the team and share it through Mr. Majewski who could share it with whoever needs to know. Mr. Majewski stated that will be a good approach, and they will then know who will be on the site and can get others on site while Mr. Seiler's team is proceeding with their work. Mr. Steadman asked that Mr. Seiler keep Mr. Majewski, Mr. Childs, Ms. Stark, and himself informed as to when they will be on site. Mr. Seiler stated he will do an itinerary for a specific day, and they could choose a time when they could meet with others.

Fiscal Responsibility: Mr. Steadman

Part of the Committee's recommendations made in March, 2022 included the guiding principles: That we preserve history and agriculture, that we achieve community use and support, and to be fiscally-responsible. It is important to have common terminology. A slide was shown which was developed on to be shared with the Board of Supervisors and others to try to define what is felt to be part of what is being fiscally-responsible.

There are three kinds of costs related to the repair and maintenance of the buildings at Patterson Farm. Project Costs are the up-front, capital improvements that are necessary to make the building compatible with its intended use; and this will be a big expense. Mr. Steadman stated it is hard to imagine a use that would provide a financial payback/return on investment of the Project Costs. The second category is CapEx (cap expenses) which are the Capital Expenses that are on-going expenses that are needed to keep a building in a state compatible with its intended use. These are on-going, long-term depreciable costs usually with a lifespan of greater than three years. It is known that a roof may need to be replaced every twenty years, and a new HVAC system may be needed every twelve to fifteen years; and those are on-going capital costs. Typically when building a Budget for a facility/building, those would be accrued for on an annual basis and there would be annual accruals to allow for the eventual replacements.

The third costs are the Operating Costs which are on-going operating expenses including utilities, cutting the grass, garbage services, cleaning services, etc. This would also include small maintenance items such as changing light bulbs, clearing drains, replacing window panes, etc. as well as small improvements such as painting interior walls, replacing doors, etc.

These are the categories of costs when you talk about fiscal responsibility that a responsible building owner needs to consider; and how much of these costs could be covered by the new, intended use whether it is a tenant or a community group. Mr. Steadman stated he believes it is hard to imagine that any of these buildings are going to be able to give a payback to the Township in terms of profitability to cover not only the on-going Operating Costs and the on-going CapEx costs, but also cover the upfront Project Costs. He stated that is why we are talking about the need for the Township and the community to potentially spend a lot of money up front.

Mr. Steadman stated we will also develop some models on the income side in covering these costs and work through that with the Township. He stated he wants to make sure that we do not come up with a plan that we feel is fiscally-responsible, but when it goes to the Board of Supervisors they indicate that it cannot be done. He stated we need to work on this together to make sure we end up with something that can be executed. The discussions on fiscal responsibility and what that means is part of the process that can run in parallel with all of the engineering and architectural work that is going on.

Mr. Heinz stated he understands that at last night's Supervisors meeting, Mr. Lewis indicated that there "was going to be a lot of problems at the Farm because there is not going to be any possibility of use for anything else except agriculture under the Stipulations of the preserve that went in." Mr. Heinz stated he feels that "paperwork can be changed but we have to start thinking about it now." He stated if it comes out in the discussions with the consultants that we have a real need to have other sources of income such as a blacksmith's shop or something like that which is really not agriculture in this case, but it might be "demonstrated, and it might have for sale some of the goods that are made by the blacksmith." He stated that could be "blown away by a piece of legislation or an agreement by the County, the Township, and the State," and we need to start thinking about that as we develop the plans. He stated we should get some legal consultant on board to provide some consideration of what the process is that we would have to go through.

Mr. Steadman stated he did not observe that meeting yesterday or hear that comment, and he asked Dr. Weiss if he would like to comment on that. Mr. Steadman stated it is his understanding that the Agricultural Easement does not apply to the buildings. Mr. Majewski showed an aerial of the property. Mr. Steadman stated it is his understanding that the land shown in orange is the preserved farmland, but the buildings are not part of that preserved farmland. He also noted an area between Mirror Lake Road and the buildings which is also not preserved. He stated the area today where the leaf recycling is done and all of the buildings are not constrained by the Agricultural Easement.

Dr. Weiss stated the goals of the Committee which were stated tonight are “spot on,” and he is sure that whatever use the Committee ends up recommending to the Board of Supervisors will be in line with the spirit of those goals. Dr. Weiss stated he does not know what Mr. Lewis was referring to since even lands Zoned Agricultural have a number of uses other than farming. He noted specifically Shady Brook Farm. Dr. Weiss stated fiscal responsibility is one of his major concerns. He added that we seriously underestimated our Bond Fund which is reserved for projects; and while it was felt we had \$3.5 million in the Bond Fund, there is actually about \$9 million in the Bond Fund. He stated the use of that money is restricted to Capital projects. He stated it will be up to the Board of Supervisors to determine how to spend that. He stated the more we use from the Bond Fund, the less we have to use Sewer sale proceeds, and we can protect more of that money. He stated if the other Supervisors agree, a large portion of the Project Costs could be borne by the Bond Fund, and it will not cause any stress to the taxpayers. He stated there are also other projects that may need to be considered outside of Patterson Farm, and the Board will have to consider other methods of getting the Project Costs taken care of.

He stated Capital Expenses and Operating Expenses are more in line with how the Master Plan is going to be developed. He feels the Ad Hoc Property Committee will lead us to a great recommendation in time.

Mr. Camaratta stated he understands that the Project Costs will be estimated by Mr. Seiler as well as the CapEx costs, but we will have to estimate what the ongoing Operating Costs will be. Mr. Steadman his understanding is that Mr. Seiler’s team will be in a position to estimate the costs necessary for the use that is proposed, and the Committee is influencing that. What they will be providing would be “order of magnitude costs,” since they could not provide detailed costs until they have all the specs. Mr. Seiler stated it will be based on

the uses that come out of the dialogue. He stated while it is not in their current scope, it is possible to estimate the Cap/Ex costs; and they have done that where it is based on total lifecycle of major components such as the roof, boiler, windows, and they could guestimate what that could be.

Mr. Majewski asked for input from the Committee about the tentative date of May 22 although he will have to confirm space availability for that date or that week. Mr. Seiler stated he chose May 22 as he knew Mr. Poole would be available that date and it would still provide sufficient time to work on Task 1. He does not feel it should be after the 22nd and they could do it the previous week if necessary. Mr. Steadman asked if anyone knows when are the best times to hold meetings like this if you want wide participation. Mr. Majewski stated he believes that May 22 would be free, but he will confirm that.

Mr. Seiler asked if there is a building that people consider the central place/ "identity making building/place" in the Township. He asked if Patterson Farm is considered that already or could it fill that role. Mr. Steadman stated there is not such a site in the Township that would come to mind. Mr. Seiler stated he read that Patterson Farm was referred to as the most-photographed location in the Township, and he stated he agrees it is "extraordinary." He stated this might be one of the rallying cries for investing in this site and that it has the potential to be a "place maker" for the community. Mr. Steadman stated that has been a topic of conversation; and while it is not that today other than the buildings used by AOY and the other artist, it could become that.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Kathleen Hirko, 1450 Dolington Road, stated she has been following the meetings and has posted on a local social media site that has about 11,000 members. She stated it is not the Township's site. She stated many residents know nothing about what is happening with the Ad Hoc Committee or the Master Plan. She stated while the site she posted on is not an official page, it does reach a lot of people and people have a lot of ideas and concerns. She stated she feels we should engage the public sooner rather than later. She stated May is not too far off, and we need to get the word out about what is happening. She stated a lot of people do not follow the Township page, and many people asked her how to watch the meeting tonight. She stated she feels these meetings should be in person because they might engage a lot more people. She stated she has trouble when she calls in as she cannot listen to the meeting,

and she does not know when she will be able to speak. She stated she feels the community has some great ideas including bird groups, garden groups, agricultural groups, teaching opportunities, and photography groups. She stated people want to use the Farm, and she feels now is the time to engage the public.

Ms. Hirko stated when the meetings were just starting, the Committee talked about the cottage on the Farm being the oldest structure on the Farm. She stated the Committee talked about possibly relocating the artist who is in there now and bringing the cottage back to its original state. She asked what is the status of that since she feels that would be a great thing for people to come and see and learn about the history of the Farm. Mr. Steadman stated engaging the public is important. He stated with regard to the cottage, when the Ad Hoc Property Committee was developing its recommendations, there was discussion about alternatives and if it would make sense for the cottage to become a house museum versus an artist's studio and whether there were other opportunities for an artist's studio. Eventually the recommendations from the Committee were broad-stroke recommendations; and amongst those recommendations it indicated they should do a detailed analysis, and develop a Master Plan with alternative uses for each building, and the cost estimates; and that is what is being done now. He stated they are working on the details with the architectural consultants to see what the best recommendations are. He stated the Committee was not in a position at that stage in March, 2022 to make building-by-building specific recommendations.

Ms. Hirko stated she likes the idea of putting up a tent on the Farm and having the residents come to a meeting at the Farm. She stated there is not really a good place in the Township to have something like that, and it might draw a lot of people. She stated there are a lot of people that do not know about the Farm; but the ones that do, are very passionate, as she is about the residents being able to use the Farm.

Dr. Helen Heinz, 1355 Edgewood Road, stated she is concerned about the history and the archeology at Patterson Farm. She stated it has been farmed since 1682 by Quakers and various other people. She asked if there was any allowance in the project for dealing with the underground sites that are on the Patterson Farm. She stated she means the ruins of the house on Mirror Lake Road, the various septic tanks and wells, and the various other buildings that were adjacent to buildings and demolished within the last twenty years. Mr. Steadman stated the septic tanks and wells are within the scope of the project, but he does not know the scope of archeological sites of other buildings.

Mr. Seiler stated he looks forward to meeting Dr. Heinz when he is on the site. He stated they are not doing any archeological investigations in their scope adding that their work will also not be disturbing anything that is there either. He stated he hopes that Dr. Heinz and others can point out remnants and bits of evidence in the landscape that might suggest some of the very early history. He stated on some sites that he has been involved in, archeological work was done by students and volunteers if there were not funds for professionals to do that work. He stated any artifacts that are found become part of the story that engages the community. He stated they will note it in their narrative to be aware of this.

Dr. Heinz stated the house on Mirror Lake Road was last occupied by an African American family and a lot of her research has shown that both of the farms that were there had African American workers and probably had one of the families living in the tenant house on Mirror Lake Road that was removed in 1964. She stated that would be a wonderful archeological site going forward and would be of interest to the PHMC.

Dr. Heinz stated the two former National Register nominations failed for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the inaccurate data that was used. She stated there was also a failure to connect the Farm to the Historic District of Edgewood Village. She stated she is trying to correct that as well as trying to put it in context with the entire history of the development of more modern agriculture in Southeastern Pennsylvania. She stated that is of National significance so hopefully that will also help in the National Registry process.

Dr. Heinz stated she feels that going forward we need to look at whether it is necessary that the buildings have to generate income or whether just their being there “generates income for all of us, as she feels the peaceful façade of the Farm is worth every penny that we paid for it.” Dr. Heinz stated she hopes that the Board of Supervisors will consider using some of the \$9 million for the Torbert farm which is apparently going up for sale and to continue to keep farming part of the history of Lower Makefield Township.

Mr. Steadman stated he agrees that there is less and less farmland which makes the Patterson Farm even more special. He added that moving forward he does not feel we should make the drastic mistake of inaction, and we need to take action as we are at a crossroads. He stated inaction will result in the further deterioration and continuation of the buildings not being used.

Ms. Donna Doan, 2814 Langhorne-Yardley Road, Langhorne, stated she is very encouraged by what she has heard this evening and that Mr. Seiler and his team are working with everyone to get a better understanding of a path forward. Ms. Doan stated that for the May meeting if there is a presentation to the public, she would reiterate her request to have Doug Wolfgang from the Farmland Preservation Board in Harrisburg come and speak to the public and let them know about the opportunity for the approximately \$456,000 in funding for the 38 acres that are not yet protected. Ms. Doan stated this is an opportunity to not only preserve the Farm that has been farmed for 340 years, but also take the opportunity to plan ahead for the future generations that will follow us. Ms. Doan stated Mr. Wolfgang's direct number is 717-783-3167.

Ms. Doan stated with regard to Mr. Seiler's suggestion of a gathering place, Satterthwaite House is exactly the place for the Patterson Agriculture and Heritage Center. She stated this would be a gathering spot where people could come and appreciate nature, the heritage, and the wildlife. She stated with regard to the "indigenous component," there is evidence of that on site, and there should be a display of some kind perhaps at the Patterson Agriculture and Heritage Center that could inform the public. Ms. Doan stated we are ten years away from the Patterson Farm 350th Anniversary, and we should ready to celebrate that.

Ms. Lora Tarantino, 185 Durham Road, Newtown, stated while technically there is not currently a gathering spot in the Township, she remembers that the Patterson Farm was called the iconic gateway to Lower Makefield Township. She stated she has been in the area for twenty-five years, and "that was the typical site to see." She stated she loves the idea of the tent on the site, and she feels the ideal time would be in the middle of this process. She stated in the early days of the Ad Hoc Property Committee meetings there was talk of the other farms in Bucks County being administered through the Bucks County Farm Bureau, but that Patterson Farm was distinct and was being managed by the Township on its own. She stated she does not know what the farms within the collection of the Farm Bureau do or what their outreach is to the community; but for Lower Makefield with the opportunity to make a very distinct footprint in the area, we should draw upon things that would distinguish it from all of the farms which could be playing to the history of the Quakers, the element of the African American side, and the history of the agriculture since it is over 300 years. She stated we have a chance to stand out.

Mr. Steadman stated the tentative date of May 22 for a public meeting is public meeting number one, and there are three public meetings in the schedule. He stated he likes the idea of having the meeting on site if that is doable but they must consider logistics, safety, and parking. He stated they will look at the best way to do that.

ACTION ITEMS, ASSIGNMENTS & MEETING SCHEDULE: Ms. Sovinee

1. Report from the Outreach and Engagement Sub-Committee about a Township letter to neighbors
2. Continue to develop a survey to be posted
3. Lower Makefield.org Patterson Farm is the site that people should go to
4. Consider on-site public meeting at the Farm
5. Project Plan will get posted on the Website
6. They will be coming out to the Farm and doing architectural surveys in the next couple of weeks

PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

Ms. Emily Hiller, 866 Mirror Lake Road, stated she has been watching the meetings for over a year and appreciates everything they are doing. She stated she lives in a farmhouse across from the Farm, and she knows people are interested and excited about what is happening. She stated it is discouraging that there is no sidewalk near the Farm and there is no public path. She asked if there is a way to include a sidewalk or a walking path so that people can walk by the Farm which she feels will appease a lot of people.

Mr. Steadman stated that is one of the issues that they want to solve. He stated currently Patterson Farm is off limits as it is an active farm, and the buildings that are not being used are not safe. He stated they want this historic property to be accessible to Lower Makefield Township residents. He stated this could include

April 13, 2023

Ad Hoc Property Committee

passive recreation such as a nature trail and walking trails, and he hopes that those kinds of community uses will be part of an ultimate plan that will help win the support of the community for the investments that will need to be made.

There being no further business, Mr. Camaratta moved, Ms. Sovinee seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bette Sovinee, Secretary

