

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD  
AD HOC PROPERTY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES – JANUARY 12, 2023

The regular meeting of the Ad Hoc Property Committee of the Township of Lower Makefield was held remotely on January 12, 2023. Mr. Steadman called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

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  
Jim Scott, Member

Others: James Majewski, Community Development Director  
Jennifer Stark, Avison-Young  
Candace Ly, Avison-Young  
Stephen Heinz, Historical Architectural Review Board  
Suzanne Blundi, Supervisor Liaison

TABLING OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 5, 2023

Mr. Steadman stated that since this meeting was held just one week ago, he would like to give the Committee members an opportunity to review the Minutes before a vote it taken.

INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS DISCUSSION: Mr. Steadman

Mr. Steadman stated the Township purchased the Patterson Farm twenty-five years ago, and it included 221 pristine agricultural acres with two farmsteads and a total of fifteen out-buildings. This prevented the property from becoming more Residential houses. The Township never developer a long-term plan for the property; and while the land has been leased to a local farmer and has been in continuous agricultural production, many of the buildings have fallen into disrepair. Two buildings have been rented to local art organizations, and those buildings are in better condition. A majority of the Farm is protected by an Agricultural Easement that prevents it from being developed and requires it to stay in agriculture.

Mr. Steadman stated in 2021 the Township formed a Committee of volunteer residents to look at the property and to make recommendations. In March, 2023, the Ad Hoc Property Committee made a series of recommendations to the Supervisors which were well received and included three primary bullets – that the Patterson Farm needs to stay in agriculture, the historical buildings are important and they should try to preserve them as best as possible, and that a building without a use will not survive. The Committee was tasked to look at uses for the buildings so that they can be saved and create utility for the community. It was recommended that a Master Plan be developed for the site so that as decisions and investments are made, they are done in a thoughtful way. Avison-Young was hired to act as project manager, and Jennifer Stark, a local resident, is acting in the project management role.

RFPs were issued to help with the Master Plan development, and two quality Bids were received which the Committee has reviewed. Both firms were interviewed last week via Zoom, and tonight there will be a discussion about choosing a bidder. A recommendation will be made to the Board of Supervisors on a contractor as the Committee cannot spend Township money.

Mr. Steadman stated there have been discussions about how the Committee should make decisions which will become recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Steadman stated he serves on the Lower Makefield Township Farmland Preservation Board which is a separate private, non-profit entity that owns preserved farmland in Lower Makefield Township, although not Patterson Farm. He stated the Farmland Preservation Board has developed a Code of Conduct, one element of which is with regard to decision making. He stated there are four bullet point with the first being that before they close a meeting, they make sure they all have the same understanding of any decision and any action items. Another is that consensus means that all opinions have been heard, understood, and potentially documented through the meeting Minutes and the Zoom calls. He stated they recognize 100% agreement is not always achievable, but 100% listening, 100% understanding, and 100% acceptance is possible. He added when a decision is made, even if an individual may have an opposing view or vote no, it is important that everyone accept the decision. He stated formally the decision-making would be majority rules; and since the Ad Hoc Committee has seven members, four votes or more would be needed for approval, but we would still want to be sure we are listening and considering all input in trying to achieve a consensus and everyone will act in good faith to implement the decision. He stated the next point is that we will document decisions and reasons/rationale in Meeting Minutes. The last point is that Mr. Steadman stated input from observers and guests during meetings is always welcome and considered; but the decisions are those of the Board/Committee.

Mr. Steadman stated since the Committee will be making a lot of recommendations, he would like the Committee to discuss the decision-making process. Ms. Sovinee stated she feels what Mr. Steadman has brought forward are the best practices. Mr. Mohan stated he agrees that these are good practices and should be implemented. Mr. Childs stated he agrees; and as long as there is no requirement by the Board of Supervisors or the Township Code that asks for Committees to have actual votes confirmed, he feels this is a good practice and a good start as to how we go forward. Mr. Schmid stated he feels it is important to discuss this early on and agree on a decision-making process as there could be decisions along the way that could be difficult, and reaching a consensus and implementing it as a whole is a good thing. Mr. Camaratta asked if Mr. Steadman is indicating that the way to reaching a consensus is that it would be majority-rules. Mr. Steadman stated he feels the Committee should tailor the process to make sure it is what we want and that we live up to it. He stated he would be willing to tailor what he has presented that is used by Farmland Preservation and make it our own for the Ad Hoc Property Committee.

Ms. Stark was asked her opinion with this process, and she stated she feels they are on a great path and she likes the idea of taking a vote so that there is a firm record and that those with different opinions have that documented for the future.

Ms. Blundi stated she understands from other Township Committees that for action to be taken it is a vote in favor by a majority of the members present. She stated things should be Agendized so that people are aware. She stated it is important that peoples' points of view are heard, but ultimately votes will need to be taken, and it would have to be a majority in favor to take action or make a recommendation. She stated she will discuss this with the Township solicitor and advise the Committee if she said anything wrong.

Mr. Steadman stated he agrees it would be a majority of those present, and there would need to be a quorum present to take a vote; and that would be four members. He stated if four members were present, three out of four in favor would be an approval. He stated if a decision is controversial or particularly significant, he feels we should do everything in our power to avoid a vote when there are only four Committee members present, and we would want to have everyone present for such votes to the extent possible.

Mr. Steadman stated he will circulate a draft on this procedure to the Committee, and at the next meeting formal action can be taken to adopt this if the Committee is in agreement.

Mr. Heinz stated Ms. Stark indicated that the documentation of people taking exception to certain issues might be just as important; and if it is a controversial decision it might be well to consider having a minority report/response to the decision so that the issues that were brought up with people having problems with the decision do not get forgotten. Mr. Steadman stated he agrees that documentation and Minutes are important; however, he is not in favor of minority reports as it goes against consensus. He stated the goal of consensus is that whether it was your first choice or not, you understand the trade-offs that were made, the pros and cons, and you are going along with the decision. He stated he agrees that the differences should be documented, but he feels minority reports tend to be more destructive than constructive. He stated the Committee can discuss this further when they consider the draft he will prepare.

MASTER PLAN CONTRACTOR BIDS: Ms. Stark

#### Contractor Selection Discussion

Ms. Stark stated the two proposals were broken down into their components and compared side-by-side. There were sub-discussions about how each team presented their track record of relevant projects, how they demonstrated an understanding of the assignment they were being given, and how they listened to the Committee. She stated we also talked about how they demonstrated their commitment to staffing and how much personal energy they were putting into our project as well as whether they showed any creative thought even before being awarded the project. She stated we also talked about whether their decision-making style was of like mind with the Committee and the Township. She stated there was also discussion about the costs presented and the timeframe that they anticipated the project would take.

Mr. Scott stated both groups are qualified, but he liked the more local experience that the Seiler Drury group had as they would rely on supporting-vendor networks, etc.

Mr. Mohan stated he watched the video of the meeting. He stated the Seiler Drury group had the lower Bid, and he had some concerns as to their scope; however, he feels they addressed those concerns, and if additional services are required, we have the additional space in the Budget to cover that.

Mr. Steadman stated he feels one of the key differentiators between the two bidders was the sub-contracting landscape architecture; and in the case of Seiler Drury that sub-contractor was not only passionate but also knowledgeable and experienced in agricultural issues and talked about sustainable agriculture and that they had worked on projects that had an agricultural orientation and not just standard landscaping. Mr. Steadman stated the landscaping sub-contractor was also extremely knowledgeable with the environmental issues with a property like this. Mr. Steadman stated even if everything else was equal, the difference between the two landscape architects was significant in favor of Seiler Drury. He noted Seiler Drury was also a much lower price.

Mr. Camaratta stated he agrees with Mr. Steadman, and when he asked Connolly Hickey a question about ecological concerns, he did not feel they were able to answer that. He stated he is concerned that Seiler Drury is a confederation of contractors, and they also missed the scope around public input which is a very important piece. He stated there were not good details about that from Seiler Drury, and he is not sure that any pricing was received about that since that meeting since it was not in the scope that the Committee was provided.

Ms. Stark stated they did get an update on this which was provided to she and Ms. Ly, Mr. Steadman, and Mr. Childs; and they satisfied the questions about appropriate numbers of outreach meetings, stakeholder meetings, and public meetings. Mr. Childs stated they did not specifically state whether that would require additional fees or time, which is one of his biggest concerns as he feels they were underpriced. He stated he feels we would have to make sure that they stay on scope and not “wander off into unrealistic ideas.” He stated he is concerned whether their concept of what we are expecting will fill what we need since he feels they have cut their price and schedule to the point where we may not get a complete product in the end. He stated he feels both firms have qualified, experienced people; and Connolly Hickey had the more organized, comprehensive, detailed plan to go forward with the project, but he feels they were overpriced. He stated Connolly Hickey also did not demonstrate any local or Pennsylvania experience, which he feels is a drawback; and Seiler Drury is Pennsylvania-oriented and has contacts, connections, and networking with the appropriate organizations and agencies that we will need support from. Mr. Childs stated he feels Seiler Drury had more questions than answers at this point.

Mr. Schmid stated he would be in favor of the Seiler Drury team over Connolly Hickey. He stated he found Connolly Hickey was a little off point in some of their presentation, and the Seiler Drury team was more on point and had more direct

experience with the situation that we are dealing with. Mr. Schmid stated it had been mentioned that Mr. Simone of the Seiler group had done work at Pennsbury Manor, and Mr. Schmid stated he called Doug Miller, the Site Administrator at Pennsbury Manor, and asked how he felt about the work done at that time; and Mr. Miller indicated he was very satisfied with the results and they did a lot of renovation to a lot of the buildings at a cost of well over \$100,000. He stated they also had to deal with PHMC, the Commonwealth group that manages the site, so they had to deal with a lot of bureaucratic situations. Mr. Schmid stated Mr. Miller indicated that they delivered on time and that the project was well done. Mr. Schmid stated he also felt the Seiler Drury team was more creative, although there are positives and negatives to creativity. He stated he would be in favor of the Seiler Drury team.

Ms. Sovinee stated she would be in favor of Seiler Drury as well; and she feels their enthusiasm, their energy around creative re-use, and their experience in Pennsylvania projects around creative re-use was very exciting. She stated she also liked their interest in sustainable agriculture, being forward-looking about agriculture in the community, and the food chain. She stated she also liked that they talked a lot about bringing in the community and making it sustainable with a number of uses.

Mr. Camaratta stated he feels both groups presented a similar process, and they will come in and do condition assessments which will help rule in/rule out what potential uses can be, provide a list of uses, and then based on the uses, they will estimate the cost of rehabilitation/restoration, etc. He stated he feels both are qualified as to architecture/drawings, etc.; however, he feels the difference is how we will reach a decision on the possible uses. He stated what Seiler Drury had in their proposal was that they would come back to the Committee and the Board and ask their opinion as to uses; and unless we feel we are in a position to speak as a community as a whole on this, he would like to see how they will do that unless the Committee will take on that responsibility itself.

Mr. Childs stated while he understands the need for creativity, there is a need to understand that this is not an open park/recreation facility, and that part of it is a working farm. He stated there are other uses there including the mulching operation, and there is heavy equipment moving in and out. He stated it is not a place for people to jog, walk, and take pictures. He stated they need to understand that there is a limit to the creativity and a portion of the property that is not going to be agriculture, and there is no sustainable use for some of the buildings that will maintain them in a usable condition. He stated they are not

in a state of good repair and should not be accessible to the public in their present condition. He stated they need to understand the realistic goals we have and the financial responsibility and liability that the Township and the taxpayers have. He stated they should understand that they can be creative, but within the limits of the property's potential uses.

Mr. Steadman stated he agrees that there is natural tension between creativity and the fact that it is an active farm and there are industrial aspects. He stated we know that it cannot become a park, but we do need some creativity to determine some appropriate uses that are compatible with some of these givens with agriculture being the obvious one. He stated either firm would recognize that quickly.

Mr. Steadman stated he felt Connolly Hickey was presenting an engineering project which was highly organized and linear; however, this is not an engineering project, and we need to create a Master Plan. He stated while the Master Plan will rely on engineering and cost estimates, we are not asking them to do the detailed engineering or any of the renovations/rehabilitations. He stated he liked that Seiler Drury spent the majority of their time discussing the creation of a Master Plan and a minority of their time with regard to the engineering. He stated he would pick Seiler Drury adding that the cost differential is twice as much for Connolly Hickey, and he feels it is important to have room in the Budget for things that may come up including the need for other consultants or services that we have not foreseen.

Mr. Childs stated with regard to the agricultural end, the landscape group that would be part of the Seiler Drury team talked about sustainable agriculture, diversity of crops, the soils, and having a farmer/farm hands live on the property. He stated while others on the Committee have more familiarity with the agricultural aspects, he does not feel that was what we were looking for, and he feels the farmer would have input on what kind of crops he could or could not rotate into that area.

Mr. Steadman stated currently Charlann Farms is farming the property and they use no tillage which falls under the umbrella of sustainable; and to his knowledge they are using best practices and they are doing a two year soy beans, one year corn rotation which is required for the soil for those large crops. He stated they grow over a dozen vegetables on a good portion of the Farm, so there is a diversity of crops. He stated he does not feel it will be in the mission of the Master Plan to try to articulate to the farmer what they should grow. He stated he did feel that

there was a level of expertise that could be brought to the table through the landscaping sub-contractor that could prove useful as we look at the land use and develop the site. He stated it is not just the engineering of the buildings, it is also how they are organized and how the equipment and people are moved between them. He stated he does see a need for broader site planning as part of the Master Plan to manage some of the conflicts that Mr. Childs brought up that are inherent with the property.

Mr. Camaratta stated this a farm, and whatever we do with the buildings has to recognize that these buildings are on a farm and there is also wildlife that is there. He stated the buildings are not used today and are degrading; and what we are struggling with as a Township is what are the appropriate uses of the buildings. Mr. Camaratta stated in the scope and price Seiler Drury put out it was indicated that they will be coming to us as to the uses; and if we want it to be broader than that and have community outreach, he would like to see how they propose doing that and how it impacts the price and the schedule. He stated Connolly Hickey did talk about a Use Analysis and discussed a building which had multiple uses including a museum which may be a viable alternative for us.

Mr. Childs stated unless Ms. Stark understands otherwise, it seems that Seiler Drury intended to include that into their initial proposal somehow. Ms. Stark stated we asked Seiler Drury to expand on the fact that they did not include enough public meetings and stakeholder meetings in their base proposal, and they were asked to re-visit that. She stated they provided us with an updated number for fees and also gave a description of how they plan to approach this including stakeholder interview discussions, meetings with the Steering Committee, and meetings with the public. Mr. Childs stated the only fee he saw was for a separate organization to do public outreach; however, Ms. Stark stated they updated their spreadsheet with their fees. She stated the market analysis was a separate line item.

Mr. Steadman stated with regard to the market analysis Seiler Drury brought this up in one of the projects that they cited, and he feels what was said was appropriate in terms of the potential uses/re-uses of these buildings. He stated he is open to including in the project a more formal market analysis that could be done for the area and an assessment of where the demand is. He stated the next topic to be discussed tonight is about community outreach/community involvement, and he stated he feels we will get healthy community input. He stated a market assessment front-loaded at the beginning of this does seem like it would be money well spent as part of the proposal. Mr. Steadman stated he believes that Seiler Drury indicated that if we added that in, they did not have a specific proposal, but it



would cost approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000. Ms. Stark agreed adding that there was also the opportunity to have them manage that consultant and there would be a pass-through, or the Township could contract directly and manage it themselves.

Ms. Sovinee asked if there is a new base figure from Seiler Drury, and Ms. Stark agreed that there is. Ms. Stark stated the new base is \$114,400. Mr. Steadman asked the comparative number for Connolly Hickey, and Ms. Stark stated it is \$261,300. Mr. Steadman asked if the \$114,400 from Seiler Drury included a market assessment, and Ms. Stark stated it does not. Mr. Steadman stated if we did a market assessment as part of that it would bring their number closer to \$139,000/\$140,000; which is still a big difference compared to the \$260,000 from Connolly Hickey.

Mr. Camaratta asked if there was additional information that came in relevant to tonight's discussion, why was it not provided to the Committee if they are expected to take a vote tonight. Ms. Stark stated what she does is share all information with Mr. Steadman and Mr. Childs as the Chair and Vice Chair; and she leaves it to them to distribute as they see fit. Mr. Steadman stated he does not know when that information came in and he was on calls all day. He apologized and agreed to distribute it to the Committee. Mr. Childs stated Ms. Stark sent it yesterday, and it has the updated price list and some other information. Ms. Stark stated it does include the \$28,000 for the market analysis so the price is actually better. She stated they can also subtract the \$10,000 for the National Registry nomination if we are not doing it through them so that would put it at the \$114,400.

Ms. Stark shared her screen with the fee breakdown.

Mr. Schmid stated the other Bid was \$261,000; and he asked Ms. Stark why she feels there is such a vast difference between the two Bids. Ms. Stark stated usually it relates to how aggressive a firm wants to be to try to get the work. She stated another reason is that the cost of their overhead may be very different or there are efficiencies that they feel that they have. Mr. Childs stated Connolly Hickey described their Bid as being "generous," and Seiler Drury described theirs as being "aggressive."

Mr. Steadman stated one of the questions he had with the lower-cost Bid from Seiler Drury was whether they would have enough information on each building to provide us with the estimates of costs for various uses as we go through the analysis, and Ms. Stark has assured him that they will. He stated this is a Master

Plan that relies on some engineering, and it is not an engineering project that also includes a Master Plan, which is what it seemed that Connolly Hickey assumed.

Mr. Camaratta asked if there is a description of what Seiler Drury means by public meetings and market study analysis. Ms. Stark stated the market study analysis is with a company called 4ward Planning, and that is who Mr. Simone was alluding to when he talked about a market analysis during his presentation. Ms. Stark stated they are specialists who can look for appropriate partnership opportunities for the Township and who would also look at appropriate uses based on proximity to similar uses so that there is no competition or if there is the need for more of a use.

Ms. Stark noted the portion in the document where they discussed the public meetings which includes information about their plans to approach meetings and getting stakeholder and public input. She stated she had advised them that she wanted to make sure that they understood that we wanted to have “generous conversations;” and they do understand this.

Ms. Sovinee stated it is frustrating for those on the Committee who have not seen this additional information in advance of the meeting. She stated if Ms. Stark is going to be sending information only to Mr. Steadman and Mr. Childs, they will need to distribute that information to the rest of the Committee. Mr. Steadman stated he does normally try to do that. He asked Ms. Stark to send this information now to the Committee if she has it open at this time. Mr. Childs agreed to forward the information he was provided.

Mr. Steadman asked the Committee’s opinion about including a market assessment in the project adding he feels it is a good idea. Mr. Mohan stated he feels a market analysis will provide a better idea of usage capabilities and possibilities for the buildings. He stated he feels we should also discuss the number of public meetings we want. Ms. Stark stated in the information provided that Mr. Childs is sharing they talk about four public meetings, four separate Steering Committee meetings, and one primary meeting with stakeholders per entity which will be single days and include survey visits. Ms. Stark stated it is pretty comprehensive.

Mr. Scott stated he likes the concept of market studies, but his concern is that after we solicit ideas some may be proven not to be feasible based on cost, and certain types of operations or occupancy requirements whether that be restrooms

or utilities. He stated the question would be whether surveys etc. should be done upfront or do we need more engineering and cost feedback on the structures themselves so that we can put some parameters on as to what is realistic.

Mr. Schmid stated he would be in favor of market analyses and asked what the deliverables would be on that. Ms. Stark stated she feels we would need to talk to 4ward Planning, tell them what we are trying to achieve, and let them tell us what deliverables make sense and when it makes sense to do it. Mr. Camaratta stated he agrees with Mr. Schmid that we need to know what would be the deliverables. Mr. Steadman stated he feels we should have an organized call with 4ward Planning to talk to them about the market analysis, what the deliverables are, what the scope is, and what timing makes sense and whether we would want some engineering first to set parameters or should it be done early so that everything is on the table. He stated this could be an ad hoc call with some Committee members so that we can get a proposal from 4ward Planning that can be reviewed for the market analysis.

Ms. Sovinee asked if the selection decision is being tabled, and Mr. Steadman stated we could take an informal poll of the Committee members which would provide some direction. Mr. Steadman stated he would be in favor of Seiler Drury. Mr. Childs stated he is okay with Seiler Drury with the concerns that he has expressed. Mr. Camaratta stated he is okay with either firm, but he wants to make sure that what was in the scope is what we need. Mr. Schmid, Mr. Mohan, Mr. Scott, and Ms. Sovinee were all in favor of Seiler Drury.

Mr. Steadman stated before anything is taken to the Board of Supervisors in terms of a recommendation, we want it to be holistic; and we would not want to have to go back in a month or two with a change order or an add-on. He stated he feels it is worth taking some time to learn more about the market assessment and let the Committee evaluate whether that is a productive use of funds. Ms. Blundi stated she would agree. She added that she was surprised when one of the presenters indicated that the cost to renovate a barn was a little over a million, which she feels may be more than anyone had thought about. She stated knowing additional details would make sense.

Ms. Sovinee stated she understands that there will be a follow-up with Seiler Drury and/or 4ward Planning, and Mr. Steadman stated it would be with 4ward Planning to get a detailed proposal on their proposed market assessment study as to scope, timing, etc. He stated no recommendation will be made to the Board of Supervisors until we know if that element is to be incorporated or not. Ms. Sovinee

stated the next Ad Hoc Property Committee is scheduled for February 9, and the Board of Supervisors meeting following that would be February 15. Ms. Stark asked how many days would be needed to get on the Agenda for February 15, and Ms. Blundi stated she can ask the Chair to hold the space. She stated the Agenda has to be published for twenty-four hours, and we try to get it out by the Monday before which would be February 13. Mr. Steadman stated if the Committee meets on February 9 we could make a recommendation that would be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors; and Ms. Blundi could ask that they provide a placeholder for this topic for February 15. Ms. Blundi agreed that could be done.

Ms. Sovinee asked who would be meeting with 4ward Planning as she does not believe there could be more than three Committee members since four would be a majority and that would then have to be a public meeting. Mr. Steadman asked that Ms. Stark coordinate some potential meeting times, and we will see who is available as any three Committee members and Ms. Stark could get more information which could then be forwarded to the entire Committee.

Mr. Heinz stated the clientele Connolly Hickey had been dealing with was mostly at the State and County level which makes it significantly different from our particular needs in terms of addressing people and focus groups. He stated the other team made a number of comments during their presentation about trying to be inclusive and getting as much information as they could which he feels is an asset. He stated at the site visit, Mr. Seiler seemed to be the most excited person there, and he feels he also made that clear at his presentation as well. Mr. Heinz stated he would be in favor of the consensus by the Committee, and he feels the Committee has done a thorough job.

Mr. Steadman asked Mr. Majewski for his thoughts on the selection. Mr. Majewski stated when we evaluate professional services, we try to break it down to a couple of components one of which is what is their experience and have they done similar jobs as well as what is the price as that is an important aspect. He stated he felt Seiler Drury was a little more focused on what we were looking for in terms of a Master Plan as opposed to Connolly Hickey who developed a little too much on getting the buildings to a use when we first have to figure out what is the use. He added that with regard to the use study, he feels that is an important component and he agrees that the timing of it is critical. He stated we need to decide if we would do that first to see what uses there could be and then get

public input discussing the possible uses or do we gather public input and then see based on that what are the uses. He stated that will need to be determined by the Committee and Ms. Stark.

Mr. Childs stated Ms. McVan and Mr. Majewski had indicated that we would have to have a recommendation by Friday before the Supervisors meeting so that they can get the public notice done. Ms. Blundi stated the Committee will meet on Thursday, and she will send out an e-mail if they want to be on the Supervisors Agenda. Mr. Majewski stated this item has a placeholder on the current Supervisors Agenda if they had made a recommendation this evening; and since they have not, it will be taken off the Agenda before it is published.

#### Next Steps in Contractor Engagement following Board of Supervisor Approval

Mr. Steadman asked Ms. Stark if this is approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 15 is there something the Committee should be considering now in anticipation of the Board approving the recommended contractor. Ms. Stark stated we will ask for a detailed schedule from the consultant, but the Committee could start looking at preferred dates for outreach sessions. She stated there was also talk about trying to strategize a campaign so that we are keeping the public up to date as we progress through this, and the Committee should start thinking about what elements we would want to use to get information out and how frequently so that there are vehicles to start in motion as soon as we get the award done.

#### COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE: Mr. Schmid

Mr. Steadman stated there had been discussion about forming a Sub-Committee to focus on community outreach and engagement. Mr. Schmid noted the importance of public outreach, education, and transparency. He stated he would like to head up the Sub-Committee to discuss this. He stated during the Seiler Drury presentation they talked about doing various surveys, public meetings, focus groups, and key agency interviews which is bringing in information from the outside; however, he also believes that we will have to do a lot of outreach with good messaging to educate the Township residents about where the Committee is going. He stated he feels this Sub-Committee should be thinking about what the messaging should be. He stated we should be trying to get early buy-in from all of the constituents along with the key players.

Mr. Schmid stated we should also consider who should do this adding that while Seiler Drury indicated that they could do the public meetings, etc., he is not sure that there may be some other group that should do this who could add more resources. He stated we need to get the public input we need as well as to craft a messaging strategy. He stated he wants the Sub-Committee to consider all of this and come back with recommendations to the full Ad Hoc Property Committee.

Mr. Steadman stated agrees that there needs to be incoming comments/input but also education and outreach.

Ms. Sovinee and Mr. Childs agreed to serve on this Sub-Committee with Mr. Schmid.

Ms. Blundi stated the Township has a lot of social media including a Facebook page, and e-mails; and we are constantly trying to get residents to sign up to get e-mails from the Township. She stated all of this can be used by the Committee.

Mr. Majewski stated there can also be a dedicated page on the Township Website on this process that would include the history, reports, studies, etc. He stated something could also be included in the May Township Newsletter provided content is submitted by March 4. He stated in that they could include information about the Web page that is available for review on this matter. Mr. Majewski stated he would be willing to serve on this Sub-Committee as well.

Mr. Steadman moved, Mr. Camaratta seconded and it was unanimously carried that the Ad Hoc Property Committee form a Sub-Committee for community outreach and engagement and that Ron Schmid act as Chair of that Sub-Committee.

#### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES OVERVIEW: Mr. Camaratta

Mr. Camaratta stated Patterson Farm is actually two properties that are eligible to be on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Historical Commission has been putting together a submission to include those on the National Register. He stated the National Register of Historic Places came into being in 1966 as part of the National Preservation Act as there was concern that with a significant amount of development, we were starting to lose a lot of our historic buildings to demolition and re-development. He stated the National Register is a list of all of the historic places in America, and Americans can nominate historic places to be on the list.

Mr. Camaratta stated the Register identifies historically significant buildings and sites. He stated our intent with the two farmsteads at Patterson Farm is not to list the individual buildings, rather it is to list the sites as farms based on the agricultural significance of Patterson Farm. He stated it is not just the houses, and it is the barns and other structures that are very important for the submission. Mr. Camaratta stated the National Register of Historic Places encourages preservation, and it enables a review of any type of Federal, State, and local projects that would go on a property to understand whether a project would have an impact on a property that is historically significant. He stated it would not stop a project. He stated it encourages rehabilitation of income-producing historic properties, not Residential properties, that meet preservation standards through tax credits. He stated it is important that they meet preservation standards because the Secretary of the Interior has established a set of criteria for how to do preservations of these properties, and you would have to adhere to that criteria if you want to get the Federal tax credits.

Mr. Camaratta stated in addition to tax credits, there are also grants that are available mostly through the State and sometimes the local Government which are available for properties that are on the National Register. He stated the Keystone Preservation Grant in Pennsylvania is an example of that. He stated in Lower Makefield Township there are a number of properties that are already on the National Register, some of which are private residences, but also Slate Hill Cemetery on Yardley-Morrisville Road and Edgewood Village.

Mr. Camaratta stated being on the National Register does not restrict the rights of the owner in the way that they develop the property or even if they decide to demolish the property as it can be torn down by the owner even if it is on the National Register. He stated it can also be developed in a way that is not consistent with the historic significance although they could not get Grants for tax credits for that.

Mr. Camaratta stated being on the Register does not stop Federal, State, local, or private projects on the site, but the review does create the chance for people to make allowances for how the project should change to accommodate the sites. He stated being on the Register does not guarantee Grant funds. He stated the Historical Commission is working on applying for Grant funding for Slate Hill Cemetery.

Mr. Camaratta stated Seiler Drury talked about different programs that might be available to us to fund the rehabilitation/restoration, and they were going to bring that in, in terms of the Master Plan which is very important.

Ms. Sovinee asked what is the timetable for applying for the National Register. Mr. Camaratta stated Janney-Brown was submitted approximately ten years ago; however, it never made it through the State. He stated the Historical Commission has now picked it up again. He stated Mr. Schmid facilitated a call with Pennsylvania's State Historic Preservation Office last week, and they knew about both properties and encouraged them to continue to pursue the agricultural significance of the farms, and they offered to review the information that they were currently preparing and tell us how far away we were from being able to re-submit. Mr. Camaratta stated hopefully we will do the National Register submission this year; and with a review from SHPO, we will have a better idea as to how much more effort is needed.

Mr. Steadman asked Mr. Camaratta asked how this Application would interact with the Master Planning process in terms of the timing. Mr. Camaratta stated there are a lot of questions as to the architectural integrity of some of the buildings and whether those buildings can be rehabilitated, restored, or even preserved. He stated this is a farm that has been continuously farmed for three hundred years, and there is historic significance to that. He stated having the buildings there in terms in making the case for the National Register would be good. He stated the Historical Commission had done an analysis for the Ad Hoc Property Committee, and he had looked at twelve barns in Bucks County that are on the National Register, and he documented which of their out-buildings were there. He stated more buildings that are present is good in order to make the case for the National Register. He added that does not restrict them if they find that there is no way to preserve a building or maintain it. He stated they could document it and take it down. He stated if the building is taken down before the site is on the National Register it may impact the historical significance.

Mr. Heinz stated with regard to Grants that might be available, there are sometimes Grants for Master Planning. He stated if we had gotten this on the National Register ten years ago, we might have been in better shape; and he feels getting the paperwork in as soon as possible would be best.



Mr. Camaratta stated there could be a scenario where not all of the buildings continue to be owned by the Township, and one or two of them could be sold to a private entity which could be a for-profit or a non-profit. He stated Federal tax credits come in if the building is on the National Register; and if a private entity were to come in and pick up the rehabilitation or restoration costs, they could apply for the Federal tax credits which would be advantageous.

Ms. Blundi asked if the Township authorized the Application to the National Register, and Mr. Camaratta stated they have not presented it to the Board of Supervisors as it is not yet completed. He stated the Historical Commission is working on behalf of the Township which would have to make the submission.

Mr. Childs stated given the timing involved in the process, the new Township Manager and the Public Works Department should be advised that if they feel there is a need to do some work on one of the buildings, the Historical Commission and the Ad Hoc Property Committee should be aware of it as that could have an impact on the Application for the National Register.

Mr. Steadman stated from what he has heard from Mr. Camaratta he does not feel there is any reason to wait to apply for the National Register and there could be potential benefits for doing it as soon as possible since it could potentially help support some of the work that is going to have to be done. Mr. Camaratta agreed adding that it does not restrict the Committee's decisions in any way.

Ms. Sovinee stated in the Committee's initial recommendations last year there were discussions about the corn crib at Satterthwaite that was in very poor condition, and she understands from the discussion tonight that we should make sure that the Township does not do anything with that until the Application is submitted. Mr. Camaratta stated the Application would not rest just on the corn crib. He stated if they were going to take down a barn, that would be a big issue.

Mr. Camaratta stated the Historical Commission is still doing the research; and once they complete the research, they can then start to fill out the official Application. He stated the research is based on what crops were grown there and the significance of the crops for the period in which they were grown.

Mr. Steadman asked if the agricultural practices that went on there are part of the consideration, and Mr. Camaratta agreed noting particularly the agricultural yields which they are trying to document. Mr. Steadman suggested that they interview Sam Stewart in that regard as he has information about the practices

of the Pattersons. Mr. Steadman noted that the Committee is not involved in the Application, and it is between the Historical Commission and the Township, but they would encourage them to proceed as fast as they can.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Childs noted that since there is a new Township Manager and a new Director of Public Works, it may be incumbent on the Committee to bring them up to speed on what the Committee is about and where we stand with the process. Ms. Sovinee stated she knows that new Manager, the Public Works Director, and the Parks person did a drive-through this week of many of the Township properties. Ms. Blundi stated she will check in with them as well to see what level of information would be helpful. Mr. Steadman stated they should be advised that the Committee is willing to meet with them or speak to them by phone.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

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

#### ACTION ITEMS, ASSIGNMENTS, & MEETING SCHEDULE: Ms. Sovinee

1. Ms. Stark – Arrange a meeting with 4ward Planning and see who on the Committee is available, but not more than 3 people at any given meeting
2. A Sub-Committee has been convened with Ron Schmid as Chair to work on messaging and educating the public
3. The Committee approved the Township moving forward with an Application for the farmstead for the National Historic Registry
4. Tabled the vote on the contractor selection and Minutes
5. Mr. Steadman – Draft a decision-making policy to be reviewed by the Committee before the next meeting.

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6. Ms. Stark – Bring any documentation that has been going on over the last few weeks to the Committee's attention so it can be distributed to the Committee

There being no further business, Ms. Sovinee moved, Mr. Camaratta seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bette Sovinee, Secretary

