

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
AD HOC PROPERTY COMMITTEE
MINUTES – MAY 11, 2023

The regular meeting of the Ad Hoc Property Committee of the Township of Lower Makefield was held remotely on May 11, 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
Ron Schmid, Member

Others: James Majewski, Community Development Director
Jennifer Stark, Avison-Young
Candace Ly, Avison-Young
Doug Seiler, Seiler+Drury
Bill Collins, Simone Collins
Todd Poole, 4ward Planning
Suzanne Blundi, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Jim Scott, Ad Hoc Property Committee Member

OPENING COMMENT: Mr. Steadman

The Patterson Farm is an important piece of property of 234 acres which has been owned by the Township since 1998, and it is at a crossroads. Most of the buildings are unused and are in disrepair. The repair and maintenance of the historical buildings is going to be very expensive, and it will be a millions of dollars proposition to restore and repair all of those buildings into usable condition if that is what is decided. Repair costs will continue to increase, and any major investment can only be justified if the buildings are put to good use.

Lower Makefield is committed to keeping Patterson Farm in farming as it has been for over 300 years. Lower Makefield is also committed to historical preservation. There are three historic homes and two large Pennsylvania bank barns on the property that are worthy of preservation. The Township has made the decision that before making major investments in any particular building, that we should

determine how the buildings can and should be used to the benefit of the community as a use is necessary to support long-term maintenance and survival of the buildings.

The Ad Hoc Property Committee was formed and charged with analyzing the buildings, identifying potential uses, estimating the cost of repairs, and to make recommendations as to their long-term use and care. The Committee delivered a report in March, 2022 recommending that the Patterson Farm should remain in agriculture, and a majority of the land is in an Agricultural Conservation Easement. The second recommendation was that the historic buildings should be preserved wherever possible, and third that without a use a building dies and cannot be maintained. The Committee has concluded that the buildings must provide some utility/value to the community that can generate some combination of revenue and/or community benefit in order to support the investment.

The farm buildings on the property, except for two or three very small buildings, are obsolete to use for farming. The two large barns on the site were built for livestock, and they have a very low, simple first floor, and the second floor which is about three stories high is to store hay. He stated only horses, cattle, and sheep eat hay so if there is not livestock in there and hay above it, the barn really does not have that use anymore, and there is a need to find alternative uses.

The Board of Supervisors approved the recommendation to develop a long-term Master Plan that would guide these kinds of decisions, and to hire Seiler+Drury to support the creation of a Master Plan. Seiler+Drury is conducting engineering and architectural analysis and analysis of alternative potential uses with the goal of developing a Master Plan that will recommend building uses, the estimated cost to bring those buildings into a condition compatible with a use, site design if there are changes to infrastructure that need to be made to accommodate the uses, and to provide a guide to staged and intelligent decisions on investments.

The Master Planning process seeks and requires community input on the potential intended uses in order to support the investment dollars as for the most part these will be Township taxpayer dollars although there may be opportunities to submit for Government Grants.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Sovinee

Mr. Schmid moved, Mr. Steadman seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of April 13, 2023 as written.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Seiler+Drury Project Update & Timeline: Mr. Seiler, Ms. Stark

A slide presentation was shown. Mr. Seiler stated he is working with Bill Collins from Simone Collins, landscape architects, and Todd Poole, 4ward Planning, the land use economist.

Mr. Collins showed a slide of a collection of historic aerials which shows the area from 1938 to 2022, and the accumulation of very dense suburban development surrounding the Patterson Farm. He stated Patterson Farm has value as open space and as an actual working farm, and one of the imperatives for the Township is to keep it in active farming.

A slide was shown of the site looking at the physical conditions. Mr. Collins stated while the site looks flat, there are ridges and some small valleys that go through the site. This shows how the water flows through the site, all of it to ultimately collect in the Mirror Lake watershed which is part of Buck Creek that flows into Brock Creek. The property is seen as a farmed area with two farm complexes. To the south side there is a significant buffer, and the Township owns a significant stand of that buffer; and that can be seen on the slide. There are also remnants of past use and show as either wetlands or old pads that have become depressed areas. He particularly noted the former greenhouse, and the stormwater basin just east of that. There are also some smaller stormwater fixtures that are not really used between the Patterson and Satterthwaite House at the top level of the composting area. It is off-line of the basic drainage pattern, and they need to consider if there is any ecological value to tying that in.

Mr. Steadman noted the small red dashed line carved out around the homesteads, and stated inside that area is the area that is not an Agricultural Easement. However, everything we are seeing in the light shade of green is farmed now.

Mr. Collins stated what they have done on this map in terms of the homesteads is to show a block area to try to capture the visible structures that are there, primary or support structures, and they show as white. He stated the gray area is the area that is currently used for composting, which is right in the middle of the two cultural complexes. He stated they need to consider if that use is compatible with some kind of an adaptive, cultural re-use of the two homesteads. Mr. Collins noted the lane that comes in from the south directly to the Patterson complex which is now only a farm lane, but is significant. He stated it has been improved and has culverts at both ends and re-directs drainage. He stated there are also significant wetlands in the buffer areas that are on and off the Township-owned land, and those need to be protected.

Mr. Collins stated the stand of trees is also significant because of its high value, age, and associations of different species in a very small area. He stated there are some renegade uses in there, and they saw that someone is growing something inside an enclosure. The trees, other than the ash, are in fairly good shape and are large trees. He stated conserving the forest land is a valuable asset similar to conservation of the soil.

Mr. Collins showed a slide representing a concept taking into consideration what they have heard so far, although this is not a design. He stated they need to consider internal circulation which can help in thinking about what different parts of the site might be used for. The circulation into the Patterson Complex was considered, and it was felt that it could stay essentially the same, but they wanted to consider how it could be separated from the farm use. He stated this was also a consideration for the Satterthwaite Complex and whether they could separate the circulation into there for cars and cultural uses from the farm uses. He stated they feel they could do that as well as separate the industrial uses like the composting use from those two lanes. He stated the farm lanes add to the sense of the era as an artifact. He stated if they are going to be paved and widened, the scale tends to be lost in terms of trying to keep the farmstead cultural effect. He stated they considered if both of the industrial operations, the composting and the farming, could be moved over to the south side where there is already a drive cut through the forest land from Stony Hill Road so that those operations would be moved to where there had already been previous soil disturbances in terms of grading and the former greenhouse operation. He stated they also considered if they could keep all of the circulations with machinery/motor vehicles segregated. He stated the diagram shows one idea of how that could happen.

Mr. Collins stated for Satterthwaite they looked at the idea of re-aligning a new entrance that would be used for vehicles if the Satterthwaite Complex was going to be used for gatherings, cultural uses, etc. He stated there is not a formal parking area there right now, but the idea was if there could be a new entry off of Mirror Lake Road and retire for the most part except for emergency uses, the historic lane, and give that all over to the cultural landscape and not interrupt all of the uses that might want to be to the south of this Complex looking over the farm field and keep the vehicles to the north of that Complex.

Mr. Collins stated shown in blue is the potential for a loop trail, although not a finished alignment; and the idea is how this could ring the farmed area without major impact and start to develop passive recreation that every community wants. He stated they need to consider how that would work and compatibility during certain seasons with farming, but they feel that physically this could work with very minor impact to the farming. Mr. Collins stated the dotted blue lines show potential ways to connect to the internal loop trail to the future sidewalks that would deliver people from the surrounding neighborhoods.

Mr. Collins stated they used the hydrology for the watershed that runs between the complexes as a buffer and as a definition to define the complexes, and that gives them a little bit more area and a little bit more opportunity to think about adaptive re-uses which could include tents, other structures, or if more parking is needed without interrupting the farmer's practice or the Art Center at Patterson.

Mr. Seiler stated Mr. Camaratta had asked how they do the surveying, and Mr. Seiler stated they are doing something innovative on this project. He noted a slide which uses a program of 3D visual scanning of buildings which is the Matterport program. He stated this allows you to "walk" around each complex. He stated they are using Matterport and the digital scans and combining that with conventional surveying and conventional drafting. The Matterport images for the Patterson Complex and the Satterthwaite Complex were shown.

Mr. Seiler stated what comes from the 3D scan are Point Clouds which are three-dimensional scans of the exterior of each building which are very accurate and show "all of the sags, out of plumbness, and out of trueness." He stated this allows them to accurately draw and understand the buildings. He showed a Point Cloud that they are drafting over with a system that draws in three

dimension. He stated it generates three-dimensional views, and perspective aerial views which might help with public outreach. He stated the “roof can be taken off so you can look inside in the model,” which might help with communicating what we are doing and might help with marketing it to people who are interested in using the buildings.

Slides were shown of the Point Clouds for the equipment barn at Patterson, the Janney House, and the Satterthwaite House that they have started to draw over. He stated it can be seen how the Satterthwaite House grew to the north.

A slide of the Janney House drawn over was shown. He stated this will be done for all fifteen buildings. He stated the process begins with the digital survey, the Point Cloud, the overlay drafting to get the model, the shapes, and the dimensions accurately. He showed a slide taking the Point Cloud away which can be looked at from any angle or direction, and is a very useful tool.

A slide was shown of the orthographic elevations to show the proportion to scale which leads to future technical drawings and renovation drawings. Mr. Seiler stated he feels it is nice to finally see these buildings in real-drawing form. He stated he appreciates that the Master Plan is focusing on the buildings. Mr. Seiler stated they are developing floor plans, basement through attic, of every building.

Mr. Poole stated he is the Management Principal of 4ward Planning, land use economists. He stated they typically perform economic Real Estate analysis, analysis for public spaces, parks, trails, and general market studies. He stated their role on this project team is to examine what the use opportunities are within the two farmsteads that are not to be actively farmed.

He stated there will be three phases, the first being Market Analysis (Demand) which includes Regional Visitor Profiles and Socio-Economic Analysis. He stated they look at population trends, spending, age, education, etc.

Mr. Poole stated the second phase is to look at Regional Offerings (Competitive Supply). He stated currently AOY, the arts organization of Yardley, is operating there, and they are very successful. He stated they see this as a great point on which to leverage with complementary activities and uses for the site. He stated they need to understand what the existing supply of arts organizations, programming, and events are in the area as well as to perform interviews and do some case studies on arts programs at locations that have a similar feel to what they feel could work for this site.

Mr. Poole stated the third phase is to consider Potential Revenue-Generating Opportunities and Synergies. He stated this is a later phase, and this will not happen until we are further along in the process and have concurrence from the Ad Hoc Committee about the direction they would like to head as far as using the two farmsteads.

Mr. Poole stated they like to first identify market areas that they are thinking about. A slide was shown of a fifteen minute primary market area (PMA) and a thirty minute secondary market area (SMA). He stated the primary market area is a fifteen-minute drive time from the site, and this will typically represent 70% to 80% of the likely patron base. He stated if there were other operations other than AOY such as other arts operations or recreational operations, 70% to 80% of those patronizing such facilities would be coming from within that fifteen-minute drive and might come once a month compared to someone who lives in the thirty-minute, secondary market area who might come once or twice a year.

Mr. Poole stated they have also done some third-party research of other organizations which have actually done the research and surveying population; and in this case on the slide, he is showing the Philadelphia region and the Delaware River Valley region areas and within that they are showing the thirty-minute SMA and fifteen-minute PMA where those fall. He stated they are showing the larger regions because they will factor into who visits Patterson Farm depending on the activity, programming, and uses that are on the site.

Mr. Poole stated within the fifteen-minute PMA, there are almost 316,000 residents which crosses the Delaware so it would be the Bucks County/Mercer County area; and within the larger thirty-minute secondary market area there are 1.4 million people. He stated within that population, there is a large mix of Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials. He stated the primary market area and secondary area market households have a median household income of just over \$100,000 which is a healthy household income, and is favorable for discretionary spending.

Mr. Poole stated in terms of regional visitors for 2021 visitors to Mercer and Bucks County spent \$872 million for Mercer and \$842 million for Bucks County. He stated it was found that the visitors are attracted to galleries, arts-type facilities, historic sites, restaurants, and festivals; and all of this is very favorable for some of the uses and activities that they are thinking about for Patterson Farm.

Mr. Poole stated with regard to the regional supply, they have identified that the adult-participation rate particularly for the Township and the primary and secondary market area is relatively high, and there are a number of people who go to art galleries. He stated when there is high household income and high educational attainment, you usually find that those people have a proclivity for patronizing the arts, going to events, and spending a lot of money doing so. Mr. Poole stated they identified an inventory of twenty-eight existing visual arts organizations and businesses including woodworking facilities identified within the secondary market area; and besides the AOY arts center, most facilities are located further than a ten-minute-drive from Patterson Farm.

Mr. Poole stated there are four annual, visual arts events and two fall-themed farm festival events which have been identified in Bucks County.

Mr. Poole showed a map of the inventory that they have put together of visual art organizations and programs. He stated there are six art centers, four art studios, and four art organizations within the thirty-minute secondary market area. He stated a fifteen-minute PMA represents about 7 ½ to 8 miles of actual distance, and a thirty-minute SMA represents between 12 and 15 miles of travel distance depending on traffic.

Mr. Poole showed a slide of a closer look at the inventory of visual arts organizations in the area, and there are descriptions of some of the metrics associated with them. He noted Tyler Park Center for the Arts which offers workshops, camps, and classes. He stated there is a lot of synergy and relevance with what they do with what AOY does and would love to do more of. He also noted the Raymond Farm Center for Living Arts and Design located in New Hope which is a 120 acre farm which has a bank barn and a Quaker farmhouse. He stated they have workshops and lectures which are things they think will make sense on the Patterson Farm site.

Mr. Poole also noted the Phillips' Mill Community Association in New Hope which is a performing and visual arts center. He stated they are not certain that the performing arts piece would be viable at the Patterson Farm site because a facility that would accommodate performing arts does not exist at the site and would be expensive to build.

Mr. Poole showed a slide listing the annual visual arts events in Bucks County. He asked that they be advised if anyone is aware of anything that they have not captured. He stated the events they found were the Tinicum Arts

Festival, Pennridge Gallery of the Arts, Crafts in the Meadow at Tyler Park Center for the Arts, and the Doylestown Arts Festival. He stated those have been identified because they feel that the Patterson Farm site presents that kind of opportunity particularly because it is located immediately off of an Interstate. He stated a location next to a major road artery improves the chances of getting a lot of people to come, spend money, and patronize the location.

Mr. Poole showed a slide of the annual fall farm events in Bucks County which include the Froelich's Farm Fall Festival and the Perkasie Fall Festival. He stated Patterson Farm is an active farm, and they feel that there could easily be a farm event that could mesh quite well with the arts as they feel those two things could be complementary.

Mr. Poole stated in the full draft Market Report which they are in the midst of finalizing, they will have case studies. He stated in this case, they focused on two organizations and their facilities which they feel have a lot of application to the Patterson Farm site. He stated the first is Peters Valley School Craft in Layton, New Jersey, which is near the Delaware Water Gap. He stated it has been in existence since the late 1960's/1970's, and he would encourage everyone to go on-line to see what they offer which is extensive. He stated they provide educational programming for adults and children in the arts including crafts, photography, woodworking, iron working, sculpture, and painting. He stated they also have on-site lodging for those who take courses there for a week or a month. He stated they have old buildings on site, and there is a lot of application for Patterson Farm. Mr. Poole stated they interviewed the Executive Director of the Peters Valley site who provided a great deal of information which led them to facility at Sanborn Mills Farm in Loudon, New Hampshire.

Mr. Poole stated Sanborn Mills Farm has a good deal of application for Patterson Farm because it is a working farm that has 70 plus craft and traditional farming workshops. He stated they have a CSA, farm-to-table events, and offer limited on-site lodging, campsites, and a food plan.

Mr. Poole stated Patterson Farm has the opportunity for on-site lodging, and that would add value to what is being offered. He stated it allows people from around the Country to come there and fully immerse themselves in the site. He stated the lodging facilities are also for the instructors and artists themselves who come from all over the World. He stated they are just in the

early stage of examining this, and he noted the potential use of tiny houses. He stated these are small, cottage-style houses which arrive on wheels and are no more than 400 square feet and could be tailored to an arts/farm-type themed location. He stated if they were to do some kind of on-site lodging this is the route they would probably go. He stated they are still doing some evaluation on that. Pictures of tiny houses were shown.

Mr. Poole stated they have not yet done any analysis on revenue-generation or looked at management structure as this would come at a later phase once there is direction from the Ad Hoc Committee. Mr. Poole stated based on their analysis and his experience, he feels that there is a great opportunity to leverage relatively high household spending in the region. He stated based on what visitors in the region are most attracted to being galleries, historic sites, restaurants, and festivals, the Township can leverage off of that based on what is at the site or what could be on the site. He noted again farm and visual arts synergies and the team felt that there are synergies which could be had with local college and community college programs that also offer arts as part of their curriculum. He stated there could be the ability to leverage there and possibly some resources going along with that.

Mr. Mohan stated events at the Farm were mentioned, and he asked if the analysis would include estimated parking requirements for those events. Mr. Poole stated that would be an iterative-type analysis doing that. He stated if he felt that they could bring in an event that could normally bring in 400 people, he would discuss with Mr. Seiler and Mr. Collins as to where they could park. He stated they would have to consider if it would be physically possible to fit that number of cars somewhere on the site without interfering with farming or being in a wetlands area. He stated he would first need to know the constraints, and they are still in the analysis phase. He stated being told how many cars could be parked would allow his team to be able to focus more narrowly in on what types of events that would bring in a certain number of people would make sense at this site.

Mr. Collins stated parking can be a constraint. He stated he sees that there are opportunities for shared parking if there is an event at one complex or the other. He stated there are also opportunities to disperse parking. He stated the only parking they showed was the general location on the new lane from Satterthwaite, and it gives a sense of scale. He stated they did not try to estimate the maximum parking, and they just showed what twenty parking spaces would look like in volume at this early stage.

Ms. Blundi stated this weekend there is a very large soccer tournament happening in the Township, and we have very limited parking. She stated we are used to busing people and using Township property to let people park and then bus them to the field. She stated she does not feel parking should constrain their thinking, although she would not recommend activities that would require thousands of parking spaces.

Mr. Collins stated they will add to the program that there could be remote parking in some cases.

Mr. Childs stated with regard to farm-related activities, Shady Brook Farm is nearby and has ongoing activities throughout the year, and he believes that there are other similar ones on a smaller scale. He stated he feels it would be appropriate to look at those more-local events as well. Mr. Poole stated they were capturing the larger events. He stated he is familiar with Shady Brook Farm, and he knows that they have the Christmas light drive-through and some other events. He stated we would keep away from competing with them in that respect since of their proximity.

Mr. Steadman stated there is an important distinction to be made as there is an entire industry growing around the County particularly in the Northeast and in Pennsylvania and New Jersey of agri-tainment, and that is what Shady Brook is. He stated it is taking an active agricultural site/farm and turning it into entertainment with various activities such as corn mazes, etc. and all of the things that Shady Brook does. Mr. Steadman stated those are classically a family farm, occupied and run by multiple generations of a family who are transitioning from making money by growing crops of having livestock to making money by selling tickets. He stated Patterson Farm is a beautiful farm site owned by the Township and not a family, and he does not envision agri-tainment occurring here. He stated what he has been hearing tonight is more focused than that.

Mr. Poole stated that is why we do a competitive supply analysis, adding that Shady Brook Farm has already cornered that market locally. He stated what they are discussing is quite unique, and they have identified places that are far enough away so it would not be an issue.

Mr. Poole stated the other term that has been used is one of the fastest growing segments of tourism, and that is agri-tourism as well as historical-cultural tourism. He stated the Patterson Farm site has both of those with

the historic piece with Satterthwaite and the Janney House plus the farm. He stated that is significant, and they are studying how to leverage it to the Township's benefit.

Mr. Steadman stated Mr. Poole had discussed the supply side looking at the visual arts, and he asked if those points on the map represent opportunities for synergy, joint cooperation, and programming. Mr. Poole stated that is correct, and there will be more in the way of synergy. He stated what Patterson Farm could offer is not offered anywhere else nearby. He added that even the places that he identified earlier in the presentation that have something similar are still different, and the experiences offered at Patterson Farm will be something different than the other locations he discussed. Mr. Poole stated there are patrons who will want to go to the facility in New Hampshire and to Patterson Farm because they have the resources and interest to do that. He stated there is a demand for this particularly in an affluent area like Bucks County and portions of Mercer County.

Mr. Camaratta asked if the visual arts were the extent of the analysis with regard to the competitive supply questions. He asked if there are other categories that he will be looking at. Mr. Poole stated they have looked at other possibilities particularly for Satterthwaite, but it would be too expensive to have a restaurant or a B & B at that location. He stated in terms of the buildings at the Patterson Farm homestead some of those outbuildings that could be preserved could make for an interesting space for teaching the arts or for an artist to make use of the space. He stated there could also be outside events, and they are considering there being an area where there could be a tented event with cooking taking place for that event. Mr. Poole stated they need to make sure that the active farming area stays in active farming. He stated some of the buildings are not cost-effective to be preserved, and so they are limited on what they can do. He stated they also want to be sensitive to the arts organization and leverage off of their success as well as generate revenue. Mr. Poole stated Mr. Kratzer had indicated that we need to find a way for the arts organization in particular to pay a little bit more for renting the spaces. Mr. Poole stated the only way that is going to happen is to bring in more activities that are revenue-generating. He stated this is why they are thinking that there could be tiny houses to lodge people who would pay to take courses, and having more events there would have revenue implications for the Township. He stated they are somewhat constrained as to what else can be done at the location without running afoul of what the Township may not want to see or because it is not physically possible given the buildings.

Mr. Seiler stated from the building point of view his effort is to look at what the buildings can physically support as to a use. He stated he sees a parallel matrix of possible uses on a building-by-building basis. He stated he feels it helps to take each building by itself without pre-conceived assumptions, although it might identify a number of uses that do not make sense. He stated it would be interesting to take that matrix and overlay it with Mr. Poole's and look for where they overlap.

Mr. Poole stated during a discussion he had with Mr. Seiler earlier today, he asked him what was the floorplate/square footage for the first floor of the Satterthwaite House, and he had indicated that it was about 1,300 square feet. Mr. Poole stated a typical American non-chain, sit-down restaurant would typically be between 2,000 square feet and 3,000 square feet and that is inclusive of the kitchen space, dining area, storage, common areas, etc. He stated the Satterthwaite House has a floor plate of 1,200 to 1,300 square feet and after you put in what is necessary to turn it into a restaurant, it would not be economical. He stated it would be very expensive and would be a high-risk proposition.

Mr. Steadman stated we had tentatively put on the schedule a public session for later in May. He stated in addition to the monthly public meetings via Zoom, we had envisioned two to three public forums where people could come together in a large space and talk to Mr. Seiler and others to discuss plans and ideas. He stated it seems that the May public forum would be premature. Mr. Seiler stated recently he advised Mr. Steadman and Ms. Stark that the surveying of the buildings and documentation including going out with a structural engineer and preservationist next week will require more time to get some initial analysis on the buildings' capacities, and pros and cons. He stated he is suggesting that we do the first public meeting sometime in June rather than in late May when the Committee decides it makes sense.

Mr. Seiler stated in the initial schedule it was indicated that we would have the monthly Ad Hoc Committee meetings that he would attend summarizing and sharing reports, although tonight both Mr. Collins and Mr. Poole were present as well. Mr. Seiler stated there would then be four scheduled public meetings with the last one being at a Supervisors meeting in the middle of September, and he would suggest that we amend this to finish the middle of October.

Mr. Seiler stated at the last meeting, it had been suggested that one or more of these public meetings could be on site so that people could experience the site. He stated he and Mr. Majewski had discussed the format, and it was suggested that the first public meeting be a forum at the Township Building or somewhere where he, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Poole could have boards at separate corners of a room where people could speak to them individually. He asked the Ad Hoc Property Committee when and where they feel it would make sense to have this meeting.

Mr. Steadman stated he has had discussions about this with Mr. Majewski, and it was felt that the Community Center would be an ideal location as it could hold a couple hundred people, is comfortable, has restrooms, and there could be refreshments; and they would not be having to go out into a field. With regard to the time, he feels it would depend on when the work is ready to be presented, and he expects that could be by the middle of June. He stated there could be more discussion on this; and for any public forum meeting we have, the Community Outreach & Engagement Sub-Committee would be instrumental in creating awareness and communication around that meeting.

Community Outreach & Engagement: Mr. Schmid

The Sub-Committee met this week, and they always meet prior to the full Ad Hoc Property Committee meeting. Mr. Schmid stated they have set communication objectives for the different phases which ties into the question of public meetings. He stated the communications will change through each of the Phases. He stated Phase 1 is the Phase we are in now which is before the public meeting. He stated Phase 2 would be just prior to the public meeting where they hope to get local residents and others to attend the meeting. He stated Phase 3 would be after the public meetings and the announcement of some of the options, and we would then want to give voice to those options and start to have the residents get a better handle on what all of the options are. Phase 4 would be when the recommendations come out in September/October.

Mr. Schmid stated during Phase 1 we want to promote some awareness of the Ad Hoc Property Committee. He stated Mr. Majewski, Ms. Tierney, and Mr. McLoone have done a good job of posting a lot of information on the

Patterson Farm site on the Township Website. On May 5, letters went out to fifty nearby residents informing them that the Supervisors had made a recommendation to hire Seiler+Drury, the timetable of the process, and that they could provide comments to Mr. Majewski and other members of his team.

Mr. Schmid stated currently in process is consideration of Top Ten FAQs to be put on the Patterson Farm Website. He stated they have also talked about being able to latch onto events or create an event where Mr. Steadman or other members of the Ad Hoc Property Committee start to talk about what we are doing. He stated they have identified at least one opportunity which is June 10, the Art Show at Memorial Park. He stated they also thought about setting up a table at McCaffrey's on a Friday afternoon. He stated these are not yet being put forward as final recommendations, but they are thinking about them.

Mr. Schmid stated they are also looking at speaking engagements such as at the Lions Club, the Yardley Business Association, etc. He stated these are small groups, and we would like to reach a larger group. He asked if anyone is aware of a group or event that we could get before, to contact him so we can advise more people what we are doing.

Mr. Schmid stated the Sub-Committee is working with Ms. Tierney to publish "Did you know" items on the Facebook page such as "Did you know the Township owns Patterson Farm." He stated they came up with about eight to ten items, and Ms. Tierney will be posting those over time.

Mr. Schmid stated we are also thinking about how to take advantage of Social media. He stated he was told that the site "Lower Makefield is a Great Place to Live" has 14,000 people on that Website, and we need to determine how to reach out to them.

Mr. Schmid stated with regard to Phase 2, he feels that will be triggered by the first public meeting, which he assumes will be in June. He stated we would try to reach out to a larger constituency including reporters, and they have talked to Mr. Majewski, Ms. Tierney, and others about reaching out to the reporters who cover Lower Makefield to create awareness around the public meeting.

Mr. Schmid stated Phase 3 would be subsequent to the public meeting, and we could help Seiler+Drury and their team talk about the various options and give more voice to those options as well as looking for members from the Ad

Hoc Property Committee to be out in the community talking about those options and getting wider feedback. Mr. Schmid stated once the options have surfaced it was felt we should look again at the pros and cons of a survey. He stated the Sub-Committee felt that it was too early in the process to do a survey at this time; but once the options are out, we can then give context to Lower Makefield residents. He stated we would also do whatever we can do to help during Phase 4.

Ms. Sovinee stated the Sub-Committee came up with the following tag line: "Honor the past, shape the future," and then a call to action for whatever stage we are at. This was acceptable to the Sub-Committee members.

Mr. Steadman stated he feels that any promotion that creates awareness is welcome. He added the Township and the Committee can put out a lot of information on the Website, but people have to go to the Website for that to be productive. He stated he is concerned with the general lack of awareness that the Township even owns Patterson Farm and that there is a Committee looking at trying to repurpose, utilize, and save Patterson Farm. He stated he feels we need to create more awareness so that people will be interested to go to the Website and look at the information that is there.

Mr. Camaratta stated he agrees with Mr. Steadman; and while the Township Website has a lot of good information on it, most people do not look at the Township's social media. He stated the Historical Commission has used the Lower Makefield is a Great Place to Live Website to recruit members and to get volunteers for their clean-up day at Slate Hill Cemetery since that is the site where people are.

Mr. Seiler stated they are doing a project in Montgomery County with Simone Collins and had signs made that were put along the bike trail. He stated they had a scan code which was successful to put people into the survey. Mr. Seiler stated many people drive down the roads adjacent to Patterson Farm particularly coming from 295, and he feels that would be a good way to reach people even if it just directs them to the Website. Ms. Blundi stated she could advocate to the Board of Supervisors for a temporary sign on the property which would drive people to the Website. She stated for the Pool and for Community Day, we have hung banners over the road by McCaffrey's so that is another option.

Mr. Majewski stated he likes the idea of a QR Code so that people can just use their phone to take them to the Website.

Mr. Steadman stated he would be in favor of signage including a temporary sign on Patterson Farm that would direct people to the Website as well as a banner by McCaffrey's. He stated we need public participation. He stated typically we have four or six individuals calling in to the Ad Hoc Property Committee meetings, and usually they are repeat callers. He stated we need to engage the larger community, and he feels the first step is awareness. He stated he agrees that there is a lot of information on the Township Website, but it does not matter if people are not going to it; and we need to drive them to the information.

Mr. Childs stated the Township Newsletter will be going out shortly, and it has information in it about this project as well. Ms. Blundi stated it includes a picture on the cover.

Mr. Schmid stated if an outside communications firm had been hired, he feels we would have had a much broader approach in the beginning to push out information and educate the public about this issue so that by the time we get to the public hearings, there would have been broader understanding.

Ms. Sovinee stated she would suggest using the tag line on any signage with the Website underneath it. She stated she would be willing to draft what could be on the signage.

Mr. Steadman stated he would be happy to speak to any group at any time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Karen Hall, Middletown Township, stated she is connected to the Patterson Farm through High School friends who are Patterson relatives. She stated she has been in Middletown Township for over forty years and seen many changes going on in conjunction with the farms in the area. She stated she lives at Styers Orchard. She stated she will voice her support and advocacy among her peers and neighbors to see what can be done to preserve the Patterson Farm and continue the legacy of farming. She stated she tries to repost and like everything she sees on Facebook regarding the Farm and its preservation as a farming entity. She stated she would also be in favor of community outreach and education programs for children. She stated she would do anything she can do to help.

Mr. Steadman thanked Ms. Hall for her offer to help spread the word that there are studies and plans being made for Patterson Farm. He stated one of the recommendations that has been accepted so far is that Patterson Farm will remain in farming as its primary use, and that all other uses need to be compatible with that. He stated we do need to find uses for the buildings in order to support their maintenance in the long run. He asked Ms. Hall to contact him so that they can discuss the issues further.

Ms. Diane Ambrosino, 7 Milton Drive, stated there was an earlier discussion about the trees and shrubbery around the Janney House. She stated she takes art lessons there, and when the class is outside drawing, the L-shaped yew hedge around the building shields the artists from any noise in the area and provides a courtyard and quiet place to draw. She stated there is a lot of great artwork being created as a result of that location and the surrounding buildings and trees on the property. She asked that they be careful about any trimming of trees or shrubbery that may happen as part of this project around the Janney House, the barn, and the outbuildings.

Ms. Sovinee stated it does provide a nice separation from the farm activities. She stated she and Mr. Steadman have had discussions about the fact that you cannot see the Janney House and Art Center from the road, and there is an opportunity for some trimming while still maintaining the property and not impacting the back of the enclosure that has been referred to.

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

1. Sub-Committee on Communication is finalizing the Top Ten FAQ's to be posted on the Website
2. We are looking at some events, and anyone who has connections with respective constituencies, other organizations in the community should advise Mr. Steadman
3. Ms. Sovinee will work on a signage draft
Ms. Blundi will work with Ms. Sovinee on this

May 11, 2023

Ad Hoc Property Committee

4. Ad Hoc Property Committee meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Childs stated there were difficulties with the Facebook stream this evening, and he asked if there is a way to link to YouTube for people who were trying to see the meeting tonight on Facebook. Ms. Blundi stated anyone can go to YouTube and search for Lower Makefield Township to see any meeting. Mr. Majewski stated he believes that it can be posted on Facebook. Mr. Steadman stated we need both forums.

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

