

FRIENDS OF WORCESTER
APRIL 23, 2003 - MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: John Harris, Rob Hayes, Charley Muir, Dave Cardy, Mike & Mary Lou Crush, Susan & Laura Caughlan, Jason Lubar, Clare Billett, Jenna & Steve Alpher, Jeannie Steigerwalt, Mary Grove, Molly Angstadt, Kim David, Carol & Alan Saydah, Fran McDonough, Rick DiBattista, Jim Van Ostenbridge & Barbara McMonagle

Location: Home of Mike and Mary Lou Crush, 3103 Skippack Pike, Lansdale, PA

Agenda Preview

SPECIAL GUEST: 10,000 FRIENDS OF PENNSYLVANIA - Marianne Scott, Guest Speaker

10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania is an organization that promotes responsible land planning. They promote legislation at the state level which can strengthen rural, urban and suburban planning. By getting groups together with different views and promoting consensus among them, they are instrumental in passing legislation which promotes planned growth and revitalization of urban areas, as well as, protecting our farmland and resources. They also promote multi-municipal planning whereby land uses are spread over a larger area. The results can reduce sprawl in rural areas. 10,000 Friends promotes regional planning in Pennsylvania.

Currently, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania is working with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission regarding sewers. Sewers open up communities to increased development. What can we do? Townships can say NO to sewers that are not part of their comprehensive plan. Usually sewers are paid for by developers, however, long term they become the RESPONSIBILITY of the township. A township has the right to uphold their comprehensive plan. Also, a township can refuse to allow developers to tie into the sewer systems of neighboring townships. This can deter development.

The challenge of preserving open space is critical. Our area, southeastern Pennsylvania “is being developed at the rate of one acre per hour – twice the national average”. If you would like more information about 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania call 877-568-2225 or visit their website <http://www.10000friends.org>.

FWO COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Treasurer’s Report: No Report

President’s Report: Thank you, Marianne Scott from 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania for being our Guest Speaker tonight. It’s important to explain how we can have input into the state legislative process. Hopefully, more people will get involved.

Recently, The Philadelphia Inquirer published an essay by FOW member, Susan Caughlan. Susan’s work was a response defending the position “Yes, preserving land does pay for itself” and appeared in the Commentary section.

We will miss Randy Jaskowiak a longtime FOW member who recently passed away.

Membership Report: It’s great to see so many new faces tonight. We are emailing the minutes and agenda to members. Email us at info@friendsofworcester.org if you would like to be added to the list.

Fundraising Report: Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor for our Newsletter please contact Barb McMonagle at 215-699-8225.

WORCESTER TOWNSHIP MEETING REPORTS:

Board of Supervisors: The preliminary plan for Kumpf-Bell cluster development with 47 lots was approved with no entrance on Valley Forge Road. The only active entrance will be on Trooper Road with an emergency exit on Township Line Road.

Zoning Board: Methacton High School received approval for approximately 20 variances for an addition.

Joint Planning Commission/Board of Supervisors: No Meeting.

Planning Commission:
CVS submitted their 3rd set of plans.

Thompson/Scott plans were reviewed. PC has asked for new plans showing the retention basin, treeline, and trail to Highview Drive changes. They will have an onsite sewer system.

Recommended Supervisors approve the zoning change to A.Q.R.D. (Age Qualified) for the 16 acre property adjacent to the Schlosser/Van Grosie properties.

Beth Pilling from Montgomery County Planning Commission is working with the PC to beef up our Comprehensive Plan. This will make funding for future preserved areas more obtainable.

Joint Planning Commission/Board of Supervisors: No Meeting.

Traffic Advisory Committee – Due to the extensive changes to Valley Forge Road & Skippack Pike, suggestions to change the intersection at Valley Forge Road & Skippack Pike to a level of service E were suggested, but rejected by the committee. It was recommended to revisit the plan in the future instead and update it at that time. FOW is completely opposed to the suggested changes at this intersection. A public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 2003 at 6:30 P.M.

CURRENT ISSUES

Open Space - The township has renewed its contract with Ross Pilling. John Harris & Ross Pilling are working with Montgomery County Lands Trust. If elected Supervisor, John Harris would be more aggressive toward open space acquisition. Buying development rights makes a property legally bound from being developed. Fifty, one hundred years from now..., it will prevent it from being changed.

CVS - FOW has put up signs & has distributed flyers against the CVS at Germantown Pike & Trooper Roads. **Worcester has the right to require adherence to current zoning laws and not issue variances.** We will activate our telephone chain and email lists to keep residents informed and urge their attendance at upcoming zoning meetings. In the meantime, FOW has an online petition against CVS. Visit our website <http://www.friendsofworcester.org>, click on the CVS button and submit the petition. Thank you to everyone who responded by putting a sign on your lawn.

Schlosser/Van Grosie - If Supervisors approve the zoning change for the additional property containing 16 acres, the age qualified retirement community proposed for North Wales Road and Township Line Road will have 204 units.

Thompson/Scott – Updating plans.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Primary - Tuesday, May 20, 2003 – Our Supervisors are currently waiting for the Primary to select the person to replace the late John Graham. Currently John Harris (endorsed by the Republican Committee) and Harris Gramm are candidates for Supervisor.

Newsletter - All articles are finished. We are waiting for the final layout & proofing. Time is important. (Our goal is to have it out before the primary.)

Photo Contest – Worcester Township’s Rural and Historical Roots – Open to all Methacton High School Students. Deadline for entries 5/29/03. Winners will be announced at noon on June 7th at the FOW & Farmers Union Horse Show. All entries will be on display. For details see Mr. Bosler at MHS or visit www.friendsofworcester.org.

Friends of Worcester Flea Market & Raffle & 63rd Farmers Union Horse Show - Saturday June 7, 2003. 8A.M. – 4 P.M. FOW will staff the food tent and have its annual raffle & flea market. Photo contest entries will be exhibited and the winner announced at noon. Space is Available for the Flea Market. Also, bake sale and raffle items are needed.

Website – Visit our website: <http://www.friendsofworcester.org>. Please come visit and leave your email address so we can email you the minutes. Also, please make suggestions and comments. We are still compiling the CVS petition - to date there are over 146 in opposition to CVS. We have added a calendar with events, township meetings & FOW meetings. The newsletter will be posted when finished.

Expand our efforts that Open Space Preservation = Lower Taxes

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Please Join Us By Attending Our Monthly Meetings.

May 19, 2003 – Monday 7:30 P.M. – Home of Jenna & Steve Alpher, 3026 Stump Hall Road (610)584-3337.

June 7, 2003 – Saturday 8:00 A.M. – Farmers Union Horse Show & FOW Flea Market, 8 A.M. – 4 P.M. Heyser Field behind Worcester Township Community Hall, Valley Forge Road, Fairview Village (610)489-7904.

June 17, 2003 – Tuesday 7:30 P.M. – Home of Jeannie & George Steigerwalt, 1028 Grange Ave. (610)489-7904.

September 6, 2003 – Saturday 3 P.M. – Annual FOW Family Picnic – Home of Rob & Wini Hayes, 3033 Fisher Road (610)584-0371. Raindate Sunday, September 7, 2003.

September 30, 2003 – Tuesday 7:30 P.M. – Home of Charley Muir, 1901 Whitehall Road, (610)584-8472

October 21, 2003 – Tuesday 7:30 P.M. – Home of Barb & Mike McMonagle, 2242 Berks Road, (215)699-8225.