

## **Friends of Worcester meeting minutes      Meeting date: January 20, 2005**

Present: Kim David, Charley Muir, Doug Rotondo, Jeannie Steigerwalt, Barb McMonagle, Susan Caughlan

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as written and will be posted on the FOW website, [www.friendsofworcester.org](http://www.friendsofworcester.org).

**President's Report.** Kim thanked Wini and Rob Hayes for hosting an excellent holiday party last month.

The annual giving letter was sent out earlier this month.

Officers for 2005 will remain the same: President - Kim David; Vice President - Rob Hayes; Secretary - Barb McMonagle; Treasurer - Wini Hayes. Standing committees were reorganized in October. Committees and their coordinators are: Membership - Barb McMonagle; Fundraising/Hospitality - Marie Amato; Township Reports - Rob Hayes; Newsletter - Charley Muir; Outreach - Wini Hayes; Website - Dave Cardy.

Kim presented proposed goals for 2005. After discussion, the following goals were agreed on:

- Outreach: improve outreach efforts through our newsletter, website, brochure, and sponsorship of two community outreach events.
- Education of residents on the following issues:
  - Growing Greener (zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances)
  - Historic preservation
  - Stormwater management
  - Village commercial zoning
  - Horse farms and equestrian trails
- Increase member involvement – foster a “community” feeling

Kim recommended that FOW make the following donations: Montgomery County Lands Trust - \$50; Natural Lands Trust - \$50; 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania - \$50. This recommendation was approved.

Kim reported that Rep. John Fichter was asked about noise barriers along the Northeast Extension reconstruction project. He responded that he is aware of our concerns and will keep us up to date on the status of noise barriers.

**Membership.** We have received an excellent response so far to our annual giving letter. There was discussion on how to thank all the contributors. One suggestion was to send each contributor a thank-you postcard with a FOW refrigerator magnet attached. The magnet would be a permanent reminder of FOW and also provide readily accessible contact information (website and mailing address). Susan will look into costs and report back.

**Fundraising/Hospitality.** A preliminary version of the brochure will be produced for inclusion with the corporate fundraising letter.

### **Township Reports.**

**Supervisors.** The Board reviewed a resident's request to change their lot lines by exchanging a portion of their lot for an equal amount of land that is now designated as open space in their development. The residents' land is wet; the land proposed to be exchanged is dry and closer to North Wales Rd. The supervisors walked the site before deciding that the lot line change would not be in the best interests of the township because it would set a precedent for altering the designated open space areas in a development at the request of any resident. The Board felt that since the township and the developer had

determined the best location for the open space, and the residents were aware of the nature of the lot when they purchased it, the original plan should be followed.

The Board discussed a proposal from the developer of the Haganir property to reduce the number of lots and install on-site septic systems. The township engineer indicated that the area probably would not perk to permit on-site systems, and that the developer should be encouraged to explore other, more cost-effective methods of providing public sewer. The hookup is already available in that area, and this property is included in the township's public sewer expansion (537) plan.

Chase Kneeland reported on a walk-through of Farmers Union Hall to review safety and ADA compliance concerns. It was noted that an emergency exit door is screwed shut and the lock on the front doors is inoperable. The township manager will look into repairs. Some basic ADA accommodations were also discussed. The Supervisors requested that the Board of the WHS prepare a list of recommended repairs and renovations for the BOS's review.

The Board discussed several concerns raised by the PC regarding the Reserve at Center Point. The PC is concerned about the completeness of the tree survey because of the extent of the high-quality woods on the property. The PC also expressed serious concerns with the proposed drip sewage disposal system to be installed in these woods. The PC is concerned about the system outlets becoming clogged with roots, the long-term performance of the system, and the long-term viability of the trees if such a system is installed. Whether belgian block curbs should be allowed in this development was also discussed. Historically, the BOS has not approved the use of this material for curbing. However, the township engineer pointed out that it is very durable and is easier and cheaper to repair than concrete curbing.

The Board discussed the North Penn Water Authority's desire to install a water tank on the Variety Club property. The Board is working with the Authority to locate the tank where it will be least visible.

The Board announced that an anonymous donor has given \$50,000 to the township's Open Space Fund, bringing the fund's total to \$100,000. It was suggested that the existence of the fund should be publicized so that township residents will be aware of it and can donate to it.

Outgoing Planning Commission member Beth Sterns was thanked by the Board and presented with a certificate in recognition of her service to the township.

The township's 537 (public sewer system) plan was revised to include the Thompson-Scott subdivision, which will pump liquid effluent to the Valley Greene treatment plant.

The tax rate for 2005 will remain unchanged at 0.05 percent.

An ordinance was passed to provide uniform regulations for the installation and use of grinder pumps in sewage disposal systems. Inspection and maintenance provisions are included.

At the January reorganization meeting, Chase Kneeland was elected Chairman of the Board. Harris Gramm was reappointed to the ZHB. The township manager, assistant manager, solicitor and engineer were reappointed to their positions.

Planning Commission. The PC meeting for December was cancelled. The PC met as part of the Growing Greener Conservation by Design Committee in December and January and continued to work on subdivision and zoning ordinance changes.

Joint Meeting. The PC and the BOS met in December. Open Space Coordinator Susan Caughlan gave a report on the recent open space public meeting and an update on the work of the Growing Greener Committee. There were discussions regarding the Park and Recreation Plan requirement and plan review issues, including the cut-off date for receipt of plans by the PC and preliminary/final reviews.

Zoning Board. At the November meeting, the ZHB heard a waiver request for the Reserve at Center Point (the former Posen/Hitchens farm on Trooper Rd.) in connection with subdivision of the existing house and barn into two parcels. No decision was rendered at this meeting.

There was no report on the December ZHB meeting.

Newsletter. The next newsletter is targeted for publication in April.

Outreach. The committee has prepared a revised outreach brochure, which was circulated for comment. Susan will work with Dave and the printer on production.

The committee is now working on a presentation to be given at Meadowood on March 29. It is possible that this presentation can be a community-wide event.

FOW will have an information table at the Worcester Historical Society's 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Antique Show and Flea Market on Saturday, May 7, from 8 to 4 at Community Hall in Fairview Village. Volunteers to staff the table are asked to contact Charley Muir or Marie Amato.

Website. We recognize that our website can be an important component of our community outreach and education efforts, so the committee is looking for volunteers interested in developing ideas for various web pages. Susan has prepared a list of suggestions for the committee to review, including pages on upcoming events, preserved land in the township, and proposed developments. Dave will continue to provide website development support, so committee volunteers do not need to have website expertise.

#### Current issues.

Open Space. Susan reported on the township's current initiative to preserve the Schierenbeck farm through the county's agricultural preservation program. She also reported that there are 18 applicants in the 2005 round for the state/county farm preservation program. .

Greenway. No progress was reported on the greenway trail from Evansburg State Park to Heebner Park.

Open Space Plan. The OS Plan revision is moving forward, with the committee using the input received from residents at the November public meeting to identify important township resources and plan for their protection.

Historic Protection Ordinance. The supervisors have expressed support for the idea of an ordinance that would encourage preservation of historic structures when a property is developed. However, no further progress is being made on this issue.

#### New Issues.

The group discussed how to energize the various committees by getting more residents interested in becoming involved in FOW. Our outreach and education activities were seen as one way to do this.

The upcoming primary election for supervisor and four school board members was discussed.

Administrative Assistant Report. Susan reported that in December new FOW stationery was printed, the fundraising letter was prepared (with help from Chris David – thank you!), the brochure was revised and is ready for production, and we have begun to work on expanding our web page.

FOW 2005 meeting dates: Feb 23 (Wednesday), Mar 17 (Thursday), 7:30 p.m., Bean Road Nursery (corner of Bean & Whitehall Rds.)