

## **Friends of Worcester meeting minutes      Meeting date: October 11, 2006**

The September meeting minutes were approved as written and will be posted at [friendsofworcester.org](http://friendsofworcester.org).

**President's Report.** Kim David congratulated the group on a very successful Stormwater Workshop in September. The partnership with Friends of Lower Providence was very successful, and we look forward to other collaborative efforts with FLP.

FOW was approached by the Animal Welfare Project, a nonprofit group in Valley Forge, to support their desire to use the North Penn Army Reserve base when it closes in a few years. The group would conduct animal rescue, training, and recreational activities at the site. It was decided that this is not really within FOW's mission to preserve open space, since the township has already expressed interest in acquiring the base for open space or recreational purposes.

**Contribution and Support.** Barb McMonagle noted that it was good to see many FOW supporters at our recent stormwater workshop.

**Fundraising/Hospitality.** Nothing to report.

### **Township Reports.**

**Board of Supervisors.** Plans are in the works to provide for the Liberty Bell Trail when the PA Turnpike is widened. This will enable the trail to cross from Upper Gwynedd into Worcester on Morris Road.

The Board authorized the township solicitor to attend the Zoning Board hearing at which the Betz-Genstar application will be heard, to impose appropriate conditions if the application is approved.

The township has received another demolition permit application to tear down a historic farmhouse and barn, this one on Berks Rd. The township is attempting to contact the owners to see whether anything can be worked out to preserve the structures. The Historical Society is also making efforts to contact the owners to discuss preservation options..

**Planning Commission.** No report.

**Zoning Hearing Board.** The Betz-Genstar application to operate a used car lot at the old Exxon station corner in Fairview Village was continued to the October meeting. The ZHB asked to see drawings of the proposed building renovations. A Fairview Village resident has contacted FOW for support in opposing this application. It was decided to send a letter to the supervisors voicing our opinion that a used car lot is not an appropriate use for this corner in Fairview Village. FOW will also ask the township to consider preparing a vision plan for Fairview Village. Such a plan will provide a foundation for changes to our land development ordinances that will support village-oriented uses and pedestrian-friendly development. An e-mail alert will be sent out notifying our supporters of this issue and asking them to voice support for more village-friendly development in Fairview Village.

**Joint Meeting.** The next Joint Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 4, at 9:30 a.m.

**Newsletter.** Articles for the fall newsletter were discussed. The survey will be included in this newsletter. The option to respond via our website will be investigated.

**Outreach.** The fall outreach effort was the FOW/FLP Stormwater Workshop on September 30, which everyone felt was very successful. FOW will contact the township's engineer, Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy, and DCNR to thank them for their participation and assistance.

**Website.** We are continuing to add content to the website, notably the White Paper on Open Space Preservation and a link to information from the recent Stormwater Workshop.

**Current issues.**

**Open Space Initiatives.** The county Farm Board has made an offer to purchase the development rights on the 47-acre Schierenbeck horse farm. The township will acquire a trail easement along the property boundary for a pedestrian/equestrian trail that is proposed to connect Heebner Park with Nike Park.

The possibility of FOW contributing to individual open space preservation projects was discussed. Susan Caughlan recommended that the West Vincent Land Trust be reviewed as a model. This nonprofit land trust organization facilitates open space preservation in West Vincent township. More information is at [http://www.westvincentwp.org/land\\_trust.htm](http://www.westvincentwp.org/land_trust.htm)

**Historic Structures Preservation Committee.** The Custer house on Valley Forge Road has been demolished, despite FOW's efforts to discuss preservation or adaptive reuse with the owner. The Historic Structures Preservation Committee finished discussing the proposed ordinance and has sent a draft to the Planning Commission for review. The committee will discuss public education and outreach activities to advise residents of this important issue and the possible solutions.

**Survey Questions.** The survey will be included in the fall newsletter, with an option to respond on the FOW website or to mail in the survey from the newsletter.

**White Paper on Land Preservation.** The White Paper will be posted to the website as a link on the Open Space page.

**Administrative Assistant's Report.** During September, the Administrative Assistant prepared for the stormwater workshop.

**FOW 2006 meeting dates and upcoming events:**

**Meetings:** Wednesday, November 8

Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. at Bean Road Nursery (corner of Bean & Whitehall Rds.)

**Holiday Potluck:** Thursday, December 28, at 7:30 p.m. at the Hayes' home. RSVP is necessary to make sure we have enough food.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Caughlan