

West Rockhill Township
Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2014

Call to Order:

The September 18, Conservation Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the West Rockhill Township municipal building.

Elected Officials:

*Absent

Supervisors:

Donald Duvall
*Jay Keyser
*John Mann

Appointed Officials:

Committee members:

Elizabeth (Betsy) Branson
Vera Cole
David Collingwood
Karina Rilling
Michael Schrameyer

Township Manager:

Greg Lippincott

Visitors Registered: None

Conservation Committee Activity:

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of the July 17, 2014 meeting were approved as submitted.

Old Business:

1. Two errors were found on the TMP in our database- these will be corrected.
2. The Lichty open space sign has been damaged and will be replaced- cause of damage is unknown.
3. Another lengthy discussion ensued regarding the log cabin on the conserved Shaffer property. If the cabin is rented a number of issues must be addressed among them:
 - a. the septic system (which has never been tested)
 - b. the well water (which most likely contains contaminants)
 - c. the electrical system with its low lying wires next to the cabin
 - e. the large trees which are too close to the cabin causing insurance issues (insurance will not cover damages if trees are so close).
 - f. gutters which must be installed (*or cleaned?*) to prevent damage to the chinking

Although this cabin was used by the Shaffer's as a 'get away' idyll, it cannot be utilized in the same way since it is now owned by the township. Possible solutions are:

- a. investing approximately \$50,000 to make it livable (*see above*)
- b. moving it to the park or some other suitable area
- c. leaving it to the next generation for solutions

The township welcomes all suggestions for the best use of this charming cabin. Vera Cole will assemble a unified document outlining possibilities.

4. Parts of our conserved property documents will be amended. At issue is the letter sent to property owners after the Conservation Committee members have evaluated and recommended a direction for the Board of Supervisors. The Manager will now provide a more detailed explanation to the owners explaining the reasons their property was not recommended for preservation based on the document sent to the Board. Furthermore, the letter will include an invitation to the property owner to attend the next CC meeting if any questions remain regarding the said property.

5. The James barn has been evaluated by a number of restoration experts. Their views differ- some recommend a tear down costing about \$13,000 because it is deemed to be structurally unsafe. If restoration is decided upon, the cost could be \$500,000. If it is taken down, it was suggested in our committee that all wood and stone remain in the township for our use- possibly to rebuild?

New Business:

1. One newspaper article was presented- Bucks County has added 5 new farms to its agricultural program. The State of Pennsylvania has preserved approximately 500,000 acres of farmland for future agricultural production.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at the start of the meeting. The meeting continued after the executive session.

Next regularly scheduled meeting – Thursday, November 20, at 7 PM.

