

## East Coventry Township Parks, Recreation and Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 8/24/2010                      **Meeting Called By:** Karen Nocella

**Time:** 7:30                              **Meeting Notes By:** Flora Kapp

Attended	Name	Attended	Name
X	Anne R. Sage	X	Flora Kapp
	Bruce Stephens		Joe Pennypacker
	Carol Tucci		John Doyle
X	Cathy Carney-Horner	X	Karen Nocella
X	Connie Megay	X	Mike Laporta

**Guests in attendance:** Bob Scott, resident E Coventry; Clare Quinn, W Vincent Supervisor/French Creek & Pickering Trust, Nancy & Brandon Cahill/Boy scout

<b>Agenda Item: Review/Approve 7/27 &amp; 8/10 meeting minutes</b>
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- Motion made by Connie to approve 7/27 minutes with spelling correction of Clair to Clare, seconded by Karen, all in favor, motion carried.
- Motion made by Karen to approve 8/10 minutes, Cathy seconded motion, all in favor, motion carried.

<b>Agenda Item: Geo-Caching</b>
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- Bob Scott was present to inform committee about Geo-Caching
  - Geo-caching is an Hi-tech hide & seek game, where treasurers are hidden throughout the world and anyone may participate by following the directions/coordinates to the location. Similar to orienteering.
  - Bob would like permission to place caches in E Coventry parks
    - Currently, there are caches hidden in French Creek, North Coventry, Kenilworth Park, and the hair salon, Shear to Please.
    - No cost to township
    - Bob would be responsible to hide the caches
  - Bob to present to BOS at their September meeting
- Discussed if approved maybe announce at next park day – hide treasure & use compass (orienteering) to find cache. Ask Boy Scouts to help with game?
- Website geo-caching.com

**Agenda Item: Open Space Referendum**

- Clare Quinn was present to explain West Vincent's program and answer questions.
  - W Vincent has two taxes implemented:
    - Real estate tax (millage) – 10 yr limit
    - EIT - 20 yr bond to pay off – will probably take most of that time
    - Money was used to purchase development rights, many landowners do not sell all as development rights
  - Benefits of program
    - If landowner sells outright
      - Deposit which is refundable goes back to developer if development plan is not approved – can take 3-7 years to get approval
      - Seller does not get full selling price until approval or completion of project
    - By selling development rights – seller gets their money right away
      - In W Vincent their committee has a set of criteria established to rank land – can get a project done in three months
    - Since funding is established county involvement is minimal
- Conservation easement is valued at the difference between the lost of land unrestricted and cost with easement restrictions
  - Landowner can retain rights to build other buildings
  - Can add more restrictions, multiple protection areas (care about woodlands, streams, watersheds, etc.)
  - Landowner can donate part of land to get tax savings
- Development rights are based on value of land with current easements/restrictions
  - Do not count as open space, not standardized, land trust monitors
  - Meets township's restrictions – less restricted, township may purchase because of the view – to keep open
- Due not lose benefits of the 319 program if land is already in the program
- Townships can only pay appraisal value of property
- Need to establish a "TDR" program
  - "Receiving zone" – determine specific areas/zones (areas industrial, high density, etc.)
    - Down zoning – restructuring
- What needs to be done
  - Prepare plan outlining the presentation to residents & costs involved, funding for project
    - Karen to put on BOS agenda for 9/13 mtg
    - Cathy, Connie to present
  - Present to BOS at a separate workshop prior to town hall mtg
    - Educate BOS regarding need for preserving open space in township
    - Invite other townships to talk about their programs (W Vincent, N Coventry, Charlestown)
    - Invite planning commission (Walt), historical committee
  - Committee must inform residents (BOS cannot)
    - Town hall meeting – schedule for October (Wed: 6, 13 or 20, Thurs: 7 or 14)
      - BOS explain why referendum and what happens if it is put in place
      - "Save land, save taxes"
        - Open land \$.36/per \$100 assessed value of property on average in services
        - Developed land costs \$1.16/per on average in services
        - Point out: need matching money to receive grant money – state & county taking our tax dollars and giving to other

- townships/counties our township is not reaping the benefit
- o Land conservation helps to cap school taxes – lower school age population
- o The more land conserved the higher the property values
- o If townships around you are conserving land and your township isn't your township will be targeted by developers for development – better to be part of the regional development group (E Cov is part of Pottstown Regional Plan)
- o Conserved land is protected – BOS cannot change zoning
- o Point out to residents that this program is for all township interests – projects/space throughout township
- Have table outside town hall mtg with info, requests for donations, coffee/cookies etc.
- 2-3 mailings
  - Contact Virtual Farm – create/print mailers
  - First inviting to town hall meeting –get list/labels from OJR
  - Get out & vote mailing - Purchase voter lists – Elections/voter services
  - Response mailing
- o Form “open space” committee
  - Need to have Chairmen, treasurer, financial report
    - Karen – campaign chair –contact for residents
  - Contact residents that filled out survey on park day
- o Fundraising
  - Township pays for first mailing – notification to residents
  - Need to raise \$3,000 minimum - must raise money for remaining mailings, expenses, etc.
- o Create website
  - Land trust uses a site template \$45/mo – Clare to supply info
  - Connie to check w/Missy King, Mike to check w/daughters
  - Should be in place by time of town hall mtg
- Next meeting: 7:30 Wed, 9/8
  - o Karen to inform Bonnie

<b>Agenda Item: Miscellaneous</b>
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- Karen met with Boy Scout, Adam Willow and Ray Kolb on Friday at Maack Farm to go over placement of signs & bench.
- Boy Scout, Brandon Cahill, was present to ask about projects in township he/troop could do.
  - o Suggestions
    - Brandon to look at Towpath Park and present ideas to committee what he/troop could do/provide
    - High traffic area for dog walking, Need for clean up and specific dog walk/free play area with poop/mutt mitt stations
    - Play equipment taken out due to wear & tear, committee had recommended to be replaced with “in kind”

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Flora Kapp/Secretary