NORTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP

FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

NORTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP

April 10, 2025

Convened: 7:00 pm Adjourned: 7:45 pm

Township Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

In attendance were:		**Not in attendance:**
Supervisor/Chairman Dennis Klusaritz	Heather Skorinko	Supervisor Ron Heintzelman
Supervisor -Al Geosits	Paul Semmel	Township Manager- Randy Cope
Director of Grants, Preservation, & Trails-Mike Kukitz	Susan Williams	
Vice Chair -Mark Yatcilla	Rich Semmel- township resident	
Secretary-Marlene Stofflet	Bob Korp	

APPROVAL OF February 13, 2025 MEETING MINUTES:

Motion was made to accept by Heather Skorinko.
Seconded by Paul Semmel.
The motion was passed unanimously.

AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AREA (ASA) UPDATE:

Mike Kukitz, Director of Grants, Preservation & Trails reviewed the following:

- Pat S. – Property added at 2.3.25 Board of Supervisors meeting.
- Joe F. – In discussions with township, possibly interested.
- Dennis S. – Property announced at 4.7.25 Board of Supervisors Meeting
- David W. – Would like to pursue a forest management-type plan. Mike put him in contact with the proper person to speak to about that.
- Charlie N. – Completed ASA application which will be announced at 5.12.25 Board of Supervisors meeting. Part of his land is in Whitehall.

DRAFT

PRESERVATION UPDATE:

- Pat S. – Anticipated in 2025
- Terry M.- Under agreement
- Heather S.- Anticipated in 2025
- Heather S. - Anticipated in 2025
- Dennis S. – Possibly interested in preservation but wants to speak with his family. Township staff will follow up within the next month or two.

- Committee members discussed reasons why the township should preserve more acreage.
- Discussed various other preservations pending where there were property issues discovered that need to be resolved before the next step.
- AICP Community Planner, Stacy Yoder, from Gilmore & Associates will be attending our next meeting for an update.
- Mike briefly reviewed the financial state of the township's available money in the preservation account:
  - Current Revenue – $474,213
  - Anticipated 2025 Expenses - $187,521

  (Four properties are projected to receive payments)
- Dennis Klusaritz stressed that we never know for sure when or what acreage will be approved by the county.

OPEN SPACE ACTION PLAN – Public Opinion Survey

- A sample of the survey sheet and questions as shown on the Survey Monkey website was handed out to each member.
- Mike mentioned some of the distributed advertisements of the survey to various sources such as Facebook, township email, signs in the parks, etc. He encouraged the committee to reach out to people we know and encourage them to take the survey.

FINAL COMMENTS FROM FLOOR:

- At this point in time, we discussed that approximately seven working farms are left to preserve in the township. However, there are 245 lots of various usage which are over 10 acres and could be preserved.
- Revisited names of possible land owners in the township to contact **in person** before the next meeting.
- Mentioned certain properties that abut Whitehall township properties and questioned if Whitehall would want to work with us, as was done with a previous property.

- Bob Korp suggested offering a landowner the **Right of First Refusal** for a one year period of time. When the year expires we would contact that person again which would give the township a way to keep in touch with the landowner again.
- The new North Whitehall Township building should be completed in June or July.
- Supervisor Ronald Heintzelman will be retiring.
- Paul Semmel announced that the Conservation Board approved the grant to fix the surface issues on Horseshoe Road near Camp Fowler.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Susan Williams, seconded by Bob Korp. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marlene Stofflet, Secretary

**This meeting was held at the Neffs Volunteer Fire Company 3755 Park Ave, Neffs, PA 18065

The Next Farmland Preservation/Open Space Committee meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2025.