

Solebury Farm Committee  
May 28, 2024  
Hybrid Meeting

Minutes

**In attendance:** Graham Phillips, Gary Manoff, Lowie Comly, Josh Perlsweig, Tim Luccaro, Lars Crooks, Buz Teacher, Hanna Howe (Supervisor Liaison), Terry Clemons (Solicitor) & Renee Scally (Township Administration). **Absent:** Kaitlin Farbotnik

**Call to order**

Graham Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm

**Approval of Minutes**

Graham made a comment to amend the meeting minutes for April 30, 2024, to take out “in sued” out of the Agricultural Ordinance Accessory Uses. Approved with the amended change 1<sup>st</sup> Josh Perlsweig, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tim Luccaro, all in favor.

**Announcements**

Township is working on a “Where am I Wednesdays” on social media. Renee asked the committee and audience if she can come over to their farms and take pictures. Lowie Comly said this is a great idea to get kids involved and know the farms in the area. If farmers are interested, to contact Renee at the township.

**Public Comment**

None

**New Business**

**I. PA Game Commission Private Landowner Assistant Program**

Any property with 25 acres or more who is looking for a greater diversity of wildlife, the PA Game Commission would provide wildlife habitat enhancement strategies with recommendations about invasive species control, enhancing grassland fields for wildlife, by planting native trees and shrubs. This is a free service. Renee Scally will post this on social media and to have Graham Phillips email Renee Scally the information to get it in the next Solebury Messenger.

**Old Business**

**I. Administrative Business**

**a. Meeting with BCCD, Township Engineer, Township Manager, Terry Clemons, Zoning Officer, with Gary Manoff and Kaitlin Farbotnik**

Terry Clemons spoke to the township engineer about having three (3) surveys to get a Stormwater Management permit is an overkill, and the township engineer would support that residents only two (2) appraisals. Terry Clemons also spoke to the Executive Director of the BCPC (Bucks County Planning Commission) they are in the process of updating their model Stormwater Ordinance. At this time Neshaminy Watershed and the Delaware Watershed have different regulations and the BCPC wants have both regulations into one (1) single regulation and the ordinance would come from these regulations. Terry Clemons mentioned how difficult it was for the farmers to comply with these Stormwater Management requirements, not much wiggle room from the DEP. Solebury’s Stormwater

Management Ordinance has some exemptions. Terry Clemons suggests another meeting with the township engineer to create a more simplified procedure for farmers, waive the fee for planting trees, and to get an exemption from the peak rate flow calculations.

Gary Manoff suggests to have another meeting with the township engineer. Wants the township to accept only two (2) drawings (first set and the as-built drawings) and waive the fee for planting more trees.

Josh Perlsweig mentioned his property is exempt from the peak rate flow, but there is still a lot of work that needs to be done from the engineering side of the project. Even though his property is exempted, he could not imagine what the cost would be like if he was not exempt.

Tim Luccaro makes a motion to the committee, to nominate Gary Manoff and Kaitlin Farbotnik to have a follow-up meeting with the Township Engineer and Terry Clemons for a few recommendations to streamline or improve the process. Josh Perlsweig 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All in favor

**b. Sustainability Sub-Committee – updates**

No updates. The next meeting is scheduled for May 29, 2024.

**c. Comprehensive Plan Committee – updates**

The draft of the survey is scheduled for July to every household. If the Farm Committee has specific questions they would like in the survey, to let Tim Luccaro know..

**II. Agricultural Promotion Objectives**

**a. Farmer-Land Match Program – Updates**

Josh Perlsweig found some past emails/correspondence and we will look at this at a later meeting

**b. Website Updates**

Suggest to put all farms on the Farm Committee page of the Township website.

**III. Land & Zoning Use**

**a. Agricultural Ordinance Accessory Uses**

Discussion regarding amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. The committee approved Terry Clemons to prepare the ordinance subject to all comments/concerns made by the Farm Committee. Once drafted and approved by Farm Committee, it will then go to the Board of Supervisors for approval, then to the Planning Commission.

**b. Housing**

**i. Accessory Use Ordinance**

Hanna Howe told the committee that the Board of Supervisors passed the Accessory Dwelling Ordinance for farms and can be outside of the 20% clustering and now the ordinance will go to the Planning Commission on June 24, 2024.

Hanna encourages the committee to come to the Planning Commission meeting in case questions arise.

Josh Perlsweig mentioned that the Farm Committee engaged with the zoning officer and township solicitor in 2018/2019 to discuss solutions to these issues, and we were told that it was not in the Township's purview *because* it's an affordable housing issue (i.e. too broad for the Township to tackle).

## **Public Comment**

Brent Alderfer spoke about the barriers to the types of restrictions that are being proposed to solve the problem. Both Brent Alderfer and Steven Phillips spoke to the township manager about the noise ordinance and enforcement is pretty simple. If someone complains, the police will go out to the property and say it is too loud and then they will come back to the property in 20 minutes to make sure the noise is off. With the PA Right to Farm act, Brent talks about how the farmer do not get treated more restrictively than everyone else. He is suggesting that farmers should not need a conditional use permit for noise. As for special events, the number of people should be four (4) people per acre, but not more than 300 people. If over 300-400 people, need to get a conditional use permit. As for the number of special events per year, it depends on the size of the event. The thing that needs to be regulated is noise, traffic, parking, and sanitary facilities. Brent recommends 4 large events per year and unlimited small events.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:39 pm by Graham Phillips, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Josh Perlsweig**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Renee Scally