

Solebury Farm Committee
April 30, 2024
Hybrid Meeting

Minutes

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

Call to order

Graham Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm

Approval of Minutes

Josh has a comment to amend the meeting minutes for March 26, 2024. He mentioned that Malika Spencer comments was incorrect, that her zoning permit was not denied, but it was misidentified of zoning in her case. Approved with the amended change 1st Josh Perlsweig, all in favor.

Announcements

Pride Parade on May 18th and Dudley Rice asked if anyone from Farm Committee would like to walk in from the Farm Committee. Renee Scally will email the link to the Farm Committee for them to sign up.

Public Comment

None

New Business

None

Old Business

I. Administrative Business

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

Gary wanted to thank the board for allowing this meeting to happen and also to thank Terry Clemons for organizing it. Gary Manoff mentioned that they are looking to make the grading permits less expensive and streamline the process to exempt certain things. Kaitlin Farbotnik mentioned that there is a foundation for exemptions existing, but they were hidden. Might need to tweak some things and make changes to what is already listed.

Gary Manoff also mentioned that there are a lot of changes that need to be made, but will take time. A lot of things are state driven, and the township can only do so much. Township Engineer is very approachable and has weekly hours available to residents. Terry Clemons mentioned that ACT167 ordinance – Stormwater Management Requirements is being worked on by the state, so things could get tougher for residents. Another thing is to take a look into Solebury's Grading and Stormwater ordinances and see what the exemptions are how they apply. Most engineers do not know of the exemptions, so they may need to be looked at and publicized. The Township Engineer is proposing a proforma plan for people to look at for sedimentation, erosion, and stormwater control. Terry also wants to compare Solebury's exemptions to other townships in the area.

b.

c. Sustainability Sub-Committee – updates

The Farm Committee is not sure who was supposed to attend this committee meeting. Josh will reach out to someone on that committee to see if they want someone from Farm Committee and he can attend those meetings.

d. Comprehensive Plan Committee – updates

They are working on a community-wide survey. If the Farm Committee has any specific agricultural questions they want on the survey, to email Tim Luccaro by Wednesday, May 8, 2024.

II. Agricultural Promotion Objectives

a. Farmer-Land Match Program – Updates

Lowie Comly reached out to Randy Serwell, who is open to farming on additional properties in Solebury. Graham Phillips mentioned that we really need to have maps of the tracking land. Josh Perlsweig has done a lot of work on this back in 2018-2019 and to have things listed on the Farm Committee section of the website for all CSAs and/or Farm stands, and also have the number of active farms in the township. He has a draft of what a page on the website could look like and he will pass this on to the Farm Committee. Kaitlin Farbotnik was asking if they could ask the township for funds to help with the Farmer-Land Match Program. Hanna Howe said to create a proposal and submit to the township when they are ready. PaFarm Link gave the farm committee a price to have things link to their website, but spoke to Del Val, but they did not have anyone to work on this project, but may reach out to Del Val again to see if still interested.

b. Website Updates

None

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 Planning Commission for approval and then to the Board of Supervisors for final approval.

Public Comment

Steven Phillips, mentioned he is seeing a lot of progress and this was a productive meeting. The overall goal is to preserve the land we preserve by making farming viable and sustainable. He is glad you are rethinking the sound compliance to make it follow the existing sound ordinance, because a lot of lawn equipment can be more of a disturbance than a gathering. Steven also mentioned that the committee needs to clarify parking, because it can become a safety issue. By saying adequate parking, how does one interpret that? The simpler the Farm Committee makes this ordinance, the easier it will be to understand, interpret, implement and enforce. If a farm is in compliance with sound, parking, and health facilities, why is there a limit to the number of people that can attend the event, if the farm is large enough to be able to handle all of the people? As for Special Events, it needs to be stated whether the event is for profit or non-profit.

Kelsey Oliver grows cut flowers and has concerts on their farm, which she considers music as a cultural event, that has taken place in barns and on farms for years. She likes how Solebury is quiet, but does not want wedding venues popping up all over the township. Some of her concerns are keep them viable and all the work that needs to be done to diversify their farms to keep them going. She has had workshops and farm tours on her farm and is excited for all the work the Farm Committee is doing so far.

Meeting adjourned at 9:11pm by Graham Phillips, 2nd by Kaitlin Farbotnik

Respectfully Submitted,
Renee Scally