

MINUTES OF MEETING
Durham Township Planning Commission
Tuesday, July 5, 2016 7:30 PM
Township Building Meeting Room

Attendees:

Lois Oleksa (LO), Matt Crouse (MC), Kathy Gentner (KG), Heath Millett (HM), Cindy Skoriak (CS),
Ann Marshall (AM)
Absent: Stephen Willey (SW)

Quorum: Yes

Secretary (monthly rotation): Ann Marshall

I. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance @ 7:35PM

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes of June 7, 2016, Motion MC, Second CS, minutes pass 5-0-1) (KG abstained, SW absent)

III. Special Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Designation - A Presentation by Richard Dodds
Chairman, Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Management Committee and Former Mayor and Current
Committee Member of Kingwood Township, NJ

Richard Dodds (RD) gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Designation - how it originated, its basic goals, which area it encompasses, what the committee does, how it has no regulatory power, but has some ability to be used a deterrent for projects that conflict with goals of the designation. Projects like PennEast are discouraged from passing through areas where Federal funds have been used to protect land.

Why sign on? You agree with the concept of caring for the river and preserving things the way we have them under current regulations. When you sign on, you get a seat at the table, you become part of a bigger group, a steering committee you can help direct it, if you have a problem, you can go to them and have a bigger group stand up for you - more leverage.

AM/MC Questions - Benefits to townships?

RD You can leverage your membership to help with local goals that fit the committee goals.

Funding potential through the designation - although it's been cash-strapped recently, hopefully with more enthusiasm within the steering committee, access to more money will come about.

KG Question - Are we obligated financially? Are we obligated to send someone to committee?

RD No financial obligation, no forced representation at meetings (only optional to send a volunteer)

KG - confirming that no additional regulations will be forced on township?

RD - no additional regulation will be forced, it has no regulatory authority, it could be suggested in committee meetings, but not mandated. The committee is advisory only. You will learn best practices for zoning etc.

BM - You stated if Federal Funds were used they would be a deterrent to the pipeline - but we already have the National Heritage Corridor - therefore there are already funds there now, and pipeline is already crossing it so isn't that already a deterrent for PennEast?

RD - It should be and FERC and PennEast should be reminded of this.

BM - Although you say it doesn't affect homeowners. It is on Cooks Creek. There are lots of properties on there so I am concerned.

RD - The designation has no authority to change your existing zoning to affect them negatively. So there is no impact on their current rights.

KG - Have any businesses been affected that are on the river - Walter's Nursery - as an example - by the designation, with additional regulations.

RD - Nothing has changed with Wild & Scenic - it's just an overlay for ideals of protecting river - no authority.

KG - There is development going on along the river in the designation.

RD - Yes, local zoning laws that will affect those builders

Sarah Snider (resident, member CCWA) - Want to note that there are funds available through the committee besides federal dollars - NGOs

RD - When you are part of committee it's like being part of a buyers' group and you have more leverage when applying to an NGO or other governmental program.

Bruce Stutz (resident) - notes that he had property on the Upper Delaware River under designation and another advantage of the program is the connections gained with other river residents - giving forum to problem solve - simple issues like how to resolve problems like boaters who trespass and camp on river properties.

Resident question:

Are we losing any water rights? No.

More questions and comments from audience and presentation was wrapped at 8:45. Thank you Mr. Dodds.

IV Supervisor Assignments: Durham Comprehensive Plan - Updates

LO checked in to see how the updates on plan were going. No one was ready with assignments, due to this special meeting; assignments were reiterated and pushed to next meeting.

Brief discussion on how to deal with the formatting CP since it was now all over the place - how will we clean it up? Decision to finish text and then find a professional (volunteer or paid) who can format the content properly.

Brief discussion on Survey results - pretty much the same direction we have in comprehensive plan. Everyone should review for next meeting. The survey should go on-line for anyone to see.

V How are we proceeding with Wild& Scenic and getting MOU signed? Decided to email the supervisors the MOU, the resolution and ask it to be on the agenda to discuss then.

VI. No new business

VII. Adjournment: Motion by HM/AM; passed 6-0 @ approximately 9:30pm