

## **BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM**

**Thursday, April 1, 2004**

### **Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the Bucks County Consortium was held at Warrington Township on April 1, 2004. The following individuals were present:

Laura Baatz, Heritage Conservancy  
Chuck Barrett, Commerce Bank  
Vivian Bell, Warrington Township  
Kristen Benhayon, Lower Southampton Township  
Eileen Bradley, Wrightstown Township  
Dana Cozza, Buckingham Township  
Frank Farry, Middletown Township  
Andrew R. Gilchrist, Natural Lands Trust  
Katrina Harding, Warwick Township  
David R. Harper, Natural Lands Trust  
Tom Harwood, Newtown Township  
Rick Lee, Delaware Valley Insurance Trust  
Anna Linn, Delaware Valley Insurance Trust  
Jeffrey L. Marshall, Heritage Conservancy  
Bob Pellegrino, Newtown Township  
Richard Sabol, Upper Southampton Township  
Dale O. Smith, Premier Bank  
Linda Wieand, Tinticum Township

### **Preliminary Remarks**

Frank Farry called the meeting to order, announced the morning's agenda, and thanked Warrington Township for hosting the March meeting of the Bucks County Consortium.

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Bob Pellegrino, and seconded by Vivian Bell, to approve the *Minutes of 4 March 2004*. Motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Vivian Bell presented the Treasurer's Report for March, and stated that all annual member payments have been received. A motion was made by Eileen Bradely, seconded by Bob Pellegrino, to approve the Treasurer's Report for March. Motion carried.

### **Presentation: "Heritage Conservancy Projects"**

The Heritage Conservancy was founded in 1958 as the Bucks County Park Foundation. Today, it is regarded as a respected leader in protecting the natural and historic resources of our region and beyond. It has accomplished this by partnering with other conservation groups, serving as a consultant to community planning boards, providing expertise in land use planning, and offering authoritative evaluations of historic architecture.

Two representatives from the Heritage Conservancy presented: Laura Baatz and Jeffrey L. Marshall. Ms. Baatz, a Resource Protection Specialist, works with landowners interested in resource protection. This includes exploring various landowner conservation strategies, and bringing their strategies to fruition. Previously she had worked as a Community Planner at the Monroe County Planning Commission where she was the Agricultural Land Preservation Program Coordinator.

Mr. Marshall is a planner and historic preservationist with over twenty-five years of combined experience in land protection and historic preservation. He is actively involved in administering the conservation easement and façade easement programs with expertise in the employment of protection strategies for significant resources. He gives public education programs and acts as a preservation advocate throughout the community. Numerous articles have been published on his endeavors in the preservation field.

The presentation demonstrated that Heritage Conservancy offers innovative solutions to help balance growth and progress with important historic preservation and land protection concerns. Its professional staff has worked with municipalities, individual landowners, businesses, state and federal agencies, and other conservation organizations to fulfill a variety of planning, implementation and management needs. Provided services are in the following program areas: community planning, geographic information systems, historic preservation, land planning and design, open space planning, and watershed based planning. Resource protection projects have included the Architectural Assessment of the Richard Leedom Homestead, Cuttalossa Valley Historic District Nomination, Hendrick Island Protection, Manderfield Preserve Management, Mulligan Property Protection, Nockamixon Cliffs, Richland Historic Resources Survey, Delaware and Lehigh Heritage Corridor Market Towns, Upper Makefield Township Farmland and Open Space Preservation. Planning projects have included the Kohler Park Streambank Restoration, Musconetcong River National Wild & Scenic River Study, Neshaminy Creek Watershed River Conservation Plan, Non-Point Education for Municipal Officials, Riparian Buffer Assessment of Southeastern Pennsylvania, and Woolman Lake Restoration. And finally, Heritage Conservancy's Lasting Landscapes initiatives, uniting open space protection and historic preservation, have included Cooks Creek Watershed, Forks of the Neshaminy, Musconetcong River Valley Watershed, Quakertown Swamp, and Route 133 Heritage Corridor.

### **Presentation: "Different Ways of Preserving Open Space"**

The Natural Lands Trust, a nonprofit regional land trust, has been working with our region's communities to protect vital resources since 1953. Through acquisition, conservation easements, planning, and education, the organization works to ensure that natural and cultural resources are here for generations. Over the past several decades it has helped to conserve more than 100,000

acres of natural areas. Today it owns and manages a system of 45 preserves which includes some of the most ecologically significant land in the area.

Two representatives from the Natural Lands Trust (NLT) presented: David Harper, River Conservation Program Manager, and Andrew Gilchrist, Assistant Director of Land Protection. The presentation's primary focus was the different ways of preserving open space. There are three primary ways NLT accomplishes permanent conservation.

First, acquisition – the most straightforward way to protect land is to take permanent ownership. Today, NLT owns and manages approximately 12,000 acres of nature preserves in the region. It has acquired the land through donations from landowners and by outright purchase.

Second, easements – conservation easements offer landowners the opportunity to place permanent restrictions on the future use of their land while maintaining ownership. In most cases the landowner then donates the easement to the NLT, which gives the Trust the responsibility of monitoring the land in the future. Through easements and other similar restrictions, it currently protects more than 10,000 acres of land.

Third, helping others – in some cases it is clear that NLT is not the best party to take ownership of a property or to hold an easement. In these cases, NLT partners with other conservation groups or local communities to facilitate their taking responsibility of the land. For example, during a recent round of Pennsylvania funding for open space protection, NLT assisted several smaller community based conservation organizations in raising more than \$500,000 to permanently protect significant lands in the region.

### **Wage & Salary Survey**

Frank Farry stated that Perkasio Borough distributed wage & salary questionnaires, and that the data is being compiled. Additional information will be forthcoming.

### **Other Business**

Bob Pellegrino reported that Andy Warren from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation will be the May speaker.

### **Adjourn**

Frank Farry thanked the guest speakers. Bob Pellegrino made a motion, seconded by Eileen Bradley to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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