

Meeting Minutes

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission

Farmland Preservation Study Subcommittee

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

8:00 am in the front conference room

ARTICLE 1: Call the meeting to order

Chair Rissi called the meeting to order at 8:10 am. Members Moxley, Bruneau, and Engel were in attendance. Zoning Administrator Smith-Jacoby was also in attendance.

ARTICLE 2: Approve the Agenda

Member Moxley moved to approve the agenda. Member Bruneau supported the motion. Motion was approved.

ARTICLE 3: Approve minutes of the last meeting

Member Engel asked that several changes be made to the Jan. 10 meeting minutes:

1. Article 1: Change Chairman Rissi to Chair Rissi. Delete “for the meeting of the subcommittee.”
2. Article 5: Visitor to our meeting was Jade Smith, Cascade Charter Township manager.
3. Article 6 Paragraph 1: “On arriving, his priority was to develop the budget for 2024 which had not been started. Manager Smith also had to deal with many staff changes and thus his inability to attend earlier.”
4. Article 6, Paragraph 2: Manager Smith was provided with a brief summary of work developed to date. Chair Rissi noted that the subcommittee members had previously met with Grattan Township and would like to expand on the TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) Ordinance developed for Grattan.
Dennis Heffron donated the development rights for his property. He noted the program is very contagious with many other farmers getting into the TDR program.
The developers facilitate the purchase of Development Rights from the County.
5. Article 6, Paragraph 3: They recommend we coordinate the TDR program with McKenna as part of the Master Plan currently being developed.
6. Article 6, Paragraph 4: The Farmland Preservation subcommittee took a document created by Zoning Administrator Smith-Jacoby and updated it into a format that clearly spells out...

7. Article 6, Paragraph 5: Delete “We need to keep the Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees happy!
Ultimately, we will need a scoring system that clearly spells out to developers what they will need to provide/do to obtain an exception to current Zoning Ordinances.
8. Article 6, Paragraph 7: Manager Smith recommended a work session...

With those changes, Member Engel made a motion to support the meeting minutes. Member Bruneau supported the motion. Motion passes.

ARTICLE 4: Disclose any Conflict of Interest

There were no Conflicts of Interest.

ARTICLE 5: Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak

There were no visitors.

ARTICLE 6: Final review of Work Summary and ARC/FP Uses

Future Workshop meeting with Board of Trustees (not the whole Board will attend).

Member Bruneau displayed a new spreadsheet of Farmland Preservation Zoning District Uses that he developed. Everything was put into one table. Select items shown as crossed off are not in the Existing FP Land Uses section of the Zoning Ordinance and should not be shown in this section:

- Private airports
- Outdoor storage centers for recreational vehicles
- Public utility and private contractor storage yards
- Minor mineral resources extraction

Zoning Administrator Smith-Jacoby to go thru Chapter 23 and confirm what can be removed from the “Existing FP Land Uses” list. She will also go through the “Add” list to confirm those items. Member Bruneau to send Madison the document that he developed.

The subcommittee review the document that Chair Rissi had developed using previous notes from Member Bruneau. Member Engel then edited that document and made several changes. Member Moxley then changed the format to make the document easier to read (14 pt. font in lieu of 11 pt.).

Revisions to the Farmland Preservation Subcommittee Notes document:

1. **Preservation** changes:
 - The Township needs to identify mechanisms **to encourage** preservation of open space or farmland.
 - Remove paragraph no. 3 entirely

- Remove paragraph no. 1 entirely
- No changes to paragraph no. 2
- Move paragraph no. 4 up to the no. 1 position
- Change former paragraph no. 4 to say: “Applicants may donate **land or** money to the Township’s Open Space **Initiatives**.”

2. **Zoning Goals** changes:

- Create a trade template/**scoring** system for open space or Farmland Preservation tied to any new development.
- For the FP district, consider no longer allowing the creation of private roads.
- Explore Grattan Township’s **and Lancaster, Pennsylvania**, TDR program...

Member Moxley presented two plans showing a hypothetical 8 acre farm with an existing farmhouse located in a corner next to a public road. The other 7 acres are open land or farmland. The second plan shows 7 possible new homes on the seven 1 acre parcels. A private road would run down the center to provide access to the 7 new homes. There is a cul-de-sac at the end of the private road. There are loop driveways for all homes. Some homes also have storage out buildings. This example shows what could happen if the Development Rights for this parcel of land are not purchased by the Township. A higher density of housing would result and open space would be lost.

Chair Rissi noted that current Zoning Ordinance requires that 30% of the land be open space.

ARTICLE 7: Any other business

No other business was discussed at the meeting.

ARTICLE 8: Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Member Bruneau and seconded by Member Engel. Motion approved. Meeting adjourns at 9:30 am.