Meetings Minutes: Silver Spring Township
Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan
Open Space Meeting

Date: March 1, 2017
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Silver Spring Township Building
By: Ann Yost
Project No.: 15SSP-01

Persons Attending: Kristy Owens, Silver Spring Township Parks & Recreation Manager
Sergeant Keith Stambaugh, Silver Spring Township Police
Ben Mummert, Central PA Conservancy
Theresa Eberly, Silver Spring Township Manager
Carl Machamer, Silver Spring Township BOS
Madison Radichok, Silver Spring Township
Laura Brown, Silver Spring Township Land Preservation Board Chair
Stephanie Williams, Cumberland County
Mark Yasenchak, Silver Spring Township RAC
Robert Seader, Silver Spring Township BOS
Ann Hutchinson, Natural Lands Trust
Ann Toole, Toole Recreation Planning
Ann Yost, YSM

Purpose of Meeting: Discuss the Township’s prioritizes and strategies for the open space protection.

Of Record:
1. All present introduced themselves.
2. The purpose of the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan and Open Space Forum were discussed. There are numerous groups and committee working on and thinking about open space in the Township and this forum was suggested as an opportunity to bring the various groups and committees together and begin to discuss a common vision and strategy.
3. Meeting discussion included:
   - L. Brown described the Silver Spring Township Land Preservation Program which only works with willing landowners.
S. Williams discussed the Cumberland County Land Partnership Program which has an agricultural focus. The criteria for selection includes prime soils, agricultural zoning, and no water or sewer.

The Appalachian Trail should be considered a regional greenway. The trail is within a protected green corridor and protection of contiguous lands will enhance the greenway.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy will be doing a view shed analysis for cell towers.

Trail linkages are part of open space.

Residents would like additional opportunities to get to the Conodoguinet Creek. Access to significant natural areas such as the Conodoguinet Creek are important to nurture the next generation of conservationist. Important to create parks that promote a connection to nature.

Vulnerable lands can be prioritized by size. A goal could be devised that targets easements by size, such as “protect parcels of 50+ acres in size”

The Silver Spring Township Land Preservation Board is currently re-evaluating criteria for focus of program investment.

Currently the Silver Spring Township Land Preservation Board consider the following criteria: parcels over 10 acres, consider all cover types (woodlands, meadows, streams) not agricultural only, soils, development pressure.

A pro-active approach was suggested for targeting parcels for protection. If is important to know what is important to preserve.

Consider a team approach to outreach to landowners that includes an accountant, an estate planner, and an attorney that have ties to the community. The team should include “trusted” people in the community. First approach is to have a conversation with the target landowner. After the conversation they may not be interested but they heard the correct message and may come back years later.

L. Brown noted that people have to really care about their property. These are the people that may be interested in putting conservation easements on their land.

Silver Spring Township's open space preservation efforts are tactical, not strategic.

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission has good examples of successful strategies for land conservation.

Opportunity Knocks, a publication by the Heritage Conservancy explores open space preservation as an investment, not a cost.

The Land Preservation Board bond issue in Silver Spring Township was approved with five out of eight residents approving the measure.

The Silver Spring Township Comprehensive Plan (currently being developed) sets the vision for the Township. Ordinances and other plans (Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan) and programs (Land Preservation Program) should support the vision of the Comprehensive Plan.

How to make the Carlisle Pike appealing and compatible with the vision for the Township? Staples has five types of building styles. Need to be proactive to work with developers to achieve vision.
- What open space parcels are critical to protect to sustain Silver Spring Township’s character and quality of life? Hemp Farms was noted as a “sacred cow”. Hemp Farm should be added to the Township’s official map.

- Consider allowing trails as part of easements. It’s important to plan ahead. State funded agricultural preservation easements prohibit trails.

4. A. Yost noted that the parkland acreage analysis found that one additional community park (50-80 acres typical) is needed in the Township. The projected parkland deficit in 2040 will be between 59-75 acres. Consider the following when targeting a location for a new community park: service areas of existing parks and areas of projected growth (zoning, public sewer and water, convenience to population, connectivity to preserve open space, natural resource protection opportunities). The Hemp Farm area was suggested as the preferred location. Also discussed was the Wertzville corridor for a location north of Route 81. Although there is no sewer or water in this area, growth is coming from Hampden Township and public utilities will probably be extended in the future. The Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan should recommend a second community park north of Route 81 when public utilities are available in the area.

5. K. Owens vision for the Township is parks and open space connected by green corridors.