

**BIRMINGHAM TOWNSHIP, CHESTER COUNTY
RECREATION, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE (RPOS)**

December 19, 2016

Chairman Siemer called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. in the Township Building. The following were in attendance:

Anne Siemer	Chairman, RPOS Committee
Jim Rosenthal	Vice-Chairman, RPOS Committee
Chuck Feld	Member, RPOS Committee
Jim Kelican	Member, RPOS Committee
Michael Langer	Member, RPOS Committee
Mike Shiring	Member, Board of Supervisors
Judy Jensen	Secretary, RPOS Committee

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 21, 2016 MINUTES

The minutes of the November 21, 2016 RPOS meeting were approved, as written; all in favor.

BILLS

There were no bills to review at tonight's meeting.

BIRMINGHAM HILL UPDATE

Mrs. Siemer noted that there are a few rails that need to be replaced along the trail at Birmingham Hill. Due to the fact that rail replacement will be an ongoing issue in 2017, Mrs. Siemer suggested that since there is money for rails in the RPOS budget, the committee might wish to purchase a number of rails and store them for future use. Mr. Kelican said he will price rails with Brandywine Ace and FenceWorks. Mr. Feld said he can pick up the rails after they are purchased.

RPOS discussed the possibility of placing a second sign at Birmingham Hill. Mr. Rosenthal noted that if RPOS places a sign by the existing sign at Birmingham Hill, then perhaps the second sign should be smaller in size. Mr. Feld said that if RPOS decides to design a large sign, the same size as the existing sign, then perhaps the newer sign could be placed further up the trail, nearer to Meetinghouse Road. Mrs. Siemer suggested RPOS continue the discussion on possible signs for Birmingham Hill at the January meeting.

SANDY HOLLOW UPDATE

At the November RPOS meeting, Mr. Feld noted that due to the rapid growth of Canadian thistle at Sandy Hollow, he felt the edges of the trail along S. New Street should be mowed with a bushhog. RPOS has been obtaining cost estimates from various landscapers for mowing the thistle, which RPOS feels should be done two or three times a year to help impede the thistle growth.

At tonight's meeting, RPOS discussed the cost estimates that they have received from area landscapers. The lowest estimate is from Lakeside Cultural Care (LLC) for a cost of \$75 per hour. LLC estimates that it will take approximately 8 hours to mow along the Sandy Hollow Trail. LLC also noted that they could do the work in January or February.

Mr. Langer made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Township hire Lakeside Cultural Care (LLC) at a cost of \$75 per hour to eradicate the invasive plants, including the Canadian thistle, which has grown along the trail at Sandy Hollow. LLC estimates that the work will take approximately 8 hours to complete. Mr. Rosenthal seconded the motion. The motion was approved; all in favor.

Mr. Feld added that the Canadian thistle must be mowed each year before it goes to seed. Therefore, the thistle will probably need to be mowed again in June or July.

RPOS has noticed that the paint on the replica cannon at Sandy Hollow is peeling. In addition, there is a crack on the top of the cannon. Mr. Langer has contacted the maker of the cannon, but has not heard back from him yet. Since the work is guaranteed, RPOS is confident that the cannon maker will fix the crack on the cannon, as well as the peeling paint.

Mrs. Siemer said that the Chester County Planning Commission has posted a video on YouTube about the Battle of the Brandywine. Mrs. Jensen said she will post a link on the Township's new website to the Chester County Planning Commission YouTube video.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Langer said he would like to create awareness and sensitivity to the importance of bee-keeping in area communities, including Birmingham Township. Honeybees, as Mr. Langer noted, are essential to the environment as they are important pollinators to a number of area plants. He would like Birmingham Township to consider passing a resolution, much as Philadelphia has done, recognizing the Township as a bee-friendly community.

Mr. Kelican raised the concern about bee sting allergies. Mr. Langer said that while there are people who are allergic to bee stings, the fact is that pollinators, such as honeybees, are not typically aggressive. Bee sting allergies are a bigger concern with more aggressive insects, such as yellow jackets, which do little, if any, pollinating.

Due to the importance of honeybees as pollinators to a large variety of plants and the fact that there is a severe drop in the number of healthy honeybee colonies, the City of Philadelphia recently passed a resolution recognizing Philadelphia as a bee-friendly city. For the reasons stated above, Mr. Langer made a motion to recommend that the Board of Supervisors consider passing a resolution, similar to that of Philadelphia, recognizing Birmingham Township as a bee-friendly Township. Mr. Kelican seconded the motion. The motion was approved; all in favor.

Mr. Shiring noted that the grant for the Cacchio property has been approved. As part of the grant, the Brandywine Conservancy will hold an easement on the property. Currently, there is a draft easement, which dictates what can and cannot be done on the property. For instance, the Conservancy wants the property to remain for passive recreation. Therefore, there will be no ball fields, playgrounds, etc. developed on the property. The Conservancy has expressed interest in the Township maintaining the barn, which dates to the 1850s. Mr. Langer noted that RPOS has no experience in maintaining properties. RPOS members also noted that the Township does not have a parks department that could help with the barn upkeep. Finally, Mr. Kelican noted that

there are liability issues associated with structures that will need to be addressed down the road.

Mr. Rosenthal, whose term on RPOS ends with tonight's meeting, expressed his interest in continuing to serve on the RPOS committee.

The next RPOS meeting is scheduled for January 16, 2017.

With no public comment, the meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Jensen
RPOS Secretary