

**London Grove Township Open Space Committee**  
**Meeting Notes: April 9, 2015**

Attending: *Members* – Kim Fields, Jock Hannum, Lew Wilkinson  
*Staff* – David Sweet

1. Misc. old/new business.
  - a. Status of Open Space Fund. Balance as of March 31: \$1,175,886.
  - b. Merner property. The value of the easement to be purchased by the Township through the Open Space Fund is still being determined.
  
2. Status of landowner contacts.
  - a. Brosius. A meeting has been set up with the Brandywine Conservancy to review the proposed easement terms.
  - b. Hutchison. It was agreed that an outreach to the family could be attempted to discuss possible treatment of the London Grove portion of the property, as its characteristics are considerably different from the Penn Twp. portion.
  - c. Lamotte. The landowners have requested an easement proposal from the Brandywine Conservancy. The Board of Supervisors approved payment of these transaction costs, in the amount of \$18,110.
  
3. Riparian buffer protection.
  - a. CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) participation. The committee revisited the elements of the program and briefly reviewed maps of riparian areas in the Township. Members reached the conclusion that a good deal of potential CREP land is already under conservation easement, which makes it ineligible for CREP. It also was felt that the terms of the program might not be acceptable to certain owners. As a result, it was decided not to undertake a CREP outreach to riparian landowners at this time.
  - b. Purchase of conservation easements. This continues to be seen as a potentially effective approach to protection of riparian areas that already are forested. The Township's mapping of riparian areas will need to be studied to see what properties could be good candidates. There may be some relatively significant dollar value for a landowner whose riparian area extends beyond the flood plain, although Township regulations will also bear on this. A sample Riparian Buffer Protection Agreement has been obtained from the Pa. Land Trust Association.
  
4. Alternative approaches to small properties.
  - a. "Simple" easement. The Willistown Conservation Program uses a tool, informally referred to as a simple or simplified conservation easement, in some cases where a full IRS-qualifying easement and the expense of easement monitoring may not be warranted. The easement is prepared at no cost to the landowner, but WCP is

provided 1% of the sale price if the property transfers. Base line information on the property is still prepared for inclusion in the easement document. This still requires a second party to hold the easement.

b. Deed restriction. An example of a deed restriction executed by Natural Lands Trust has been distributed.

5. Boddorff. The status of funding from the White Clay Wild and Scenic Rivers Program to help defray transaction costs has not been finalized. It also is possible that survey costs will not to be incurred. When these are pinned down, the committee will be asked to vote on a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to pay the transaction costs.

Next meeting: Thurs., May 14, 5 p.m.