

# UPPER MT. BETHEL TOWNSHIP

387 Ye Olde Highway  
Mount Bethel, PA 18343-5220

## THE MINUTES OF A MEETING FOR THE UPPER MT. BETHEL TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2016

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by Judith Henckel, chairperson. Other members present: Michelle Arner, Janet Pearson and Kathleen Barnes. Barrett Transue was unable to attend. Ellen Lott, The Nature Conservancy, and Denny Jones were in attendance.
- II. REORGANIZATION:** Kathleen Barnes was reappointed for a three-year term by the Board of Supervisors. Janet moved to appoint the current slate of officers for 2016: Chairperson-Judy Henckel, Vice-Chairperson-Kathleen Barnes, Secretary-Michelle Arner; second by Kathleen. All aye, motion passed.
- III. MINUTES:** Kathleen moved approve the minutes of December 7, 2015; second by Janet. All aye, motion passed.
- IV. Reports:** Judy noted the PA Natural Areas Inventory (PNDI), now known as PA Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) clearly shows expanded areas of unique habitat for species of special concern in Upper Mt. Bethel Township. Livable Landscapes-Open Space Plan for Northampton County has been published. The Slate Belt Area is recognized for many important natural areas. Certain areas are targeted for action plans. Shale Gas money funds the County Environmental Services Assistance Program which focuses on restoration of developed lands.
- V. PROJECT UPDATES:**
- County Update:**  
*Albert Farm:* Steps toward preservation of this farm are basically complete. Funding will come from the TPP (Township Partnership Program) which has been promised a few years ago.  
*Two other farms* are moving forward.  
The County budget does not provide funding for open space this year. Limited funding is available and grant applications are still being accepted for this spring.
- UMBT Update:** (natural areas) Current Balance: \$2,072,629
- Schwartz:* This project for a conservation easement is complete.
- Transue:* The Board of Supervisors did not approve the monitoring endowment request of \$10,000. DCNR and County funds will be utilized. Ellen provided an update on the status of the project.
- Ribitzki:* A second appraisal has been ordered and the buildings are coming down.
- Eastern Industries:* There was some discussion about the current offer from NLT (Natural Lands Trust). Denny offered some clarity on paying off the bond and a possible new loan. There was discussion about the Supervisors interest in selling individual parcels and the pretense or consequences of such action. Members reviewed uses compatible with preservation and the alternative challenges of developing portions of the property. Members agreed to encourage the Supervisors to move forward; the next step would be to negotiate the easement language.
- There was some discussion about current proposed zoning changes and the status of the Act 537 plan (sewage facilities). Impacts of inadequate sewage facilities and short-sighted sewer plans were discussed.
- VI. ADJOURN:** 9:20 PM Janet motioned, Kathleen second.

**NEXT MEETING:** Scheduled for February 16, 2016.

Respectfully Submitted: Michelle Arner, Secretary