

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING-MINUTES
OCTOBER 16TH, 2013**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ron Hoover called the meeting to order at 7:18pm. Other members present were Bob Eberhart, Joe Tylka, and Andy Merritt. Staff present was Susan Steele, Manager, Amy Smith, OSPB Administrator and Rebekah Seymour, Recording Secretary. No audience was present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. MINUTES

Mr. Tylka suggested a grammatical correction to the minutes to change the phrase “a process in the ordinance that would ensure funding checks” to “a process in the ordinance that would ensure program funding.”

- ***MOTION: Mr. Eberhart moved to approve the minutes of September 18th, 2013 as submitted with grammatical correction made by Mr. Tylka; Mr. Merritt seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion carried.***

There was brief discussion on motion language as it pertained to fee simple purchase and amount caps. Mr. Eberhart questioned if the motion should be changed to allow this language in for a cap to which Mr. Tylka disagreed. Ms. Steele suggested that the matter be left for the BOS as it had already been discussed at previous meeting and recommendations had already been sent to be reviewed to which the board agreed.

4. LAND RATING SYSTEM REVIEW

Ms. Steele opened discussion on talking points of what lands should be eligible or ineligible for inclusion in the program since as of now there is currently undevelopable land in program. Mr. Hoover stated that approving that land for the program was based on the possibility that rules might change and that land might become developable. Ms. Steele answered that the issue had come up because concerned citizen’s had expressed dislike at paying for property in open space that was already protected by federal, state, or local laws. Ms. Smith gave example that had been brought up of land in program that had a negative rating. Ms. Steele suggested that perhaps it should be put into effect that the land would need to be surveyed before given a rating so that eligible land can be identified to be rated. Mr. Tylka stated that simple language should be drafted to be included in the ordinance to state this. A brief discussion ensued about program details and requirements for other programs such as clean and green and CREP. There were also comments made regarding the “double-dipping” concept for programs that were included in both OSP and one of those listed above as brought up by citizens. Ms. Steele suggested forwarding concerns to Ms. Yurchak to draft language that tax dollars will not be paid on land that is ineligible due to being

already protected by state, federal or local laws as found in a survey of the land, to which the board agreed.

The board opened discussion on land rating system on formulas present at beginning of land rating and the suggestion they be taken out and provide only bonus points for larger parcels of land. The board agreed and added that it should also clarify on the land rating system that it would be only eligible acres that would be rated. Mr. Tylka pointed out that perhaps the OSPB should get an opinion from Ms. Yurchak about minimum land acreage to be considered for inclusion after suggestion of getting land surveyed. Mr. Tylka felt that only 11 possible acres is too low a threshold to pay for a survey that might cost anywhere from \$1500-1800 to find only a few acres are eligible. After a brief discussion the board agreed and further review of land rating system was tabled until opinion could be procured from the Township Solicitor. Ms. Steele stated it might be best for the process to be developed, not to talk about exceptions that might arise; the board agreed.

5. ROLE OF THE OSPB WHEN OSPP PROPERTIES ARE EXERCISING THEIR RIGHT TO SUBDIVIDE

Mr. Eberhart opened discussion regarding a recent subdivision decision that had been made about land that was in the OSP and was only reviewed by the PC and BOS. Mr. Eberhart stated he felt that the OSPB should have a say in what happens to land in the program. Mr. Tylka stated that he agreed with Mr. Eberhart because the OSPB is meant to be an advisory board to the BOS with the expertise of the program workings. Mr. Tylka stated further that he would rather the OSPB be completely involved in issues, thereby having access to all the facts, or, not at all if the OSPB is only privy to a portion of a topic's information. Staff suggested that perhaps instead of changing the ordinance to include the OSPB in the review process, make it so that the OSPB must be made aware of processes and be invited to sit in on the discussions to give opinions or to be consulted informally about decisions so that OSPB could give a written recommendation on decision.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

7. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

There were no citizen's comments.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18pm.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Merritt moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:18pm; Mr. Tylka seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion carried.***