

Third Quarter Land Trust Report **To Board of Supervisors**

Governance

A Renewal Agreement, for a five year period, was executed between the Land Trust and West Pikeland Township

Communications

The newly improved Land Trust web site is now complete. It was completely overhauled, redesigned and includes pertinent up to date information. Photographs, contributed by residents, show many views of the township. To see the final product, which we are very excited about, go to:
www.wplandtrust.org.

Open Space

A Board of Supervisors Resolution approved document mapping for all parcels within the township. This provides a tool of ranked properties for conservation using smart conservation technology. This tool along with the Criteria Assessment document will be used to screen properties for consideration by the open space advisory committee.

Two documents have been developed for interested landowners to provide them with general information about placing easements on their properties and outline the normal steps in the process. The feedback from landowners who have received and reviewed the documents has been very positive.

Currently there is a healthy backlog of interested landowners which the committee members are reviewing and assessing.

The open space advisory committee and the WPLT Board have reviewed and approved the procedure where appraisals and yield surveys (if needed) will be funded via the open space funds.

The open space advisory committee and the WPLT Board have reviewed and approved the policy that each landowner will be permitted to select the primary non-profit partner as holder for their conservation easement. Those non-profit partners could be: West Pikeland Land Trust, French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, North American Land Trust, Brandywine Conservancy, Natural Lands Trust, and others.

Stewardship and Monitoring

Presently, WPLT has only a few donated easements, which are regularly monitored in the spring, before vegetation is mature. In anticipation of a future larger role in holding and monitoring conservation easements, the committee chairman attended the Land Trust Alliance Rally, in Pittsburgh, and participated in workshops on Easement Drafting and Stewardship. These courses are part of

the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices Curriculum designed to demonstrate that WPLT is operating in an ethical, legal and technically sound manner, and ensure the long-term protection of land in the public interest.

Development & Grants

We are waiting to hear status on a second \$5,000 DCNR Grant application as offered by Andy Dinniman's office. This Grant is designated for trail work. Several of the high priority Open Space Bond funded projects will be qualified for Grant application to the County and/or State. There also may be opportunities for Grant applications to private foundations for special projects.

We will be including an invitation to a 2009 special event with our End of Year Fund Raising Letter. The event will include a keynote speaker—these events have been well attended in the past.

Planning

Lisa LaCroix has joined the Land Trust Board as a full member. She is also heading the trails committee, which reports jointly to the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Land Trust. We are working on new board member development to replace board members whose terms are expiring. Any one with interest in board membership should contact the Land Trust.

The preliminary work was completed to have the township join the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, which will allow West Pikeland TWP to become a participating municipality in the Regional Park, Open Space and Recreation Plan funded with a 90% matching grant from the Chester County Vision Partnership Program

Suzanne F. Kaplan
October 7, 2008