

East Vincent Township Open Space Committee Minutes – February 10, 2026

Location: Township Building

Time: Meeting called to order at 7:16 PM

Committee Members Present

- *Jon Bauer*
- Chris McNeil
- Nicole Keegan
- Michelle Adams

Others Present

- John Binellii (Prevent East Vincent Data Center Facebook Group)

Mr. Binelli requested permission to record the meeting. Permission was granted.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:16 PM. The Committee recited the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Approval of January Meeting Minutes

The Committee reviewed the **January 20 meeting minutes**.

Motion: *Jon Bauer* made a motion to approve the January 20 meeting minutes.

Second: Chris McNeil

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Administrative Record

The Committee reviewed and memorialized the history of meetings and executive sessions.

2024

No meetings were held in:

- January
- June
- July

Executive Sessions were held in:

- May
- November
- December

2025

No meetings were held in:

- February
- July
- August
- September
- November
- December

Executive Sessions were held in:

- January
- March
- April
- May

A correction to the meeting list will be made to address a duplicate date.

Motion: Motion made to approve and memorialize the meeting history.

Second: Motion seconded.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Review and Approval of Outstanding Minutes

The Committee reviewed previously unapproved meeting minutes from:

- **September 2024** – Planning for the Landowners Meeting, including budget discussion and Community Day preparation. The meeting concluded with an Executive Session.
- **October 10, 2024** – Landowners Meeting.
- **October 2025** – Community Day planning and discussion regarding the Board of Supervisors public hearing on the Snart Hemmer agricultural easement. Discussion also included conservation easement monitoring responsibilities and the role of Natural Lands.

Motion: Michelle Adams made a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: *Jon Bauer*

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Township Newsletter Submission

The Committee reviewed a draft article for the upcoming **Township Newsletter** highlighting local agricultural producers within East Vincent Township.

The article will feature three local farms:

- **Spring Ridge Farm (Snart Hemmer Farm)** – owned by Charles Walker, located at 131 Keen Road.
- **Eden Valley Farm** – operated by John and Penny Hunt, located along the Schuylkill River and known for Wagyu cross and Angus beef production.
- **Stoney Run Farms** – currently pasturing cattle on preserved farmland along Pughtown Road.

Discussion included the recent opening of the **Stoney Run Farms retail butcher shop** located at **301 North Lewis Road in Royersford**, which offers locally sourced meat and other regional products.

Committee members noted that promoting local farms helps support **working farmland preservation** and encourages residents to purchase locally produced food.

A minor typographical correction to the article was identified and will be addressed prior to publication.

Agricultural Security Area Discussion

The Committee discussed the potential **reinvigoration of the Agricultural Security Area (ASA) program** in East Vincent Township.

Key points included:

- Interest expressed by **Charles Walker** in joining the Agricultural Security Area.
- Historically, the Township has maintained a robust ASA program, though it has not been actively updated in recent years.
- Committee member **Bill Fields** has taken the lead in researching the program and coordinating with the County.

Current efforts include:

- Reviewing the **WeConserve Agricultural Security Handbook**

- Coordinating with the **Chester County Agricultural Preservation program**
- Comparing existing township maps with county records to confirm properties currently included in the ASA
- Reviewing new application procedures and digitized submission processes

Mr. Fields is preparing a **position paper** outlining the program's benefits and potential drawbacks. The Committee discussed the benefits of Agricultural Security Areas, including:

- Eligibility for **state and county agricultural preservation funding**
- **Protection from nuisance complaints** related to normal farming operations
- Support for the long-term viability of local agriculture

The Committee also discussed outreach to landowners with **10 acres or more** who may wish to join the program. The Committee may assist landowners with completing required application forms before submission to the Board of Supervisors.

Further discussion and potential recommendations will occur at a future meeting after the position paper is completed.

General Discussion

Planning Commission Support

Committee members discussed coordination with **Natural Lands**, noting that Natural Lands representatives may attend Planning Commission meetings when natural resource expertise is needed.

Draft Article on Township Land Preservation

A draft article was presented outlining the history and accomplishments of land preservation efforts within East Vincent Township.

Key discussion points included:

- The voluntary nature of farmland preservation and conservation easements
- Historic land preservation efforts dating back to the early 2000s
- Coordination among municipalities in the **Owen J. Roberts School District region** through the **Northern Federation of Chester County Communities**
- Chester County agricultural preservation funding that resulted in approximately **\$4 million allocated to East Vincent Township**
- Recent land preservation successes since 2024 totaling approximately **310 acres preserved**

The article also highlights the Township's ongoing conservation initiatives including:

- The **Open Space Committee's evaluation of township properties**
- Coordination with **Natural Lands**
- Landowner outreach and preservation education efforts
- The development of **Independence Park**, a 96-acre park originally established in 2009 and currently undergoing expansion with new recreation facilities and trails.

Committee members suggested the article could be published on the Township website, summarized in a future newsletter, or formatted as a public educational resource.

Members will review the draft and provide comments via email.

Public Comment

The meeting was opened for public comment. **John Binelli** was present but had no comments or questions.

Adjournment

The public portion of the meeting concluded, and the Committee entered **Executive Session**. **Time:**
7:52 PM