

MINUTES
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
1031 VALLEY FORGE ROAD, WORCESTER, PA 19490
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2023 - 7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:04 PM

2. ATTENDANCE

Michelle Greenawalt, Bob Andorn, Jen Taylor, were present.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Jen Taylor motioned to approve the minutes. Bob Andorn seconded. The motion was carried by a vote of 3-0.

4. WORCESTER TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE UTILIZATION AND ACQUISITION ANALYSIS

The Planning Commission briefly discussed two members' recent tour of the property at 3335 Fisher Road. It was agreed an address list should be assembled for the properties nearby 3335 Fisher Road, and the Griffith Property so those residents could be invited to a meeting to share their thoughts on future use.

The PC members requested that survey data and additional information from the Comp Plan be collected – as it pertains to these properties and their potential uses.

Pete Maxwell, President of FC MontCo Youth Soccer Club presented. Mr. Maxwell shared the organization serves roughly 650 children in the Methacton school district, 350 of whom are intermural players, and 300 of whom are travel players. Currently, FCM utilizes four separate locations throughout the school district, including Heebner Park and Mt. Kirk.

Mr. Maxwell shared information about the growing numbers of youth participants following the end of COVID, and the growing number of young families in the area. Mr. Maxwell emphasized the need for additional playing fields to address the growing numbers of youth soccer events.

Pete discussed the club's use of current facilities. He reported the lack of lights and limited parking as current challenges. The club has recently erected temporary lights at Heebner Park following a local neighborhood petition to gather support. He shared their request was granted by the Board of Supervisors with no objections voiced.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Andorn asked Pete how many total fields would be necessary to service his club's target population of 1,000 youth athletes. Pete replied that about 12-15 fields would be necessary. The Planning Commission discussed several potential possibilities related to existing open space throughout the Township, as well as potential limitations of some of those spaces. Opportunities for shared parking were discussed as an

area requiring research as the Township considers use of the spaces. Lighting of fields was also discussed by the commission and Mr. Maxwell.

5. PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

- Discussion of agenda for Planning Commission Meeting

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Maxwell thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak with them.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM by unanimous vote.

active applications (review period expiration)

- LD 2017-02 Palmer Village, LLC (*review period waived*)
- LD 2022-01 City View (*review period waived*)

MINUTES
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
1031 VALLEY FORGE ROAD, WORCESTER, PA 19490
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2023 - 7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:31PM

2. ATTENDANCE

Jennifer Taylor was absent from the meeting. All the other members were present.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- Motion to approve the November 9, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
(An eligible quorum was not present to pass the minutes.)

4. CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION: 2023-01

- The Variety Club seeks Conditional Use approval to erect playing field lights at 2950 Potshop Road.

Marc Jonas, Esq. presented on behalf of the applicant. He and Ms. Mary Beth Schmidt provided a brief history of the Variety Club, property, and summarized the proposal. The Variety Club's lighting expert, Bob Zoeller, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Planning Commission regarding the 70-foot lights that would be erected at the Variety Club. Michael Bowker, P.E., also presented a topographical map to the Commission, and discussed the multiple phases of the project. It was confirmed the Conditional Use Application for athletic field lights was part of the first phase.

Chair Sheer asked if the applicant had any additions to the materials submitted since the December 15th review. Mr. Jonas replied they did not.

The Planning Commission discussed the presentation with the applicant. Chair Sheer asked about the time of day/s of the athletic field lights would be illuminated. Ms. Mary Beth Schmidt replied they would be extinguished by 9pm Monday through Friday, 10pm on Saturday, and would not be illuminated on Sundays.

The Commission members asked several questions regarding the lights' impact on neighboring properties. The Commission asked about rented use of the fields. Ms. Schmidt replied that the uses benefited many other youth organizations and non-for-profit endeavors that align with the Variety Club's mission to serve youth with disabilities. The applicant confirmed there would be no sound system as part of this project.

Vice-Chair Greenawalt thanked the applicant and their team for the presentation. She also thanked the applicant for their work with disabled youth.

Lee Knoch motioned to recommend approval of the conditional use application. Michelle Greenawalt seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-1, with Mr. Andorn voting against the recommendation.

5. WORCESTER TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE UTILIZATION AND ACQUISITION ANALYSIS

Scout Troop 133 was unable to attend the meeting. The Planning Commission members were updated by the Township Manager regarding the progress of the Griffith property acquisition.

Mr. Jim Thompson and Dianne Cram presented on behalf of the Worcester Historical Society. His presentation focused upon the Old Dutchie Church recently sold to the Township by the Historical Society. Ideas proposed included:

- Possible connection to Heebner Park via Trail parallel to Heebner Road. The Commission discussed the need to engage with property owners in that area and discuss their interests or concerns.
- The “son of the Methacton Oak” tree growing at the Old Dutchie Church.
- Potential improvements to the Old Dutchie Church Building in partnership with the Township.

Chair Sheer asked Mr. Thompson about potential uses for the building. The use as a nature center was discussed, with access being the main point of concern given the limited parking and driveway access off Rt. 363.

The Commission thanked Mr. Thompson for his presentation.

The Commission discussed potential uses for several properties, including Griffith, 3335 Fisher Road, and the Old Dutchie Church. The Commission discussed the importance of historic preservation as an element of open space acquisition prioritization.

6. PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

The Township Manager mentioned he would reschedule the Boy Scouts. The Commission requested the neighbors bordering 3335 Fisher Road, and Griffith be contacted concerning an opportunity to speak at the upcoming meeting.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

active applications (review period expiration)

- LD 2017-02 Palmer Village, LLC (*review period waived*)
- LD 2022-01 City View (*review period waived*)

MINUTES
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
1031 VALLEY FORGE ROAD, WORCESTER, PA 19490
THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024 - 7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02PM

2. ATTENDANCE

All the members were present.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- a. Ms. Greenawalt and Mr. Andorn offered amendments. Mr. Koch made a motion to approve the May 23, 2024, meeting minutes with the amendments. Ms. Greenawalt seconded. It passed unanimously.

4. WORCESTER TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE UTILIZATION AND ACQUISITION ANALYSIS

Mr. Sherr introduced the analysis of the open space utilization and acquisition. He specifically called attention to the three points they were tasked with analyzing.

- i. Evaluation open space needs
- ii. Potential uses for open space currently owned by the township
- iii. Recommendations for open space purchased in the future

The proposal from the former Township Manager suggested utilizing a SWOT analysis to assist in the selection process.

Mr. Andorn stated that the document was given to the commission in August. He pointed out that there was a discrepancy with there being multiple properties that were duplicated in the inventory list. He also suggested that the Fisher Rd. property size is not consistent across versions of the analysis document. Mr. Andorn asked for a map outlining where the properties are so the township can spread out the utilization of parks. He also noted that there are a large portion of properties that are too small for any open space type use such as pumping plants and cell towers. Mr. Andorn asked if the commission would perform site visits and hold meetings on location. He noted that they had an on-site meeting in the past and thinks that the commission would be better able to provide recommendations by visiting the properties.

Mr. Sherr echoed Mr. Andorn's comment that walking the properties is important. He added that knowing what is around a property could avoid problems or inform future acquisitions. He also reminded the commission about the 300 acres by 2030 plan.

Ms. Greenawalt also agreed with site visits. She also proposed a survey for residents to see what they would want. Ms. Greenawalt reminded the public that the commission had listened to multiple interest groups including youth sports, historical groups, and environmental groups.

Mr. Andorn agreed that meeting neighbors would be useful. He also mentioned that the density of a neighborhood would affect the use of a park nearby and visiting the site would improve the ability to assess that. He also said that there are only about 9 properties that would be on the visit list. This would pull out many of the properties that are smaller and would not have much ability for official use as open space. Mr. Andorn also asked for the results of a survey from the Comprehensive Plan Task Force to help understand what residents want.

Mr. Jones offered to look for the data Mr. Andorn asked about.

Mr. Sherr asked about a timeline on the comprehensive plan adoption. He also wanted the Township Solicitor to be at the next meeting to answer questions.

Ms. Taylor asked about the deadline the commission was given for this project and she was wondering how flexible the timeline was. She indicated that the end of the year was likely unattainable.

Mr. Finnigan thanked the commission for letting him be in attendance. He congratulated the commission on an already successful open space program. He also noted that the Township has infrastructure that is unique like the horse ring. Mr. Finnigan continued by asking that the commission call or come to the office whenever they would like information. This would allow staff to better disseminate information to the commission. He then asked the commission for a list of properties and dates for site visits so the Township can advertise in accordance with the Sunshine Act. Mr. Finnigan indicated that he would direct the Township Engineer to prepare the requested map showing the open space parcels and have it ready for a future meeting.

Mr. Sherr asked about the Curative Amendment that was adopted so that the commission could have more information inf helping to plan for the future.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Mr. Finnigan introduced the topic of the Worcester Band Shell by presenting two potential locations at Heebner Park.

Mr. Sherr asked for clarification on the use and structure of a “Band Shell”.

Mr. Finnigan responded that it would be a permanent structure and the board would have to be asked about how it would be used. He continued with why Heebner Park was the logical choice, pointing out the electrical access and the bathrooms that are already in the park.

Ms. Taylor stated that she thought the Valley Forge Road location might have too much noise to be a good location for a band shell.

Mr. Andorn noted two issues he had: 1. What band shell is the board of supervisors choosing? This is for a size consideration. 2. He also does not want to be restricted to only Heebner Park as it might not be the best location.

Mr. Finnigan added that the project was budgeted for around \$200,000 and prior quotes for the structure were around \$70,000.

Mr. Andorn stated that Heebner Park might be the best but, there is likely a better location. Other locations might not necessarily be as inexpensive, as some properties do not have utilities, parking lots, or restrooms.

Mr. Finnigan noted that this is not going to be a budgetary issue as the capital expenses are easily moved from year to year.

- b. Mr. Sherr began a discussion concerning potential zoning ordinance amendments related to fences, accessory structures, cell towers, and signs He expressed a desire to have the Township Solicitor present for a future meeting to discuss this item in greater detail.

Mr. Andorn noted that he had a lot to say concerning this matter but was opposed to discussing or proposing anything as he felt he could not discuss a document provided by the Township Solicitor as it was designated as privileged documentation. Mr. Andorn expressed a desire to receive something for a future meeting that would allow him to discuss the contents in a public meeting setting.

Mr. Finnigan stated that he would ask for a draft ordinance and so the process could move forward. He also clarified the entire process of adopting an ordinance.

Ms. Greenawalt requested that there be a “red-lined” version of the ordinance for the next meeting so the commission could understand what was changed in context of the whole section of the zoning ordinance. She also questioned the reasoning behind a 3,000 sq. ft. accessory structure.

Mr. Andorn is not going to make comments until the draft ordinance is in front of the board.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Marilyn Rese asked for an update on City View and Mr. Sherr indicated that the Township was waiting on a resubmission from the applicant.

Ed More is opposed to the band shell at either of the locations at Heebner Park. He also would like to know the purpose of the band shell and echoed many of the other questions that the commission had.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.

active applications (review period expiration)

- LD 2017-02 Palmer Village, LLC (*review period waived*)
- LD 2022-01 City View (*review period waived*)

QUESTION 1... Why did you move to, or locate your business in, Worcester Township?

school district	57	9.9%
open space	65	11.2%
housing options	65	11.2%
location	71	12.3%
quiet/rural	57	9.9%
career	42	7.3%
other	136	23.5%
no response	85	14.7%
total respondents	578	

other: multiple answers (88)

QUESTION 2a... What do you like most about living/working in Worcester Township?

open space	203	35.1%
location	42	7.3%
overall quality of life	58	10.0%
parks & trails	14	2.4%
other	187	32.4%
no response	74	12.8%
Total respondents	578	

other: multiple responses (67), school district (5), taxes (7)

QUESTION 2b... What do you like least about living/working in Worcester Township?

new development	96	16.6%
taxes	43	7.4%
traffic	79	13.7%
police services	17	2.9%
lack of retail/commercial	29	5.0%
roads	16	2.8%
other	158	27.3%
no response	140	24.2%
total respondents	578	

other: multiple answers (54), utilities (16), lack of walkability (8), speeding (8)

QUESTION 3... Which ONE recreational facility does Worcester Township need more of? (select one only)

none, all acceptable	170	29.4%
natural open spaces	142	24.6%
trails	138	23.9%
playgrounds & tot-lots	24	4.2%
fields & courts	23	4.0%
other	40	6.9%
no response	41	7.1%
total respondents	578	

other: community pool (11), dog park (10), community recreation center (7)

QUESTION 4... Which ONE commercial service would you like to see in Worcester Township? (select one only)

none, all acceptable	219	37.9%
restaurant	138	23.9%
convenience store	104	18.0%
retail	17	2.9%
pharmacy	15	2.6%
professional office	11	1.9%
personal service shop	7	1.2%
other	24	4.2%
no response	43	7.4%
total respondents	578	

other: grocery store (9), small shops (3)

QUESTION 5... Which ONE roadway in Worcester Township is in the most need of improvement? (select one only)

Valley Forge Road	181	31.3%
none, all acceptable	135	23.4%
Skipack Pike	83	14.4%
Germantown Pike	36	6.2%
Morris Road	21	3.6%
other	59	10.2%

no response 63 10.9%

total respondents 578

other: Bethel Road (12), Whitehall Road (7), Berks Road (6), Mill Road (4)

QUESTION 6... How do you get news about the Township? (select all that apply)

newsletter 507 54.3%

website 144 15.4%

Peek at the Week 112 12.0%

social media 71 7.6%

meeting videos 26 2.8%

other 59 6.3%

no response 14 1.5%

total responses 933

other: family/friends (18), Friends of Worcester (13), newspaper (7), word of mouth (7)

QUESTION 7... Please rate the present quality of the following in Worcester Township: (rating 1 to 4, 4 being best)

Fire Service	3.67
Overall Quality of life	3.54
Natural Resources	3.37
Athletic Field & Courts	3.31
Ambulance Service	3.29
Preserved Open Spaces	3.25
Playground & Tot Lots	3.22
Internet Service	3.14
Trails	3.12
Water Systems	2.96
Housing Choices	2.94
Cellular Service	2.86
Noise Control	2.86
Housing Affordability	2.79
Stormwater Management	2.76
Sewer/Spetic Systems	2.76
Roadway Conditions	2.71
Police Service	2.61

Retail/Commercial Services	2.59
Taxes	2.45
Traffic Volume	2.23

total respondents	578
no response	25

QUESTION 8... Looking to the FUTURE, Worcester Township needs to focus more effort on improving... (select all that apply)

traffic volume	258	11.6%
preserved open spaces	234	10.5%
roadway conditions	198	8.9%
taxes	193	8.7%
police service	160	7.2%
trails	145	6.5%
cellular service	135	6.1%
retail/commercial services	134	6.0%
noise control	123	5.5%
natural resources	88	4.0%
sewer/septic systems	87	3.9%
stormwater management	82	3.7%
internet service	67	3.0%
housing affordability	56	2.5%
ambulance service	49	2.2%
water systems	45	2.0%
housing choices	43	1.9%
playgrounds & tot lots	38	1.7%
overall quality of life	35	1.6%
athletic fields & courts	35	1.6%
fire service	17	0.8%
total responses	2222	
no response (all)	46	

QUESTION 9... From the list in question 8, what are the FIVE most important issues in the Township today?

preserved open spaces	238	12.5%
traffic volume	224	11.8%
taxes	189	9.9%

roadway conditions	188	9.9%
police service	142	7.5%
trails	117	6.1%
retail/commercial services	107	5.6%
cellular service	93	4.9%
natural resources	85	4.5%
noise control	84	4.4%
sewer/septic systems	68	3.6%
housing affordability	53	2.8%
stormwater management	50	2.6%
overall quality of life	49	2.6%
ambulance service	42	2.2%
internet service	42	2.2%
housing choices	35	1.8%
fire service	27	1.4%
athletic fields & courts	25	1.3%
water systems	24	1.3%
playgrounds & tot lots	24	1.3%
total responses	1906	
no response (all)	89	

QUESTION 10-A... How many years have you lived in, or operated a business in, Worcester Township?

3 years or less	60	10.4%
4 to 10 years	124	21.5%
11 to 20 years	126	21.8%
21 to 30 years	115	19.9%
31 to 40 years	63	10.9%
41 to 50 years	35	6.1%
more than 50 years	28	4.8%
no response	27	4.7%
total respondents	578	
average	20.8 years	

QUESTION 10-B... If you live in Worcester Township, do you rent or own your home?

own	503	87.0%
rent	26	4.5%

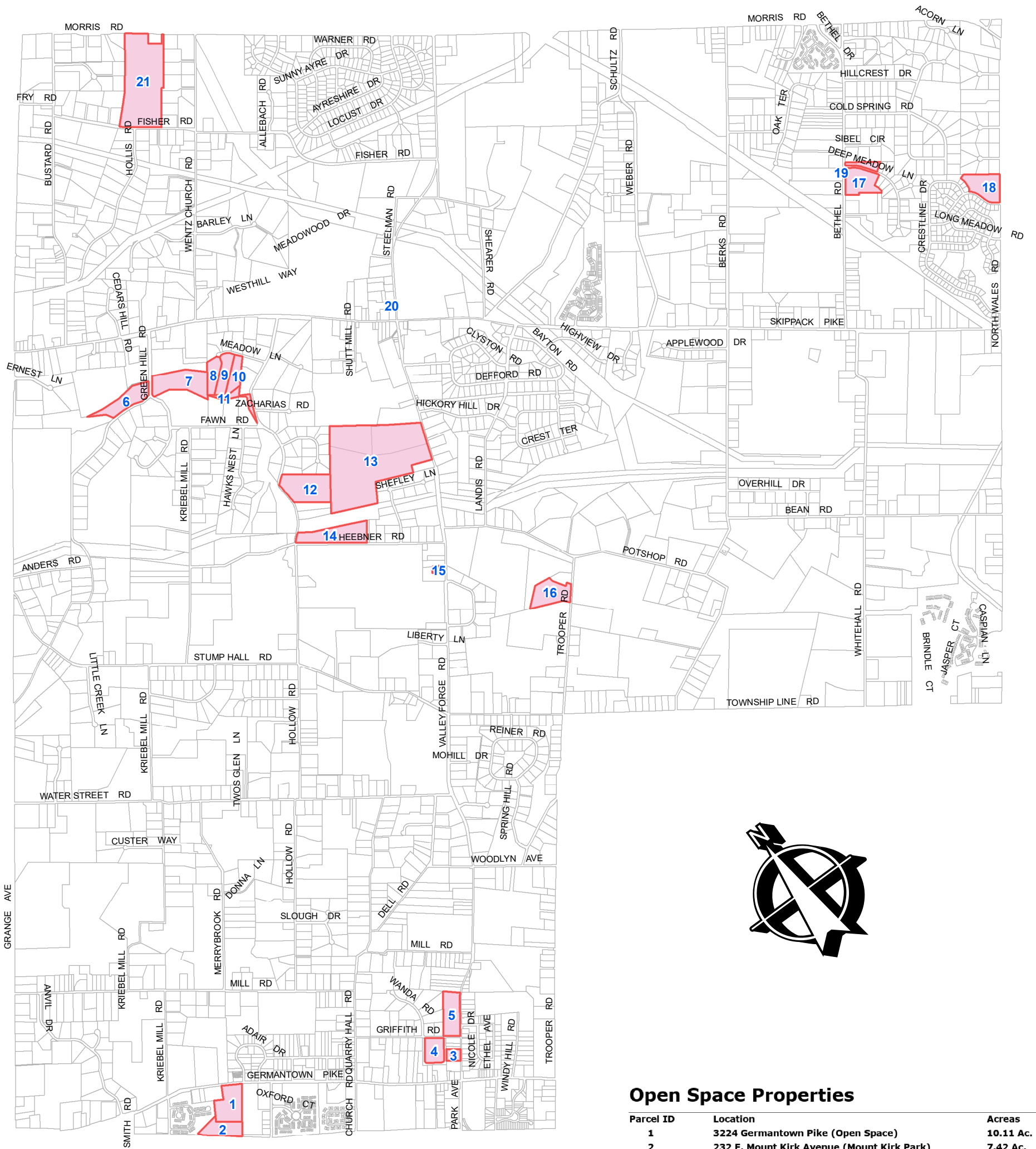
no response	49	8.5%
total respondents	578	

QUESTION 10-C... How many people live in your household?

1	93	16.1%
2	230	39.8%
3	91	15.7%
4	84	14.5%
5	42	7.3%
6	8	1.4%
7+	6	1.0%
no response	24	4.2%
total respondents	578	
average	2.64	

QUESTION 10-D...What is your age?

30 and under	7	1.2%
31 to 40 years	38	6.6%
41 to 50 years	68	11.8%
51 to 60 years	115	19.9%
61 to 70 years	120	20.8%
71 or more years	110	19.0%
no response	120	20.8%
total respondents	578	
average	60.6 years	



Open Space Properties

Parcel ID	Location	Acres
1	3224 Germantown Pike (Open Space)	10.11 Ac.
2	232 E. Mount Kirk Avenue (Mount Kirk Park)	7.42 Ac.
3	1031 Valley Forge Road (Community Hall)	1.87 Ac.
4	1031 Valley Forge Road (Public Riding Ring)	5.10 Ac.
5	Griffith Road (Open Space)	8.61 Ac.
6	Hollow Road, Green Hill Road (Zacharias Trail)	21.92 Ac.
7	Hollow Road, Green Hill Road (Zacharias Trail)	21.93 Ac.
8	Meadow Lane (Building Lot)	4.70 Ac.
9	Meadow Lane (Building Lot)	5.52 Ac.
10	Meadow Lane (Building Lot)	4.49 Ac.
11	Hollow Road, Green Hill Road (Zacharias Trail)	2.79 Ac.
12	1622 Hollow Road (Rental, Walking Trail)	14.84 Ac.
13	1721 Valley Forge Road (Heebner Park)	73.67 Ac.
14	1721 Valley Forge Road (Heebner Park)	12.37 Ac.
15	1581 Valley Forge Road (Dutchie Church)	0.97 Ac.
16	1170 Trooper Road (Compost, Walking Trail)	9.33 Ac.
17	Deep Meadow Lane (Open Space)	8.90 Ac.
18	2532 Long Meadow (Sunny Brook Park)	9.10 Ac.
19	Deep Meadow Lane (Open Space)	2.14 Ac.
20	2011 Valley Forge Road (Farmer's Union Hall)	0.45 Ac.
21	3335 Fisher Road (Open Space)	40.59 Ac.

NOTE:
TOWNSHIP OWNED WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANTS,
PUMP STATIONS AND MEDIAN STRIPS/RIGHT-OF-WAYS AREAS
NOT SHOWN ON THIS PLAN.



WORCESTER TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE MAP

Worcester Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania



1 inch = 2,400 feet