

Upper Merion Farmers Market Advisory Board

November 15, 2022- 7:00PM

Meeting Minutes

The Upper Merion Farmers Market Advisory Board meeting took place on November 15, 2022. The meeting was called to order 7:10 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present in person were Lauren Dare, Chair;; Tina Garzillo, BOS Liaison; Brian Sell; Eric Huhn; Susan Saraceni; Koren Draper; Gerri Vitamo

Zoom: Beth Davis, vice chair

Minutes:

Approval of September 20, 2022 minutes. First – Eric Huhn; Second – Sue Saraceni

Approval of October 18, 2022 minutes. First – Eric Huhn; Second – Sue Saraceni

We have Facebook accounts for Upper Merion Park & Rec and Upper Merion Farmers Market. A separate URL has been created for the farmers market. Tiffany is looking at redesign.

Chili cookoff had a good turnout. Some contestants were no shows.

November 19, 2022 is the last market day of the regular season.

There was much discussion about the winter market. It was decided to continue the winter market at the township building for the 2022/2023 winter market. The winter market vendors are Spring Creek and June Bug.

There was an extensive conversation regarding the future of the Upper Merion Farmers Market as well as moving the market to Norview Farm. There will not be a pole barn at Norview Farm for the 2022/2023 winter market and construction of a pole barn would not interfere with the winter market.

Tina noted that a meeting regarding relocation of the farmers market to Norview Farm was held on 11/2/22 with following individuals present: Tony Hamaday, Jeff Hickman, Dave Dolga, Tina Garzillo, Gerri Vitamo, Paige Wildasin, Brian Sell, Dan Russell, and Dennis Rudzinski. The meeting was to discuss moving the farmers market to Norview Farm. There will be an engineering study to determine placement and construction of a pole barn at Norview Farm. Eleven farmers market vendors were surveyed and all eleven want the market to move to Norview Farm. The greenhouse has already been removed.

The farmers market board would like to better understand the construction plans as construction is the biggest issue. When will construction commence and end? Who owns this project? What role does the township want the UM Farmers Market board to play in the process? What is the footprint? What is the project timeline? Will there be a comparable electric set up at the pole

barn? Are restrooms available at Norview Farm for public use? Will the truck fit in? What will be the traffic flow for customers and vendors? Will there be changes to the available parking? Since there is a lack of enough volunteers to set up the weekly market at the township building, can a tent be placed at Norview Farm for the 2023 spring, summer, fall market that could remain up for the entire summer?

Some positives for moving the market to Norview Farm are: (1) retention of current vendors; (2) permanent sign at Norview for the market; (3) market marquis at Norview; wayfinding signs for the farm and market; (4) Public Works staff available for electrical and other issues.

Gerri and Beth would like to see time put into community outreach. Gerri mentioned having a new marketing plan for the farmers market including, but not limited to: (1) postcards in township welcome packs, (2) EDDM – every door direct mail, (3) paid social media ads, (4) digital ads, (5) digital survey, (6) obtain vendor input, (7) and market needs marketing dollars.

There was discussion of bringing back book signings, book readings, animals, Sur La Table, and Williams Sonoma chefs to the farmers market.

For the board liaison comments, Tina noted: (1) holiday lights – registration opens 11/7; (2) holiday village – 12/3; (3) Hometown Heroes new announcement – deadline for application 3/30/23;(4) free gun turn in – 11/16 & 11/17

Meeting adjourned at 9:18pm. Motioned by Sue and Brian.