



ABOLITION HALL STEERING COMMITTEE

Monday, January 12, 2026 at 7:00 PM

AGENDA

*Meeting will be in-person with a virtual option at the Whitemarsh Township Building
616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA19444*

**To join Zoom please click: [Steering Committee 01.12.2026](#) and use Meeting ID# 839 8833 3050
Or by phone 1 646 931 3860**

Committee Members:

Laura Boyle-Nester __ Dana Dorsey __ Darren Sudman __ Edmond Shinn __ Deborah Lukens __

BOS Liaison: Jacy Toll __ Staff: Craig McAnally ____

1. Call to Order
2. Re-Organize for 2026:
 - Selection of Chairperson for 2026
 - Selection of Vice Chairperson for 2026
3. Approval of Minutes: December 8, 2025
4. Abolition Hall Status Update: Maintenance Plan and 14 Marple Lane
5. Report on programming and pilot event planning
6. Grant research and planning
7. Review by Township Arborist on Tree program and next steps in the program.
8. Public Comment
9. Next Committee Meeting: TBD
10. Adjournment

MBTA Update – Conditions Assessment

Claire Donato of Mark B. Thompson Associates (MBTA) provided a start-up plan and activity plan (attached for review) and an update on the conditions assessment. Since September, MBTA has coordinated with Gilmore & Associates and multiple engineering disciplines. A structural engineer was engaged in October, and J&M Engineering was approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 13, 2025, to provide MEP/FP services.

Numerous site visits were conducted between September and December to document existing conditions. MBTA is compiling findings into a structured framework organized by priority, type of work, building or site system, and implementation strategy. Immediate priorities focus on life safety, access, and preventing further deterioration. A draft assessment report is expected following the holiday period.

Needs and Goals for Site Activities

The Committee discussed near-term needs and goals to enable limited programming and public access. Topics included insurance requirements, parking coordination with neighboring properties, restroom needs, and maintaining low-cost or volunteer-supported activities. The importance of aligning activities with building code limitations and accessibility constraints was emphasized.

Brainstorm Session – Potential 2026 Activities

Committee members and the public brainstormed potential activities for 2026, including guided tours, educational programming, partnerships with historical organizations, and events tied to Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Ideas included highlighting Underground Railroad history, author talks, interpretive use of tree stumps for education, and small-scale outdoor gatherings.

The Committee discussed funding constraints and opportunities, including Open Space Fund limitations, future fundraising, and the proceeds from the anticipated sale of 14 Marple Lane.

A motion was made by Edmond Shinn and seconded by Laura Boyle-Nester recommending that the Board of Supervisors establish a separate account to segregate proceeds from the sale of 14 Marple Lane and any donations, for the improvements to the Buildings and Grounds associated with 1 Germantown Pike and 4006 Butler Pike to be used strictly for this property for improvements, programming and/or similar uses.

The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Public comments addressed tree work details, wood chip management, building winterization, gutter maintenance, historic landscape considerations, deer management, and interpretive opportunities related to the site's history.

Next Committee Meeting

The next Steering Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, January 12, 2026 at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Craig McAnally
Township Manager

DRAFT

December 8, 2025

Whitemarsh Township | Corson Tract Planning Start Up Plan

Phase	Start-up activities
Target Schedule	To be initiated Winter 2025-2026
Goals Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports immediate activity on site - Builds relationships and partnerships to introduce a wider community to on-site programming - Ensures buildings are secure and maintained - Supports capital campaign
Activities Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pop-Up at the Corson Tract – seasonal events until permanent occupancy is feasible - Hard hat and history tours and other site-specific programming
Space Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seasonal outdoor activities and temporary facilities - Maulsby Barn – Main Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative uses and small programs up to 49 people total in all Main Level rooms; at least one exit required - Non-accessible toilet room - Abolition Hall – Ground Floor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program space for pop-up use
Proposed Activity Plan	Tentative proposal for seasonal pop-up events for 2026. May rely on identifying program partners or volunteers to organize and deliver programming.
Proposed Occupancy and Staffing Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abolition Hall – Ground Floor maximum indoor class / event size: approximately 15-20 typical - Volunteer / Staffing: To be developed with detailed activity plan

Proposed Parking	Temporary Parking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approximately 10 non-accessible parking spots along existing driveway
Possible Preconditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Township zoning use change - Required Parking – Township to establish maximum number, location on site - Building Permit / Temporary Certificate of Occupancy requirements - Insurance requirements
Minimum Scope of Work Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Toilet trailer or portable toilet units (ADA) - Tent area to be identified and prepped for installation - Site clean-up and groundskeeping - Designated parking area, staked out or identified with signage - Install building-mounted lighting at doors and to illuminate driveway and parking - Safe-off root cellar access - Maulsby Barn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replacement of wood deck - Abolition Hall – Ground Floor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-grade compacted gravel or engineered wood chip walkway - Option to install utility sink to support Pop-Up events; small pump needed to connect to plumbing drain located at ceiling - Hovenden House: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe-off basement bulkhead door - Limited access for tours and event support to be determined

December 8, 2025

Whitemarsh Township | Corson Tract Planning Activity Plan

Preliminary outline of events – to be developed – to include specific dates, event hours, program descriptions, guest and partner participants, logistics, and volunteer/staff requirements for each event.

EVENT	DATE	POP-UP EVENT THEME	PARTNER ORGANIZATION(S)	SPACE USE
1	January 19, 2026	Preliminary ideas include:	Preliminary ideas to introduce wider community to on-site programming include:	- Seasonal outdoor activities and temporary facilities
2	Spring	-		- Maulsby Barn – Main Level
3	Summer	-		- Abolition Hall – Ground Floor
4	Fall	-		
5	Winter	-		