

OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2009

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Open Space and Agriculture Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:35 P.M. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol called the meeting to order and read the following notice requirements.

Notice Requirements

In order to ensure full public participation in this meeting, all members of this committee or Board, and also members of the public are requested to speak only when recognized by the Chair so that there is no simultaneous discussion or over talk. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Notification of the time, date and place of this meeting has been published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and Express Times and sent to the Star Ledger and Courier News, as has been posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building at least 48 hours prior to this meeting and has been filed with the Municipal Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Open Space Advisory Committee

Present - John Mathieu
James Burke
Sandra McNicol
Phil Lubitz
Lee Frank

Absent - Richard Dodds

Agriculture Advisory Committee

Present: William Pandy
Cynthia Niciecki
Elaine Niemann

Absent: None

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The Committee members welcomed a new member to the Open Space Advisory Committee, Mr. Lee Frank.

Motion to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes

It was moved by James Burke, seconded by John Mathieu and carried to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2009 Regular meeting minutes for the Open Space and Agriculture Advisory Committees and place on file.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye	-	Sandra McNicol, John Mathieu James Burke, Cindy Niciecki, William Pandy
Nay	-	None
Absent	-	Richard Dodds
Abstain	-	Elaine Niemann, Phil Lubitz, Lee Frank

CORRESPONDENCE

2008 Hunterdon County Comprehensive Preservation Plan

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol stated that the Plan pertains to farmland and is available to review if anyone is interested. Mrs. McNicol read aloud the website address for anyone who may be interested in reviewing the Plan. The website is: <http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/cadb.htm>

Copy of letter to the Township Committee and the Board of Adjustment from the Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committees

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the letter. Mr. Burke gave the Committee members an update after speaking with the Hunterdon Land Trust. He noted that the Hunterdon County Land Trust will be paying for the subdivision application, the escrow fees and the fees for the variance.

Copy of letter to Mary Karen Lynn Klimenko, The Laura Jane Musser Fund request, from Sandra McNicol and Richard Dodds

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained this was initiated by Vice Chairman Richard Dodds to have the Open Space Committee support a grant that the Hunterdon Land Trust is working on at this time. She noted the letter was sent on February 24, 2009.

REPORTS

PIG Progress: Liz Schmid

Liz commented and gave an update on the PIG program. Liz talked about the old PIG news first, which was about the Augustine Farm. She stated this will be closing soon. Also discussed was the Crouse property. Liz discussed an update on the new PIG news, which covered the Felix Farm and the Haring Farm.

Attendees for Farmland Status Meetings/February 18, 2009

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

OLD BUSINESS

Stormwater Runoff on farm fields

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that she is scheduled to meet with Township Engineer Tom Decker. She noted that Tom Decker will be in contact with William Pandy to discuss the farm fields, and the storm water runoff.

Hunterdon Land Trust - Activities Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that an application was dropped off to the Board of Adjustment for the Clark property. She noted that it will be on the B.O.A. agenda for March 11, 2009 7:30 PM. She said that it might be a good idea if a few people attend the meeting along with Kate Buttolph from the Hunterdon Land Trust.

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S. McNicol also noted that Kate Buttolph said that the Haring property was ranked high and hoping to have an option within the week. Mr. Burke explained that he spoke to a Freeholder about the Equestrian Village and he explained that he was told that it was on the Freeholders meeting agenda but, they did not get a chance to talk about the property. Mr. Burke explained the process, and that a Resolution must be then signed.

Thursday, March 5, 2009 Meeting at Prallsville Mill - 6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. will be a review and discussion of the draft Lockatong and Wickecheoke Creek Watersheds Project reports

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained Todd Kratzer and Chris Testa from the Soil Conservation district talked about the New Jersey Water Supply and a study they were working on for the Lockatong and Wickecheoke Creek Watersheds. Mrs. McNicol noted that they are still taking comments if anyone still has them to submit.

Suggestions for new members

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that we are still looking for a few members on both committees. Elaine Niemann noted that a newsletter will be going out to all the residents and there will be a notation that there are openings for both committees.

Preservation Signs

Liz Schmid discussed preservation signs and that they will be available to land owners that are willing to put them up on their property. It was suggested to contact or go personally to the land owners, and ask them if they are interested. Mr. Burke noted that signs will be put up on the Gergar property, the Melnyk property and many other farms which have been preserved. Mr. Burke suggested that the Township make up our own sign. He will take a picture of signs he has seen in other towns to get an idea of what they look like. Mr. Mathieu suggested that the names be on the signs of the original owner for history purposes. Mrs. McNicol would like to make a deadline, possibly by the next meeting to have a photo of another sign, so that the Committee can get an idea of what they want to do.

NEW BUSINESS

Hike - Harms property

Mrs. McNicol noted that she and Richard Dodds received confirmation that it would be okay to have a community hike at the Harms property. Mr. Mathieu reported that he spoke to Mr. Thomas Flagg, and he also received confirmation that the hike could be on Mr. Flaggs property. The Committee discussed which property to be hiked on and they decided that Mr. Flaggs property would be a good property for the springtime hike and they would go in the fall to the Harms property. He noted that Mr. Flagg is looking forward to the Township having a community hike on his property. The hike is scheduled to be on May 2nd 2009 from 9:00AM till 12:00PM with a rain date of May 16th 2009. Mrs. McNicol read aloud a flyer which she prepared to put on the website so residents could be informed. Mr. Mathieu suggested that he, Sandra McNicol, and Richard Dodds walk the property to find the best trail to walk the property.

NEW BUSINESS

Land Rally - Request for funds to attend

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the flyer on the Land Rally that will be in New Brunswick NJ. Mrs. McNicol was going to request for funds to attend the Rally, but she will not be available to attend.

Seeking Advise from the Agriculture Advisory Committee

Phil Lubitz explained that the Township Committee is in the process of working on an ordinance in reference to excess equipment and junk on resident properties. He explained the Township Committee had a discussion at their meeting about the ordinance, and they would like to be sensitive towards farmers who leave old equipment around and need the parts. Mr. Lubitz stated they are looking for ideas and assistance from the Agriculture Advisory Committee for guidance to word the ordinance appropriately pertaining to farms. Mr. William Pandy described several items on his farm that look like junk, but noted that it is not indeed junk.

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He said all of his large equipment that is lying around is all usable. Mr. Burke stated that the Township is trying to do away with eye sores on properties, such as, old unused cars, and much debris lying around.

There was a lengthy discussion on the ordinance the Township Committee is working on to control the junk and large equipment on private properties. Elaine Niemann suggested getting together with William Pandy and Cynthia Niciecki to discuss some of the wording that could be worked into the ordinance before the next Township Committee meeting.

Sandra McNicol noted she gave Secretary Keller a request to obtain open space information from C.F.O. Diane Laudenbach for the amount of funds and bonding that has been spent, used and that is available for the next months open space meeting.

Sandra McNicol asked the Committees how they felt about her writing a notice to the residents by way of an explanation of how bonding, open space, and open space funding works to educate the public. She noted that it would be a good idea to put this information on the website. All the members agreed this would be a very good idea.

Conservation Easement Slates

Secretary Keller brought to the meeting a conservation slate for everyone review. Mrs. McNicol discussed the plans the Planning Board has for the slates.

Public Comments

No comments.

It was moved by James Burke, seconded by Phillip Lubitz and carried the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 P.M.

All voted Aye on Roll Call Vote

Respectfully submitted,

**Cynthia Keller, RMC
Secretary**