

OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2010

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Open Space and Agriculture Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:07 P.M. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol called the meeting to order and read the following notice requirements.

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News on January 14th, 2010, and by telefaxing a copy of the notice to the Star Ledger, and the Express Times on January 8, 2010. A copy of the notice was also posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building and Post Office on January 8, 2010.

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, and further, all persons are requested to utilize the microphones which are provided for your use by the Township. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Roll Call

Present

James Burke
Sandra McNicol
Richard Dodds
John Mathieu
Lee Frank
William Pandy
Cynthia Niciecki
Ed Krovalich
Elaine Niemann (arrived at 7:20PM)

Absent

Phil Lubitz
Linda Pfingst Oesterwinter
Pete D'Costa

Guest Speaker - Margaret Waldock from the Hunterdon County Land Trust :

Preservation Goals

Margaret Waldock was present and introduced herself as the Director of the Hunterdon County Land Trust Alliance for 13 years. She stated that there are presently 4,000 acres in the County that are preserved.

2.

She gave an overview of what the Land Trust does in the County and how they help landowners and Townships preserve land with the help of funded grant sources. She explained the goals they have for Kingwood Township and the future potential parkland and open space properties they would like to see preserved.

Stewardship

Richard Dodds gave an overview of the properties which have been preserved along the Delaware River. He noted that there is a lot of land that the public needs to be educated about that is available to them. He explained that the Delaware River Stewardship program is a management strategy with an opportunity for people to get involved. Some of the ideas discussed were about making trails for the public to hike on the preserved properties. He explained that they are trying to obtain grants and private donations for the future parks. There was a very lengthy discussion on the Stewardship Program and preserving several properties in Kingwood.

Everyone thanked Margaret Waldock for attending the meeting and speaking to everyone.

Municipal Orientation - Committeewoman Elaine Niemann

Committeewoman Niemann gave an excellent Orientation Program for the Open Space and Agriculture Advisory members. The following is what Mrs. Niemann covered:

Kingwood Township Municipal Orientation Program
Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee
February 4, 2010

- 1) Introductory remarks
 - a. General roles and responsibilities of volunteers
 - b. Resources available from the municipality, procedures to access them
 - c. Importance of communication
 - i. All written communication, including email, is a matter of public record
 1. Use of home computer for sensitive township-related communications is to be avoided

3.

- ii. Coordination with other volunteer boards/committees is ideal
- d. Meetings are recorded, and members of the public may request copies of these recordings.

2) Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund DVD- “The Rights and Duties of a Volunteer in Local Government” – 12 minutes

3) Questions following the DVD

- a. Complaint procedure handout, brief discussion of the township personnel handbook
- b. What are punitive damages?

4) Concluding remarks

- a. We recognize that the hard work done for the benefit of our community is often done when no one is looking and at times the work may seem unappreciated. We know what you do for us and we don't forget, even if you don't hear it from us!
- b. The Township newsletter was launched last year and will have another issue released in March. Please be sure to send any material you may have for the newsletter to me.
- c. Wrap up the material presented in the DVD

Elaine Niemann asked if there were any questions and thanked everyone for participating in the Municipal Orientation Program she presented.

Approval of Minutes

Motion and approval of the January 7, 2010 Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committees Reorganization and Regular Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Mathieu, seconded by Mr. Dodds and carried to approve the January 7, Reorganization and Regular Meeting of the Open Space / Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting.

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	- Sandra McNicol, Richard Dodds, John Mathieu, Lee Frank, William Pandy, Cynthia Niciecki, Ed Krovalich
	Nay	- None
	Abstain	- James Burke, Elaine Niemann
	Absent	- Linda Pfingst Oesterwinter, Pete D'Costa, Phil Lubitz

4.

Correspondence

N/A

Reports

Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid
(Report for February 4, 2010)

Liz Schmid was present and reviewed the following report of February 4, 2010 which she prepared for the meeting.

Open Space Agriculture Advisory Committee Report
February 4, 2010

- 1). Felix Farm - The initial survey was completed and only some minor issues were noted which are being worked at this time. The family has returned almost all of the contract material to the County, and we are all still pushing for a closing next month.
- 2). I spoke with Mr. Simon about the CADB rejection of his farm due to size, and referred him to HLTA for possible alternate programs. HLTA is now working with him to possibly use Federal Farm and Ranchland money to preserve the farm without the County.
- 3). Felix II - This is the Ogradnick Farm on Route 12 which was one of our PIG farms for this year. Phil and Mary have decided that they really want to sell the farm, and preserving it at this time might hinder them in doing this. I have spoken to the State re: the fee simple program, and was told that they can get put on the competitive list if they want to do so. I have left a message to that effect with the family, and offered help in getting the application together.
- 4). I spoke to David Frank a some length in regard to his property at Bl 24/Lot 7. He is thinking about various options.
- 5). Chris Ely, who purchased the Williams Farm (Bl25/Lot10, Bl26/Lot21), is interested in preserving some or all of the farm.

5.

He is knowledgeable about various programs, but needs to figure out exactly what he want to do on the property. He will be back in touch next month when he returns from various business trips.

Mr. Ely and his wife were present and introduced themselves to everyone and expressed how they are very interested in preserving their property.

Liz presented a list to the Committee members of potential preservation projects. (Attached to the minutes).

Everyone thanked Liz for her report.

Attendees for Farmland Status Meetings/January 20, 2010

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reported that Liz Schmid attended the Farmland Status Meeting in the month of January.

Old Business

Preservation Signs

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol gave an update on the signs. She gave a description of the colors and stated that the Township Logo is being worked on. The Committees discussed what will be printed on the signs for the Ukarish property and the Melnick farm.

Sustainable Jersey Program - Update

Elaine Niemann gave an update on the Green Team and what they are working towards for 2010. She noted that they discussed their priorities for 2010. She stated that they are working with the school on a special "Earth Day" project for the children. It will be a t-shirt contest. Also they discussed a project they would like to do that will be called "Adopt a Road" program to clean up the township roads. Mrs. Niemann explained that Kingwood's Green Team will be working to get certified, so that Kingwood can apply for many more grants.

6.

Hunterdon Land Trust - Activity update

Discussion took place with Margaret Waldock in the beginning of the meeting.

Open Space Recreation Plan Element for Master Plan

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed a meeting a subcommittee for the Open Space/Recreation Plan in January discussed. She explained that they have a survey to present to the public at an open house at the Kingwood Township School on February 20th, from 9:00A.M - 12:00 noon. They are hoping to get parents on there way in and out of the school to participate, and also give their input for the plan.

James Burke explained that the Parks and Recreation Committee are working on ideas to correct the drainage on the fields at the Kingwood park.

The Kingwood Land Use Plan - Community Survey

Richard Dodds gave an overview of the feedback from the survey. He noted that approximately 325 surveys have been returned and filled out. Elaine Niemann explained that she and Liz Schmid are working on a spread sheet to get some kind of idea how people feel and what they want for their township. She explained that this project will take about 11 (two hour) shifts of volunteers to complete the spread sheet. She announced that volunteers will be welcome and needed.

New Business

Hunterdon County Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting of January 11, 2010

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that she attended this meeting on January 11, and reviewed what was discussed.

Preserved Open Space List for Website

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed a draft of a map of Kingwood Township and the existing and potential parkland and open space properties for 2010.

7.

The Committee members discussed how they would like to get this up on the website for the public to see what the township has planned, and what will be available as open land to them. She stated she would like to have a volunteer day to trail the properties. It was suggested to ask the Eagle Scouts that are looking for projects to work on some of the trails on these properties. It was also discussed that it is very important to put up signs along the front of where there are preserved properties. Richard Dodds will be working on a map that will be color coded of all the open space properties.

Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor

N/A

Other Matters

Elaine Niemann noted that the Kingwood Chronicle will be going out in March. She suggested writing information about the Spring Hike that will be scheduled on April 24th, Saturday at 10:00A.M. James Burke gave an update on the property the Township will be obtaining on Horseshoe Bend Road. He explained that it is coming along and that they are still waiting for the environmental tests to come back.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Burke, seconded by Mr. Dodds and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:25PM. **All** voted **Aye** on **Roll Call Vote**.

Respectfully submitted,

**Cynthia L. Keller,
Secretary**