

OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Regular

Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2012

7:00PM

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee and the Agriculture Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:14P.M. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol of the Open Space Advisory Committee called the meeting to order and read the following notice requirements.

Notice 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 19th, 2012, and by telefaxing a copy of the notice to the Star Ledger, and the Express Times on January 11, 2012. A copy of the notice was also posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building and Post Office on January 11, 2012.

In order to ensure full public participation in this meeting, all members of these Committees, 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 all persons are requested to utilize the microphones which are provided for your use by the Township. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Roll Call

Open Space Advisory Committee

Present

Sandra McNicol
Richard Dodds
Phil Lubitz
Karen Hertzog

Absent

Diana Haywood
John Mathieu
Lee Frank

Agriculture Advisory Committee

Present

Cynthia Niciecki
William Pandy
Edward Kralovich

Absent

Elaine Niemann
Pete D'Costa

2.

Approval of Minutes

Motion and Approval of October 2, 2012 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committees

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by Karen Hertzog and carried to approve the meeting minutes of the October 2, 2012 Regular Meeting of the Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committees with the following corrections:

Page 8. Under Fish and Game Policy on Land Maintenance:
The 11th line from the bottom, should state: They stated that (deer deforestation)is one of the greatest damage that an animal can do. In place of (deer forestation)is one of the greatest damage that an animal can do.

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	-Lubitz, McNicol, Dodds, Hertzog, Pandy, Niciecki
	Nay	-None
	Abstain	-Kralovich
	Absent	-Haywood, Frank, Niemann, D'Costa, Mathieu

Correspondence

Copy of Letter from the NJDEP re: Open Space Plan

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that Elaine Niemann was unable to attend this evening. She stated that this is the Green Acres Program. She stated that since the township has not spent the remainder of their open space funds that the township is not eligible for additional money at this time.

Reports

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed Liz Schmids report of November 2012.

Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid (Report for November, 2012)

Agriculture Advisory Committee Report
November 6, 2012

3.

I am writing this on October 29 before leaving for three weeks, so the information is as of that date.

1. Maplewood Farm - The County has sent the contract to the family but as of the time I left, there were some corrections needed before the family could sign it. I urged the family to work on this promptly so that we can get this closed. After the contract is signed, the County will order the title work. Our surveyor is waiting for the title work to be completed to do the survey. I have stressed to him the need to be prompt with the survey as there is a March deadline on the Federal money.
2. The Mulligan Farm (Bl 33 Lot 24) was accepted by CADB. The landowner is still weighing his options.
3. Helmer and Zander - Appraisals are back and will go to SADC for certified value.
4. Decker - (Bl 24 - Lot 8) - Fee purchase through the State Green Acres program has been formally approved.
5. Goeckeler (Bl 30, Lot 6) - The application is still under review at the State.
6. Gross - This is still in limbo. The landowner is now considering one or two severable exceptions as the certified appraisal did not meet his expectations. This would require going back to CADB and SADC for approval again. The application for leftover FFRP money is in.
7. Marramore Inc. ((Bl 20 Lot 5) 59.38 acres - This is one of two pieces in an estate with many heirs. They wish to sell the properties. HLT is wondering if there is any Township interest in this piece which is near the Township park and abuts the Melnyk, school and former Kent properties and has Locketong frontage. (This is the same as last month as I was not able to get any up-date before I left)
8. Maritan (Bl 33 Lot 25), 104.71 acres - Sharon Gonen, the lead heir in the estate situation, has submitted an application to Green Acres for direct purchase of this property. It adjoins the Clark property and has Locketong frontage. They had approached SADC, but the property did not rank high enough to qualify for the farmland fee simple program. (This is the same as last month as I was unable to get an update before I left).
9. The Wydner family signed a 120 day option with SADC which allows the State to order appraisals. Hopefully, this is on the road for preservation.

4.

10. Clark - (Bl 33 Lot 25) 2 acres. Mr. Clark called the week after his wife died wanting to know about preserving this two acre lot which was one of two subdivided from the piece that was preserved. They sold one of the lots for \$60,000, and he did not like paying roll back taxes. I referred him to HLT due to our financial situation. Kate is hoping to get an appraisal for \$120,000 for the lot and then buy it with for \$60,000 with Township Green Acres money if the Township is interested. She is going to send him an option agreement. He has pulled the lot off the market until probate gets underway. (Again, this is the same as last month as I was unable to update it before I left).
11. Chaitman - Since this farm is in two separate pieces under different ownership, and one of the pieces probably would not fly by itself because of excess woodlands, HLT and the County have decided that the family would have to be willing to put all of the farm on one deed. The family may not be willing to do that. There is FFRP money for this farm if the other funding can be worked out. It is still up in the air.
12. Are there any farms that we want and that are interested in preservation for which HLT can apply for Federal money?
13. Coveleskey and "The Farm" church property - The Township application for cooperative funding from the County is still being evaluated. Expect an answer by the end of the year.
14. Deer damage on fields adjoining Green Acres property - I brought this issue up at CADB meeting and it was agreed to write a letter to Green Acres about farmers concerns. In my research as to how Green Acre properties are managed, I spoke to Tony Petrongolo, the director of land management at DEP.

He believes that State managed lands do lead to better deer control as more hunters get on the property, thereby trimming the herd. He says that in some cases the fields are managed for grassland birds and those fields can be tilled and are mowed after bird season. If the land is being managed for wildlife, the fields are left untilled and not mowed. As of the time that I am writing this (10/29 while the electricity is still on) I need more information to help CADB write a letter to the State.

5.

Old Business

Hunterdon Land Trust - Activity update
Trystensky Property

- Mayor Niemann's Letter to Residents
- Shortfall Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained the funds for the Trystensky property. She reviewed the letters that were sent out to neighbors surrounding the property from Mayor Niemann. She does not foresee anyone contributing funds towards the preservation of the property. There was a brief discussion on how there could be funds found to contribute towards the purchase of this property.

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by William Pandy and carried to make a recommendation to the Township Committee to contribute the amount of \$2,200 to be spent to purchase the Trystensky property in addition to the funds the township has already obligated to contribute.

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	-McNicol, Dodds, Kralovich Hertzog, Pandy, Niciecki
	Nay	-None
	Abstain	-Lubitz
	Absent	-Haywood, Frank, Niemann, D'Costa, Mathieu

Horseshoe Bend Park Steering Committee

- Meeting Update - NRCS Greg Chianese

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol and Richard Dodds stated that they met with representatives from the Natural Resource Conservation Service and also took a walk with them around the Horseshoe Bend Park. Richard Dodds noted that they were interested in whether local farmers farmed the fields at the park. He noted that they would like to get together with Richard Dodds in the future with a plan.

- Storm Damage

Richard Dodds explained that he cleared the orange trail of the brush from the storm. He also noted that there were mystery volunteers helping clean up the park of the fallen trees. He explained all the damage there was at the Horseshoe Bend Park.

6.

William Pandy offered to bring a large tractor to help move some of the tree off the fields.

- Hunting Update

Richard Dodds stated that the township has a group of very nice hunters at the park and that all is going well.

- Off Leash Dog Area - Entrance Double Gate Request

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained a situation that happened at the park regarding dogs running out of the gate. Richard Dodds stated that there are extra materials at the DPW garage for an additional gate to be put up.

Copy of Resolution No. 2012-66 FYI

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that this is just for the Committees info.

New Business

Memo and Budget Request for Open Space for 2013

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the figures from last year and asked the Committees what they feel would be a request for 2013.

It was moved by Cynthia Niciecki, seconded by William Pandy and carried to request to the Township Committee the same amount as last year the amount of \$600.00 for the 2013 Open Space Budget.

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	-Lubitz, McNicol, Dodds, Kralovich, Hertzog, Pandy, Niciecki
	Nay	-None
	Abstain	-None
	Absent	-Haywood, Frank, Niemann, D'Costa, Mathieu

Bull's Island Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that there is nothing new at this time.

7.

Bond Payments 2012 and Open Space Trust Fund Balance

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted she asked the township's CFO for the latest figures. She stated that the township has paid up a current amount due for 2012 for the bond in the amount of \$1,817.55. She noted that the current balance in the Open Space Trust Fund is \$285,676.00, which does not include this year's appropriation, which is \$181,900.00 for a total of \$467,576.88. She noted that as of the first of the year the township will have almost \$400,000.00 in the fund. There was a lengthy discussion of the information Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Ed Kralovich mentioned the box outside the municipal building regarding the flags. He stated that it is packed and needs to be emptied. He wanted to know who was in charge of the box. Secretary Keller explained it was the a project that an eagle scout had done and that she will contact the boy scout master leader to let them know it needs to be cleaned out and maintained.

Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Lubitz, seconded by Mr. Dodds and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:05pm. **All** voted **Aye** on **Roll Call Vote**.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Keller,
Secretary

