

**OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURE JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

**Regular  
Meeting Minutes  
March 5, 2013  
7:00PM**

**Call to Order**

The Regular Meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee and the Agriculture Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:09P.M. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol 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 December 20, 2012, and by telefaxing a copy of the notice to the Star Ledger, and the Express Times on December 7, 2012. A copy of the notice was also posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building and Post Office on December 7, 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  
Phil Lubitz  
Karen Hertzog

**Absent**

Diana Haywood  
John Mathieu  
Lee Frank

**Agriculture Advisory Committee**

**Present**

Richard Dodds  
Cynthia Niciecki  
Ed Kralovich

**Absent**

William Pandy  
Pete D'Costa

2.

Also present at the meeting were several guests from the Parks and Recreation Committee and a representative from the Environmental Commission to hear the presentation from Craig Chianese.

### **Guest Speakers**

Chairwoman of the Open Space Committee Sandra McNicol, introduced Craig Chianese, Soil Conservationist with Natural Resources Conservation Service to the meeting. Mr. Chianese spoke about managing invasive plant species and habitat for threatened and endangered species of plant, birds, mammals and amphibians at Horseshoe Bend Park. He offered information for possible assistance from the Partners for Wildlife Program under the US Fish and Wildlife Service. He explained that he was here to speak as a result of a request from early last year. He stated that the township sent a letter to NRCS asking for an assessment of Horseshoe Bend Park property. He brought samples of plants to show everyone what each plant looks like and how to manage them. He reviewed several areas of the Horseshoe Bend Park where there are invasive plants and gave some suggestions as to ways to get rid of them. He suggested that the township go through funding through Partners for Wildlife who can help the township with in kind services, guidance on how to manage invasive species, supplying seeds and ideas of what to plant. He explained that John Park who is from the New Jersey Auto Bond is also a member of the Partners for Wildlife, and will also work with the township. Agriculture Advisory Committee member Richard Dodds gave an overview of the Horseshoe Bend Park grounds on the township's projector. Sandra McNicol discussed what she knew regarding managing plants and wildlife at the Horseshoe Bend Park and how the fields are cut before the wildlife is ready to leave the area. Craig Chianese suggested getting an outline of the property. There were a few questions from the Parks and Recreation Committee regarding Horseshoe Bend Park and the reasons the township purchased the property. Phil Lubitz responded by explaining that there are many recreational activities at the Horseshoe Bend Park for the people in the community. He explained that there are many activities that people have been doing to enjoy the new park from mountain biking, hiking, horseback riding and bird watching.

3.

Richard Dodds responded to the questions regarding grants the township applies for and how they work. He stated that when the township receives a grant for the park, it is matched by in kind volunteer labor with no cost to the tax payers. It is an opportunity for those folks who would like to volunteer.

Everyone thanked Craig Chianese for coming to the meeting.

Richard Dodds explained that on Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, he will be walking with representatives from NJ Parks and Forestry on a trail about two miles long at the Horseshoe Bend Park both on township and State property. He reviewed several properties that have been preserved on the overhead projector so that everyone could see how they all meet up with Horseshoe Bend Park. He stated that if anyone is interested they are welcome to join them on the hike, and noted they will be searching for replanting opportunities. He explained that there are properties that are nearby the Horseshoe Bend Park, which are in the works to be jointly purchased by the Land Trust and the Township. Sandra McNicol explained that the State gave the township open space funds to be spent and noted that they are now informing the township that if they do not spend the funds in the near future, they will lose the funds. Richard Dodds explained how the open space committee works together and how properties are purchased with the help of non-profit and charitable organizations. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that the Township's Planning Board has been reviewing the Open Space and Recreation Plan of the Master Plan. Mayor Lubitz asked the Parks and Recreation what they foresee in the future, as far as more fields needed and additional sports that may need additional fields. David Hewitt responded, he explained there is a Boy Scout who would like to put a Frisbee golf course at the Horseshoe Bend Park for his Eagle Scout project. The Open Space Committee asked the members of the Parks and Recreation Committee if they will need more fields in the future for sports. Ron Hartpence feels that the population in Kingwood has not grown that much, but he has always thought that the property where the Department of Public Works exists would be the best place to add additional sports fields. Sandra McNicol explained that this is a preserved farm and that cannot be developed. Mayor Lubitz stated that the Parks and Recreation Committee have the opportunity to talk to the residents to find out what is needed.

4.

David Hewitt explained that the Parks and Recreation Committee years ago did a survey on Community Day asking the residents what they feel the township needed. He noted that several residents have expressed the desire to have an indoor facility or overall community center. Heidi Diminick expressed that there is nowhere for adult indoor activities, such as basketball, volley ball and other sports. She explained that there is an adult recreation basketball group who gets together each week, but that it is only for an hour and that is not nearly enough time.

Sandra McNicol suggested that it might be a good idea for the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Open Space Committee to form subcommittees with several members from each committee and get together to discuss new ideas. There was a suggestion that the township apply for a grant for solar to possibly heat the Morton Building at the Horseshoe Bend Park. Richard Dodds noted that the township has been busy renting out the facility at the park to many different organizations, and each group pays for the use of the fields and the building. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol thanked everyone who came to the meeting.

#### **New Business**

Township C.F.O. Diane Laudenbach Present - Memo with list of Open Space Funds for the Payments Due for Principal from 2013 - 2027

C.F.O. Diane Laudenbach was present and reviewed the memo which she provided for the Committees. She reviewed what is left in the open space funds, and how many years it will take to pay off a bond, which is being paid off with open space funds. She explained that the township needs to save their funds for a few years before purchasing any other properties.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion and Approval of February 5, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committees

Not enough members were present to vote on the minutes. This will be tabled until next month.

#### **Correspondence**

5.

Copy of Ordinance No. 17-02-2013 Endangered Species and Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance Adopted by Twp. Comm. On February 7, 2013

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Copy of Letter from the National Park Service Re: Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Orientation Workshops

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained this is an orientation to Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers to be held in early April at three different locations. She stated that the series of NPS-sponsored workshops are designed to provide our Wild & Scenic River partners with a basic understanding of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, the designation process and the River Management Plans, along with an overview of Section 7 and Section 10 of the Act which relate to the NPS and other agency roles in the permitting process. She stated that she will be attending one of the workshops and if anyone would like to attend they are more than welcome to join her.

Copy of Press Release from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation - New Jersey Conservation foundation Earns National Recognition

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

News Article from NJ.Com - New Hunterdon Land Trust Steward to Lead Horseshoe Bend Park in Frenchtown Hike - March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that there was a hike on March 2, 2013 and Steward, Thomas Thorsen lead the walk around Horseshoe Bend Park. She stated that she did not go on the hike, but will try to find out more information about it and discuss this at next month's meeting. Richard Dodds explained that there was some confusion in regard to how residents read the article. He explained that several people thought the article meant that Thomas Thorsen is the Steward of the Park and also in charge of the park, which is not correct. He explained that Mr. Thorsen is the land Steward assigned by the Hunterdon Land Trust to go on this specific hike at the Horseshoe Bend Park, and that he is not totally in charge of the park.

6.

## Reports

### Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid (Report for March, 2013)

Liz Schmid was present and reviewed the following report:

Agriculture Advisory Committee Report  
March 5, 2013

1. Maplewood Farm - Hopefully the survey has now been completed to everyone's specifications. The copies have been sent to all interested parties and copies of the deed and payment vouchers have arrived from the State. We are hopeful that this can close by the end of the month.
2. Aljam 1 and 2 - Aljam 1- (Bl 18, lot 5) 133= acres, Aljam 2 - (Block 22, lots 1, 2 and 2.08) a total of 49.78 acres. Across the street from each other on the corner of Fitzer and Barbertown-Point Breeze Rds. The family is looking to preserve or sell this property. I explained the various farmland preservation alternatives including the State direct Easement Purchase and the State Fee simple programs. I also explained the financing situation in the Township at this time. I spoke to Stefanie Miller at the State who is somewhat interested in applications at this time, so I e-mailed the family and suggested that they contact her as soon as possible if they are interested in either of the State programs.
3. The Mulligan Farm (Bl 33Lot 24)
4. Helmer (Bl 2, lot 5) and Zander( Bl 5, lot 3) - Certified values have come in from the State and are being sent out to the landowners. Hopefully there will be a responses from the landowners by next month. We will have a problem funding these farms as we do not have as much money in the open space fund as we thought we would have when the applications went in two and a half years ago. I have approached HLT about getting Federal money for Helmer, but we do not know whether or not he will accept the terms or be willing to wait for those as the application round does not start until October. Zander would probably not be eligible for those funds as the farm is much smaller. Helmer would cost about \$78,000 in Township funds and Zander would be about \$38,000.
5. Decker - (Bl 24 -Lot 8) -Fee purchase through the State Green Acres program is in progress.
6. Goekeler (Bl 30, Lot 6) - The application is still under review at the State.

7.

7. Gross - Landowner is trying to decide whether or not to ask for new appraisals which would include a severable exception.

8. Marramore Inc. ((Bl 20 Lot 5) 59.38 acres -According to HLT, this is being worked on as a Green Acres direct purchase. It has also been approved for inclusion in the County PIG.

9. 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 Lockatong frontage. They had approached SADC, but the property did not rank high enough to qualify for the farmland fee simple program. CADB rejected this property for the County PIG.

10. The Wydner farm - Certified value was presented to the family. The State has not heard back from them.

11. Clark - ( Bl 33 Lot 25) 2 acres - To be purchased by HLT

12. Chaitman - nothing new.

13. Coveleskey and "The Farm" church property - Richard will know this best.

Everyone thanked Liz Schmid for her monthly report.

Copy of Resolution Supporting Sustainable State Funding for Preservation and Stewardship of Open Space, Parks, Farmland and Historic Sites in New Jersey

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed. Richard Dodds explained that this resolution had been adopted last year and again adopted this year.

**Old Business**

Hunterdon Land Trust - Activity Update

Trstensky Property Block 24 Lots 13.08, 13.09, 13.10

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that this was discussed earlier under Liz Schmid's report.

8.

Horseshoe Bend Park Steering Committee

Richard Dodds reported that he discussed this earlier in the evening and was very glad that several members of the Parks and Recreation Committee were present this evening to learn more about what the Open Space and Ag Committees do and how they work together.

There was a brief discussion on responsible farming on the State grounds of the Horseshoe Bend Park. Cynthia Niciecki stated that when the Fish and Wildlife obtain these properties their goal is to create habitat for the wildlife, which makes it more difficult for farmers.

Ed Kralovich noted that he has tapped his maple trees, which he got 10 gallons of sap. He stated that this was from three trees on his property.

Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor

N/A

Adjournment

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by Ed Kralovich and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:11pm. **All** voted **Aye** on **Roll Call Vote**.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Keller,  
Secretary