

OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2015
7:00PM

Call to Order

A Regular meeting of Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees was called to order at 7:12P.M. Chairwoman of the Open Space Advisory Committee Sandra McNicol called the meeting to order and read the following notice requirements.

Notice Requirements

Notification of the time, date and place of this meeting has been published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and Courier News, and 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.

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

Phil Lubitz
Diana Haywood
Sandra McNicol
Karen Hertzog
Heather Haberle

Absent

John Mathieu
Lee Frank

Agricultural Advisory Committee

Present

Richard Dodds
William Pandy
Cynthia Niciecki
Edward Kralovich

Absent

Susan Goeckeler

3.

I am going to list the projects that have had some type of change since last month first.

I will then list the farms that are still on the radar, but have not moved along significantly since last month. Changes are in bold face type.

1. **Gross** - (Block 5 Lot 4) **This farm was preserved on January 15th after many years of changes.**
2. **Maritan** (Bl 33 Lot 25), 104.71 acres **-The owner of the property is trying to get the property eligible for the County PIG program again. Toward that end she has gotten an affidavit from the farmer as to the amount of land farmed and the yield from that land.** I am not sure that this will address all of the issues that led the CADB to reject the farm two years ago.- Sharon Gonen, the lead heir in the estate situation, had submitted an application to Green Acres for direct purchase of this property. It adjoins the Clark property and has Lockatong frontage. HLT still has an open application for County Non-profit Open Space funding. The County Open Space Committee did not like the estimated value and felt that the property is not easily developable.
3. They also felt that HLT did not have a sufficiently detailed plan as to how they would use the property. HLT will be putting something together.
4. In any case, this funding will not be adequate to preserve the property and HLT will be looking for additional funds. The Township Committee has passed a resolution supporting the concept of preservation for this property.
5. **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 farm did not rank high enough to qualify for Direct Easement Purchase funding. **The owners have approached the County to make a County PIG application. They will also have to apply for Federal funding with HLT.**
6. **Felix II** - (Block 12 Lot 1) The owners had applied for farmland preservation a number of years ago and then withdrew the farm. They have recently expressed an interest in doing something with the farm. They had been given the contact information for a Green Acres project. When I spoke to one of the owners she said that they really want to sell the farm into preservation. I checked with the SADC and they have no money left to purchase farmland in fee. I believe that the same is true at DEP. The owner has already tried to communicate with Dirt Capital Partners, but felt that they only wanted to rent. I am trying to find a farmer who would want to do sustainable farming in order to apply for funds to purchase through Dirt Capital Partners.

4.

7.

I have spoken to our County Agent who reports that Dirt Capital Partners is looking for well-established farmers with really solid plans for profitable farming to get a return for their investors in the project to then invest in another farm. HLT is working on trying to find a farmer.

8. **Perrotti** - (Block 23 Lot 11) - The family approached SADC for the State Direct Easement Purchase program, and have filled out all of the paper work. HLT has submitted an application for Federal funds to cover the municipal contribution. It is currently being handled as a County PIG application. The Township Committee has passed a resolution in support of the preservation of this farm. Unfortunately, the PennEast pipeline runs through this farm. There has been a hold-up as the name on the deed had not been changed to "the estate of", which must be completed in order to move forward. **We have to work out with the State to get it into the municipal program.**
9. **Kocsis Property** (Grossman) -Block 6, Lots 18 and 23.01 on Rt. 12. totaling about 150 acres. The new owners of this farm have applied to the State for the Direct Easement purchase program. The farm has scored well and the process is continuing.
10. **Tranquility Farms LP - (Block 5 Lot 1.01, 105+ acres) - No Change** - This farm has filed an application for the County PIG program. The owners are willing to file an application for Federal funding to cover municipal and County shares of preservation costs but have not yet done so. This farm has to be added to our list of target farms, and it would be good to have a resolution from the Township that we would support this preservation project.
11. **Helmer Farm (Bl 2, lot 5) - No Change** - Mr. Helmer decided to decrease the size of the exception area from 5 acres to two. He has received final approval from the SADC to cover this. The owner is taking steps to clear the title. The title work is being reviewed by SADC. They will make the final call on what is to be done as far as the title is concerned. The survey has been completed.
12. **Zander-** (Block 5, Lot 3)- **No Change** - SADC has given final approval and contracts are being mailed out to the owner.
13. **Milford** (Block 15, Lot 1) - **No Change** - 39 acres. The replacement application for Federal money was approved. The farm is at SADC for Green Light approval. The County has ordered appraisals and the preservation process will continue.
14. **DeSapio** properties on Ridge Road - **No Change** on Direct Easement Purchase applications for two areas along Ridge Rd. The first area is Bl 6, Lots 12 and 13.01 (@ 70 acres total). The second area is Block 5, Lot 6 (69.54 acres) that extends into Frenchtown for maybe 20 acres more. Block 6, Lots 12 and 13.01 did not score highly enough to qualify for Direct Easement Purchase funding for this round.

5.

The owner has been advised that he could apply through the County PIG or the Township and also apply for Federal funds. He has not yet done so. Block 5, Lot 6 is still up in the air. SADC and the owner are trying to agree on a configuration. The owner has not accepted the appraisal number at this time. This may also have to apply for Federal money as it is not ranking high.

15. **Goeckeler** (Bl 30, Lot 6) - **No Change**. Green Acres staff visited the property and told the owners that while they are still interested, there is no money for preservation at this time. They will continue to hold the application.

16. **Oakes** (Block 20, Lot 7) - **No Change**. This Green Acres Direct application is on track to close sometime in the next year.

17. **No Change**. I had spoken to Patti at HLT about the possibility of having a dedicated fund at HLT for Kingwood residents to contribute extra funds for preservation projects in Kingwood. She says that they are still thinking about this, but have not been able to come up with a suitable mechanism to do it.

The Committee Members thanked Liz Schmid for her report.

New Business

N/A

Old Business

Hunterdon Land Trust - Activity Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted this can be taken off the agenda until we have further info from the HLT.

Horseshoe Bend Park - Update

Richard Dodds explained that they are still working on the cleaning up at the Church property.

PennEast Pipeline - Update

Copy of Letter of Request from Chair of Board of Health to Twp. Comm.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Copy of Letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission - From the Environmental Commission Chair D. Kratzer

6.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the letter from EC Chairwoman Debbie Kratzer.

There was a discussion regarding the meetings that were cancelled recently with FERC. The Committees had a brief discussion regarding the pipeline. They discussed several questions and concerns that can be sent in to FERC for their input.

FERC Scoping Tutorial

Heather Haberle reviewed the information she received on the pipeline details regarding all the things it will effect. The Committee Members all thanked Heather Haberle for the very important information she shared with the Committees.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the Citizen's Committee against the pipeline who are researching and looking into to learn what they can do to stop it. There was a discussion regarding the State regulations and environmental concerns.

Scoping Training Announcement

Heather Haberle reviewed.

Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor

N/A

Adjournment

It was moved by Phil Lubitz, seconded by Richard Dodds and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:18PM. **All Voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Cynthia L. Keller,
Secretary**

