



2.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion and Approval of the January 5, 2016 Reorganization and Regular Meeting Minutes of the Open Space/Agricultural Advisory Committees

It was moved by Diana Haywood, seconded by Richard Dodds and carried to approve the January 5, 2016 Reorganization and Regular Meeting Minutes of the Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees.

Comments/Corrections: None comments or corrections

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	-Haywood, McNicol, Mathieu, Frank Hertzog, Haberle, Dodds, Pandy, Goeckeler
	Nay	-None
	Abstain	-Lubitz
	Absent	-Niciecki, Kralovich

**Correspondence**

20<sup>th</sup> Annual New Jersey Land Conservation Rally, Friday, March 18, 2016

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the NJ Land Conservation Rally in case anyone was interested in attending.

Article - Hunting Invasive Mussels and Hoping Not to Find Them

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Article - It's Not Worth the Burden

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed. She explained that the expense for recycling has gone up considerably. She explained how she would like to consider some changes in the future for the recycling center.

Article - For the Sake of Wisdom and Other Wildlife - Reduce and Recycle Plastic

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Article - The Albuquerque Journal - Recycling Criticism Contained Faulty Logic

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

3.

### Reports

#### Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid (Report for February, 2016)

Liz Schmid was present and reviewed the following report:

#### **Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee**

**February, 2016**

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 from January are in bold face type.

**1. Dalrymple** - Block 6 lots 26 (33.4 acres) and 26.01(18.55 acres) - The landowners have completed an application for the Municipal PIG program as well as for Federal funding in conjunction with HLT. HLT has submitted the application for Federal funding. CADB has given preliminary approval, **as has SADC**. The Township Committee has passed a resolution requesting that the State add this farm to our targeted farm list. **We now need to go out for proposals for appraisals.**

Liz Schmid asked all the members of the Committees if they agreed for her to go ahead with the appraisals. The Committees all agreed that it would be a good idea to seek appraisals for the property.

**2. Tranquility Farms LP** - For financial reasons, this farm is not eligible for Federal funds so County and Municipal PIGs were not feasible. The owners have met with SADC staff and staff has toured the property. The State has sent the owners an option agreement package. The State had questioned why we cannot contribute toward this project and we responded. **The State is expecting appraisals on the farm by the end of February.**

**3. Milford** - (Block 15, Lot 1) - 39 acres. The replacement application for Federal money was approved. SADC has granted Green Light approval. **A certified value has been received from the State and is being presented to the landowners.**

**4. Maritan** (Bl 33 Lot 25), 104.71 acres - Richard has had discussions with Jackie Middleton at HLT about possible use of new Green Acres money for this property. **After Richard and Tom from HLT walked the property it was decided that the property should be cleaned up before appraisals are done. Jackie will be working with the family to do this.**

Richard Dodds reviewed the Maritan property over the overhead projector and explained how to access on to the property.

4.

He reviewed all the wetland areas of the property. The Committee Members all commented on the property.

**5. 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 survey has been completed and the package is being reviewed for closing. **Closing is now hoped for in February.**

**6. DeSapio** properties on Ridge Road - Direct Easement Purchase applications were made for two areas along Ridge Rd. The first area is Bl 6, Lots 12 and 13.01 (@ 70 acres total) known as the family farm. The second area is Block 5, Lot 6 (69.54 acres and known as the Brown farm) that extends into Frenchtown for maybe 20 acres more. The property owner did not accept the value offered on the Brown farm. He wanted to amend the application by removing the Frenchtown portion to see if the value becomes acceptable. The State felt that was a rejection of the State offer and will require a new application. The owner has indicated that he will **reapply** in January. A lot line adjustment needs to be completed on the family farm (Bl 6, Lots 12 and 13.01) The State is working on title for the farm and is waiting for the owner to complete the lot line adjustment before awarding the contract for a survey. **The owner was before the Planning Board for a lot line adjustment and the State is waiting for that to be finalized before closing. They are hoping to close it in February.**

**7. Mattison - No change-** (Block 21, Lots 1.01, 1.02, 1.03 and Block 21.01, lot 2) on Rt. 12 and Whiskey Lane - Owner is interested in selling into preservation but only NJCF has any interest and would need other money to complete a sale.

**8. Felix II** - (Block 12 Lot 1) - **No Change** - A township resident has contacted me about the possibility of purchasing and preserving this farm. The purchase is dependent on the ability to preserve. In speaking with the interested purchaser, it became clear that possible preservation funding may not be sufficient to purchase the farm. We discussed the need for them to discuss specifics with the owner. I spoke with SADC and HLT to see if they had any creative ideas as to how this could be worked out. No one has come up with any new ideas. I will continue to stay in touch.

**9. Helmer Farm (Bl 2, lot 5) - No Change** - Mr. Helmer decided to decrease the size of the exception area from 5 acres to two, which slowed the process, then title issues arose. These issues have not been resolved and there seems to be no way to subordinate the reverse mortgage. Owner may try to subdivide and sell off some lots to get out of debt. If he does this he will have to reapply.

5.

HLT has gotten a six month extension on the approved federal funds, **but will not try to extend it past that point.**

**10. Zander-** (Block 5, Lot 3) - **No Change** - SADC has given final approval and all issues have been resolved. Surveys are underway but going slowly because of changes. They are trying for a February closing, but there has been no decision yet on the Federal money. An issue with the new restrictions on the revised Federal program farms has cropped up with the State and has not yet been resolved.

**11. Perrotti** - (Block 23 Lot 11) - **No Change** - The family approached SADC for the State Direct Easement Purchase Program and the State is processing this application. The family has accepted the certified value offered by the State (despite issues with the solar company).

The State has awarded title and survey contracts and expects to be able to close soon without the use of any Federal funding. The Township Committee has passed a resolution in support of the preservation of this farm. Unfortunately, the PennEast pipeline runs through this farm.

**12. 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.

**14. Perrotti - No Change** - Block 7 Lot 14.10 - 52 acres on Oak Grove Road, adjacent on the south side to the preserved DeSapio farm. The owner is looking for the most profitable way to proceed with his investment property. He has 4 approved lots ready to build on when the economy picks up. He is in no rush to do anything. He was really just doing research on how much he could get for preservation when he called the State. He would ideally like to get \$15,000/acre for the easement.

**15. 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.

Everyone thanked Liz Schmid for her report.

#### Updated Preserved OS/Farmland Map for March

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained she will have an updated Preserved OS/Farmland map for everyone to review at the March meeting.

6.

**New Business**

Copy of Letter from SADC Re: Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Application Green Light Review for Block 6, Lot 26, and 26.01

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Memo from the Chair Environmental Commission - Re: Sustainable Aquaculture Systems, Inc. Block 15.01 Lot 1 in Kingwood Township Block 49 Lots 21 and 23 in Franklin Township

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the memo from Environmental Commission Chairwoman, Debbie Kratzer. She explained that Debbie Kratzer put a lot of effort into putting together comments regarding concerns of the Sustainable Aquaculture Systems Wastewater Plan, which she stated were never sent to the State due to a few misunderstandings.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained the impact on the groundwater withdrawal and the quality and flow, which will affect the wells in the township. She noted that water is a very large concern in this area.

Resolution No. 2015 - 127 Resolution to Oppose to Consent to the Proposed Water Quality Management (WQM) Plan Amendment Entitled Sustainable Aquaculture Systems Inc.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the resolution adopted by the Township Committee on December 3, 2015.

**Old Business**

Horseshoe Bend Park - Update

Richard Dodds explained that the township would like to do a ribbon cutting in the spring for the new property currently purchased called the church property. He explained that Heather Haberle offered to be the lead person who will be involved in planning the event. He noted thanks to Heather Haberle for taking this on to help out.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained how a person came and used a snow blower in the area where the leash free dog area is located so the public could still use the field.

7.

Richard Dodds explained that the owners of the Devils Tea Table received a grant, but they did not use it. The grant money can be spent on properties that can be seen from Route 29, or Route 32.

He explained a few properties over the overhead projector that are for sale along Route 29 in Kingwood Township that would be a good purchase and contiguous with the Horseshoe Bend Park. He noted that he will be looking into this offer. He noted that he will be meeting with the State on February 9, 2016 to discuss this further.

Conference Call-In to Participate in Meetings - Draft Guidelines From Heather Haberle for Remote Access Information for Board, Committee and Commission Members

Sandra McNicol explained how Heather Haberle prepared remote access guidelines for the program. The Open Space and Ag Committees looked them over and feel that they look good.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol feels that this should be tabled until the Township Committee can review and approve it.

Everyone thanked Heather Haberle for all her help and work on the guidelines to initiate this procedure.

Richard Dodds explained that it is now set up and in working use. He noted that Heather Haberle has called in and is currently participating in this meeting this evening. The system is working well and members of the Advisory Committees are now able to participate in meetings.

Copy of Resolution No. 2016 - 07 DEP Green Acres Program - Enabling Resolution

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Update of County Meeting from January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 - Updated Open Space Trust Fund Plan

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed and explained that she submitted a few comments. She noted that no one from the committees attended the meeting. She feels that it is fairly well written.

8.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that she updated the portion on Kingwood Township and explained the changes and comments she sent into the County. She noted that they are still accepting comments if anyone is interested.

Announcement for Purchase of "The Sanctuary" Hunterdon County Democrat

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the announcement that she prepared for the newspaper.

There was a brief discussion regarding the property and the name chosen "The Sanctuary". William Pandy expressed how he is not comfortable calling the property "The Sanctuary" if hunting is to be allowed. He feels that it just does not sound right. This will be discussed at the Township Committee Meeting and brought back to the Open Space and Ag Advisory Committees to discuss further.

**PennEast Pipeline - Update**

Richard Dodds noted that the meeting on January 20, 2016 here at the township was very informative. He explained all those who attended the meeting. Richard Dodds and William Pandy gave a brief overview of what was discussed at the meeting.

There was a discussion regarding the large drones flying over properties for surveys.

Sandra McNicol explained that she had good news to share. It was just released from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation that Somerset County purchased the development rights on Friday for \$5.87 million, ensuring that the Rattlesnake Bridge Road property the Lana Lobell Horse Farm, which includes a mile of frontage along the Lamington River will remain farmland. It was announced Monday, February 1, 2016. The land had been approved for a subdivision of nine estate homes in 2007, but never sold.

**Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor**

There were no public comments.

**Adjournment**

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by Lee Frank and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:39P.M. **All Voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.**

**Respectfully submitted,  
Cynthia L. Keller  
Secretary**



