

OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2016
7:00PM

Call to Order

The Regular meeting of Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees was called to order at 7:22P.M. Chairwoman 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

| <u>Present</u> | <u>Absent</u> |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Sandra McNicol | Heather Haberle |
| Diana Haywood | Karen Hertzog |
| John Mathieu | Phil Lubitz |
| Lee Frank | |

Agricultural Advisory Committee

| <u>Present</u> | <u>Absent</u> |
|------------------|------------------|
| William Pandy | Edward Kralovich |
| Richard Dodds | Susan Goeckeler |
| Cynthia Niciecki | |

Approval of Minutes

Motion and Approval of the March 1, 2016 Meeting Minutes of the Open Space/Agricultural Advisory Committees

2.

It was moved by Diana Haywood, seconded by Richard Dodds and carried to approve the March 1, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees.

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

Correspondence

Article from Ed Kralovich - From the NJ Farm Bureau - County Open Space Funds

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the article regarding County Open Space Funds in the NJ Farm Bureau. The Committee members discussed how the program has changed and the County funding is now depleted.

Reports

Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid (Report for April, 2016)

Liz Schmid was present to review the following report:

Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee

April 5, 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 February are in bold face type.

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. As recent farm appraisals have been coming in very low, I have spoken to Rick Dalrymple about what his lowest acceptable price would be. **After talking it over with his brother, they agreed that the \$7,000/ acre number is about what they want. They do not want to give the property away.**

3.

The owner was very upset that I had talked him into applying as a municipal PIG and now we are not wanting to do appraisals because of one or two low values in the area.

Rick Steffey at the County has volunteered to speak with him to see if he can get him to understand how the system works. He did tell me that the County has used its State money on other farms so that transferring the property into the County Pig permanently will not work. The fact that their property lies partially in the commercial zone should help in getting the appraisal numbers up? Have we heard anything back from the Township attorney on the old option agreement? If Dalrymples want a higher number than we think might come in, does the Township willing to pay for up to two thirds of the cost of one appraisal if the family will pay for one third?

One Lowell Realty Inc. (Lipka) - Bl 17, lot 14 (30.89 acres) Flag lot on Barbertown-Point Breeze Rd.- The owner of this property just wants to get rid of it and is willing to donate it to anyone who will take it. It is wetlands and he tried to develop it and now has an open lien from DEP on the property. He (or maybe his estate) does not want to or cannot pay the lien off. DEP says the lien consists of a \$12,000 fine and a \$6,000 penalty for not having complied with an administrative order. The fine was for placing fill and cut vegetation into wetlands and wetland transition areas. The fine and penalty stay with the offending owner, but DEP would require the situation to be remediated. HLT has no interest in the property. It is not near any other preserved land. Does the Township have any interest?

Liz Schmid explained that the owners are willing to give the property away and asked the township if they would be interested. The Committees discussed the possibility of accepting the property if they are really interested in giving it away.

Tranquility Farms LP - For financial reasons, this farm is not eligible for Federal funds so County and Municipal PIGs were not feasible. The State has sent the owners an option agreement package. The State had questioned why we cannot contribute toward this project and we responded. **Appraisals have been returned and issues are being resolved.**

4.

Milford - (Block 15, Lot 1) - 39 acres. The landowners have rejected the appraised value. They could reapply in the future if the market improves.

Kocsis Property (Grossman) - Property is preserved.

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 Planning Board for a lot line adjustment and the State is waiting for that to be finalized before closing. **The State is waiting for the lot division deeds to be recorded. Closing will follow.**

Zander- (Block 5, Lot 3)- Closing is waiting on Freeholder approval of use of our County money on the project. That should happen tonight. County Counsel will then figure out how to coordinate the funds for closing.

Helmer Farm (Bl 2, lot 5) - The County has sent the attorneys a letter to resolve the subordination issue now or the application will be rejected. - 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. HLT has gotten a six month extension on the approved federal funds, but will not try to extend it past that point. She is trying to see if this old Federal money can be transferred to another property.

5.

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 to 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.

Maritan - (Bl 33 Lot 25), 104.71 acres - **No Change** - 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, but the family has been told that there is no money available now.

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.

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.

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.

Perrotti - No Change - Block 7 Lot 14.10 - 52 acres on Oak Grove Road, adjacent on the south side to the preserved DeSapio farm.

6.

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.

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.

New Business

Flyer - 2016 Kingwood Twp. Stream Bank Clean-Up and Native Species Planting - Saturday, April 16, 2016

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the flyer regarding the Stream Bank Clean-Up and Native Species Planting event scheduled on April 16, 2016. She explained what they planted last year and stated that it is a lot of fun and invited anyone that is interested.

Sustainable Aquaculture Systems

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that representatives from Sustainable Aquaculture Systems attended the Environmental Commission Meeting in March. She reviewed what they talked about and noted the Environmental Commission asked a lot of questions and expressed their concerns.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that the representatives from Sustainable Aquaculture did not know anything about the shortage of water in the wells in the township and also they did not know anything about the Penn East Pipeline coming through.

There was a brief discussion regarding MEL Chemicals. John Mathieu noted that he has been on the Planning Board for 26 years and he knows that the company, which was call MEI years ago use to give the township a copy of the test results of the wells each month. He noted that there was a remediation program at that time. Diana Haywood and Sandra McNicol noted that MEL does not give the township anything at this time.

7.

The Committees expressed their concerns for the amount of water Sustainable Aquaculture are planning to use for their business.

Old Business

Horseshoe Bend Park - Update

Richard Dodds explained that a gentleman named, Michael Flood from Frenchtown volunteers to come and removes the doggie bags and disposes of them.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol would like to have a sign made and paid through Clean Communities to state: "Welcome to Kingwood Township Dog Park Maintained by Volunteers "Please Cleanup After Your Dog". She noted that she will be ordering this sign within the next month.

Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund Plan

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that the County sent information on the plan and they asked for comments. She noted that the township did not have many comments to add, but that she changed the comments under Kingwood Township. She noted that they made a few changes in the Agricultural goals. It was noted that the Preserved Farmland is not like open space in the fact that it has to be maintained, but that the farmer takes care of that, which is already in the plan. She noted that the plan has been approved, which is basically a list of their goals. She feels that the next thing we need to pay attention to is when they start working on their budget.

Horseshoe Bend Park East Dedication - Saturday, May 21, 2016

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that Heather Haberle is working on this dedication and will have more information for everyone within the next week.

There was a suggestion for a short hike on the day of the dedication.

Cynthia Niciecki suggested that the new signs for the Horseshoe Bend Park East be put in a certain area of the new park. She explained this is because the landowner who lives near the property is very uncomfortable with cars being parked near her driveway.

8.

Cynthia Niciecki suggested that signs be put up on the other side of the house on the property that state "No Unauthorized Vehicles Beyond This Point". All the Committee Members agreed this would be the best thing to do.

PennEast Pipeline - Update

William Pandy and Cynthia Niciecki noted that they attended recent meetings for the PennEast Pipeline. Richard Dodds noted that there is a meeting scheduled for anyone that is interested at the Old Fairview School House on Sunday, April 17, 2016 from 1:00PM to 3:00PM.

Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by John Mathieu and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:18P.M. **All** voted **Aye** on **Roll Call Vote**.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Keller
Secretary