

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2010
7:00PM

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee and the Agriculture Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:05P.M. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol called the meeting to order and read the following notice requirements.

NOTIFICATION 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 14th, 2010, and by telefaxing a copy of the notice to the Star Ledger, and the Express Times on January 8, 2010. A copy of the notice was also posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building and Post Office on January 8, 2010.

Roll Call

Open Space Advisory Committee

Present: Sandra McNicol
Phil Lubitz
James Burke
Lee Frank
Karen Hertzog

Absent: Richard Dodds
John Mathieu

Agriculture Advisory Committee

Present: Elaine Niemann
Cynthia Niciecki
William Pandy
Ed Kralovich

Absent: Pete D'Costa

Approval of Minutes

Motion and approval of the October 7, 2010 Open Space
Advisory Committee/Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting
Minutes

2.

It was moved by Phil Lubitz, seconded by Bill Pandy and carried to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2010 Open Space Advisory Committee/Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting.

Comments: No comments.

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	- S.McNicol, P.Lubitz, J.Burke, L.Frank, E.Niemann, C.Niciecki, W.Pandy, E.Kralovich
	Nay	- None
	Abstain	- K. Hertzog
	Absent	- R.Dodd J. Mathieu, P. D'Costa

Correspondence

Copy of Letter to the State Agriculture Development Board

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the letter sent by Chairman William Pandy of the Agriculture Advisory Committee.

Copy of Letter to Kevin Richardson

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Copy of Letter to the Kingwood Twp. Planning Board re: Right to Farm Application

Chairwoman Sandra reviewed. She stated that the Planning Board has received the application, and they will be reviewing it at their next meeting.

Two Copies of Letters to the Township Committee with requests from the Open Space/Ag Committees

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the letters, which were sent to the Township Committee. She noted that tonight was Karen Hertzog's first meeting as a member and welcomed her to the Committee.

3.

Sandra McNicol also explained the second letter, which was also sent to the Township Committee requesting that they support a Memorandum of Agreement to support long-term protection and enhancement of the lands. These properties include the Mergott property Block 41, Lots 16, 23, Block 40, Lot 24, and Block 41.01, Lot 2, the Trap Rock property Block 40, Lots 20, 26, and 26.01. This agreement is between the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Parks and Forestry, the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance, and the Township of Kingwood. She noted that the Township Committee reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement at their meeting on November 1, 2010, and voted to be in support of the agreement.

Memorandum - Re: Revised Policy#2008-02 Open Space, Farmland Preservation and Historic Preservation Policy Adopted October 5, 2010

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that this is the revised policy for preservation for the County. She reviewed the letter from Kevin Richardson, which included a copy of a Resolution, adopted on October 5, 2010, and a copy of the revisions to the Policy. Sandra stated that the Committee should table this for now and read it over, and discuss any questions or comments they have at next months Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting.

Reports

Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid
(Report for November 4, 2010)

Liz reviewed her report:

OPEN SPACE/AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT NOVEMBER 1, 2010

1. Five Kingwood farms have submitted applications for farmland preservation for this round. The Zander farm (Block 5, Lot 3), the Gross farm (Block 5, Lot 4.03), the Helmer farm (Block 2, Lot 5), and the Search (Makatura) farm (Block 7, Lot 6) applied through the County PIG program. The Tozzi farm (Block 20, Lot 7) applied through the Kingwood PIG.

4.

The County staff will be ranking these farms over the next month or so and then will present the ranked list to the CADB for approval. That list is then sent to the Freeholders for final approval for County funding.

The County staff is willing to be flexible and switch farms between programs if it seems appropriate at a later time. Since applicants for both programs are thrown onto the same list, it does not matter much which program the farm applies for. For a rough estimate that totals 299 acres. If the average cost per acre was 9,000, (we have had higher and lower amounts paid in the past two years) the total preservation cost would be \$2,691,000. The Township piece of that would be \$538,200. The largest piece (103 acres, Search farm) has agreed to apply for Federal Farm and Ranchland money if we get that far.

2. As the Tozzi farm was not on our original list of targeted farms, I am sending in a revision to the State of the Township Farmland Preservation plan. As it only adds one farm and deletes the farms that have now been preserved. I believe that we can get away with not going the whole nine yards with a Planning Board hearing, etc. If Planning Board or our attorney would like to disagree, we need to move quickly, as the revisions need to be in to the State by December 12. I am trying to keep this as reasonable as possible.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that both farms are in the upper north part of the Township, and that they are both very nice properties for preservation.

Attendees for Farmland Status Meetings/October 20, 2010

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol stated that Liz Schmid's next Farmland Status meeting is scheduled to be November 20, 2010.

Old Business

Kugler Woods Memorandum of Agreement - Paperwork received at 10/07/2010 Mtg. Kate Buttolph Present to Speak

5.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol welcomed Kate Buttolph from the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance to the meeting. Kate Buttolph explained that she met with the State representatives, and that they reviewed the properties noted in the Memorandum of Agreement. She noted that the Agreement was approved and that the next step was with Katherine Suttle, who is the State Representative at Bulls Island.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed a map of the properties that will be monitored for the easements. She explained to everyone that this is where they went for their hike last spring. Kate Buttolph noted that once the State signs the agreement, then they can schedule walks through the property.

Chairman of the Agriculture Advisory Committee, William Pandy discussed the problem regarding the ATV's on several of the open properties in the Township. Kate Buttolph stated that she will try to contact the owners of the property to notify them of the problem of the ATV's and how they are ruining the land. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol gave Kate Buttolph a map to review to show her where the ATV's are being seen. Jack MacConnell a resident of the Township, offered to take pictures of ATV's, and the damage they have done on all the properties. He explained that this may be a way to stop them and encouraged them to clean up the properties that they damaged. Ms. Buttolph stated that she will research as to who she can speak to about the problem and will get back to Mr. Jack MacConnell and any others that are interested.

Fall Hike Review - Preserved Augustine Farm

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that the fall hike was at the Augustine farm on October 16th. She stated that there were approximately about 16 people who attended and that it is a very beautiful farm as they also saw horses on a family members property. Sandra noted that it was very nice of Margaret Augustine to allow the Committees and those interested to walk the grounds.

Preservation Signs

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that the preserved signs are not ready at this time.

6.

She explained that she has contacted the sign company and they informed her that are working on the signs, and they should be ready as soon as possible. Member Phil Lubitz suggested that the Township have a dedication of each farm when the signs are installed. A member of the Committee suggested that the preservation sign for Helen Gergar, should be dedicated before the Gergar property goes up for auction next month. Sandy McNicol explained that the property is located on Oak Summit Road in Kingwood Township. It was noted that the Leon's have life rights to farm the preserved property.

Hunterdon Land Trust - Activity update

The Committee discussed this earlier in the meeting.

Open Space Recreation Plan Element for Master Plan Approval 10/12/2010

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that this has been approved by the Township's Planning Board.

Solar Energy Ordinance - Revised 10/25/2010

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that the Planning Board spent many hours on the ordinance, and feels it is a fairly good ordinance. She explained some of the items they discussed and amended. She stated that there were questions from the residents as to whether there would be annual inspections each year for the panels. There was a very lengthy discussion on the soil and water run off of the properties where the solar panels are being considered. Sandra McNicol suggested that any suggestions and comments anyone may have should go to the Townships Planning Board. She stated that the next Planning Board Meeting would be held on Tuesday November 9th at 7:30pm. There were many stories shared about the several families that have signed contracts to the solar companies for their farms.

County Open Space Manual

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

New Business

7.

Open Space Preservation - Trstensky Blk 24 Lots 13 & 13.10

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that she went to the property sight and worked on the land ranking. She explained how she and Liz Schmid, Farmland Preservation Coordinator have been working on this together.

Kate Buttolph discussed the Trstensky property and other properties that the Land Trust is interested in preserving along that area. She discussed several properties that are vacant along Route 29. Kate explained how the score rankings could be made higher and ground water recharge.

Everyone thanked Kate Buttolph for coming to the meeting.

Open Space Trust Fund - Budget and Bonding

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the information, which was provided by the Township's C.F.O. Diane Laudenbach.

Total Amount of money currently in the Kingwood Township Open Space Trust Fund:

\$361,020.09 (which includes the 2010 open space tax)

Total amount collected in 2009 - \$211,800.00

BANs (Bond Anticipation Notes)

Interest on the BANs are renewed annually

Interest paid in 2010 - \$31,120.49 so far this year, plus there is a renewal due in December on the \$661,000 - The Interest rate was 1.75% and should amount to approximately \$11,600.00.

Interest paid in 2009 - \$19,795.00

Interest paid in 2008 - \$00.00

Funds are held in a bank account belonging to Kingwood Township

Mayor James Burke explained how Bonds and BANs are paid for by the County open space tax.

8.

There was a brief discussion on an update of the Horseshoe Bend Road Property.

2011 Budget Request for Open Space Committee

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed expenses for 2010. There was a discussion on maps the Committees would like to have available regarding the preserved properties throughout the Township. The Committees all agreed that they will keep the budget request for 2011 the same amount as last year.

It was moved by Lee Frank, seconded Jim Burke and carried to request to the Township Committee the amount of \$600.00 for the Open Space account for 2011, and to amend the motion to include the Agriculture Advisory Committee to the same budget account as the Open Space account.

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	- S. McNicol, J. Burke, L. Frank, K. Hertzog, E. Niemann, C. Nieciecki, W. Pandey, E. Kralovich
	Nay	- P. Lubitz
	Abstain	- None
	Absent	- R. Dodd J. Mathieu, P. D'Costa

Public Comment – Privilege of the Floor

No Comments

Other Matters

Adjournment

It was moved by James Burke, seconded by Lee Frank and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 P.M. **All voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Keller,
Secretary