

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 2, 2015
7:00PM

Call to Order

A Regular meeting of Open Space Advisory Committee 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

Sandra McNicol
Phil Lubitz
Diana Haywood
Lee Frank
Karen Hertzog

Absent

John Mathieu
Heather Haberle

Agricultural Advisory Committee

Present

Richard Dodds
William Pandy

Absent

Cynthia Niciecki
Susan Goeckeler
Edward Kralovich

2.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that there would be a meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee. She explained that there were not enough members for a quorum for the Agricultural Advisory Committee this evening.

Approval of Minutes

Motion and Approval of the May 5, 2015 Meeting Minutes of the Open Space/Agricultural Advisory Committees

These will be tabled until the next meeting when members from both Committees will be present to approve the May 5, 2015 minutes.

Correspondence

N/A

Reports

Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid (Report for June 2015)

Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee June, 2015

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 May are in bold face type.

1. **Perrotti** - (Block 23 Lot 11) - The family approached SADC for the State Direct Easement Purchase program. **They are currently waiting for the appraisal to come back and the State is about to select it for this program. HLT had to resubmit the application for Federal funds to cover the municipal contribution due to a change in the application forms.** The Township Committee has passed a resolution in support of the preservation of this farm. Unfortunately, the PennEast pipeline runs through this farm. While the Township had decided to take this farm into the Municipal PIG program to use some of our money at the State, the preservation would go faster if it goes State Direct, and it would not necessarily be dependent on getting Federal money to complete. It will therefore continue in the State Easement Purchase Program. The family has added an additional residential lot to this application.

3.

2. Dalrymple - Block 6 lots 26 (33.4 acres) and 26.01(18.55 acres) - The landowner has expressed interest in preserving these two adjoining lots. I explained the three available programs to him and referred him to the County for a County PIG application. I also advised him about the need for Federal funding to complete a project and the eventual need to apply for that money. I explained that State money would be more constrained than in the past, because of the new funding source. He understood this. **I spoke with the State about a Direct Easement Purchase application, but the farm is not large enough for them to consider. Would it be possible to do a Municipal PIG application for this property to use some of the money being held at the State for the Township? We have already lost \$190,000 for non-use and the other \$500,000 is at risk.**

3. Tranquility Farms LP - For financial reasons, this farm will not be eligible for Federal funds. It has been referred to the State for possible State Direct Easement Purchase.

4. 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. She has made no move to take this to CADB again. **When the County rejected this property for a County open space grant, one of their major issues was the lack of a specific plan for its use. I have offered to work with Jackie to try to come up with something that would be acceptable to the County. After that we would have to figure out some additional funding sources.**

5. Milford (Block 15, Lot 1) - 39 acres. The replacement application for Federal money was approved. **SADC has granted Green Light approval.** The County has ordered appraisals and the preservation process will continue.

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). The second area is Block 5, Lot 6 (69.54 acres) that extends into Frenchtown for maybe 20 acres more.

4.

Block 6, Lots 12 and 13.01 did not score highly enough to qualify for Direct Easement Purchase funding for this round. 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. **Contracts have been awarded for survey and title work for Block 5 Lot 6.**

7. Zander- (Block 5, Lot 3) - SADC has given final approval and contracts have been mailed out to the owner. **Some issues have arisen and are being discussed by the attorneys**

8. Helmer Farm (Bl 2, lot 5)- Mr. Helmer decided to decrease the size of the exception area from 5 acres to two, which slowed the process. Then title issues arose. He says that the title issues have been resolved.

This is being reviewed by counsel at both county and State level. They will make the final call on what is to be done as far as the title is concerned. The survey has been completed. **The owner has approached Farm Credit East in an attempt to resolve the financial issues that may kill this application.**

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. **Title and Survey contracts have been awarded so things are progressing.**

10. Felix II - (Block 12 Lot 1) - **No Change** - 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. 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.

5.

11. **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.

12. **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.

Phil Lubitz and Richard Dodds asked Liz Schmid a few questions regarding the funds. Liz Schmid explained the process.

Everyone thanked Liz Schmid for her report.

New Business

E-mail and Request from Margaret Sleeper - Friends of Horseshoe Bend Park - Re: Compost Toilet for South Entrance Park

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol briefly reviewed and noted that everyone received this e-mail. She noted that several other individuals e-mailed and gave their suggestions, requests and recommendations for a compost toilet at the Horseshoe Bend Park.

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol explained that the Open Space and Ag Committee referred this to the Parks and Recreation Committee. She noted that the Parks and Recreation Committee decided to order two handicap accessible portable potty facilities, which are now located at the Horseshoe Bend Park on both sides of the park.

Richard Dodds noted that the Parks and Recreation Committee suggested that a subcommittee be formed consisting two Open Space members and two Parks and Recreation members to discuss the compost toilets and many other needs to be discussed for the parks in Kingwood Township. The Parks and Recreation Committee will be in contact to form a subcommittee.

(SADC) State Agriculture Development Committee Spending/Dalrymple

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the sheet explaining Farmland Preservation using SADC funds over the projector.

6.

She noted that Pam Theire no longer works for the State, and that a woman named Lisa Stern will be the new representative from the State who the township will work with.

There was a discussion regarding the use of funds for the Dalrymple property. The Open Space Committee discussed the possible sources to obtain additional funds.

Richard Dodds reviewed the wetlands on a few of the properties over the projector.

Everyone agreed to pursue the Dalrymple properties.

There was a discussion regarding inviting the owners of the property out to Kingwood Township and show them the Horseshoe Bend Park and other areas of the Township.

Old Business

Horseshoe Bend Park - Update

Richard Dodds noted that the Parks and Recreation Committee has ordered two new signs for the Leash Free Dog Area, which are a list of the rules and regulations within that area. He reviewed the list over the overhead projector that the township would like enforced.

PennEast Pipeline - Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol asked if anyone new of anything new going on regarding the PennEast Pipeline. William Pandy noted that there will be a meeting with the PennEast Pipeline and their attorney at the County Complex for properties owners.

Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor

No public comments.

Adjournment

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by Lee Frank and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:35PM. **All Voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Cynthia L. Keller,
Secretary**

