

OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2016
7:00PM

Call to Order

The Regular meeting of Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees was called to order at 7:09P.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	John Mathieu
Phil Lubitz	Lee Frank
Diana Haywood	
Karen Hertzog	
Heather Haberle	

Agricultural Advisory Committee

<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Richard Dodds	Ed Kralovich
Cynthia Niciecki	William Pandy
Susan Goeckeler	

Approval of Minutes

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

2.

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by Cynthia Niciecki and carried to approve the April 5, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committees.

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

Correspondence

Article on the Sanctuary Preserved - Sunday Democrat April 2016

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the article of the Sanctuary Preserve. She noted that someone from the Land Trust put this article together regarding the property, which was known as the property in Kingwood Township called "The Sanctuary Preserved". Chairwoman Sandra McNicol stated that this is the property recently purchased by the township, which is now called Horseshoe Bend East and formerly the Church property.

Richard Dodds noted that there are three sections that were built onto the home. He noted the first section was construction in 1861. He described the inside of the home and the structure of how it was built. There was a picture circulated around the room of the inside of the attic. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that it is a very interesting and well written article.

News - This Week In Farm Bureau - Under Open Space Funding - Request from Ed to Encourage Everyone to Write a Letter to the Governor

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the article regarding Open Space Funding given to the Committees from Edward Kralovich. The article explained that the Farm Bureau members are encouraged to join a letter writing campaign to the Governor urging him to sign the open space bill.

Reports

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

**Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee
May 3, 2016**

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 from April 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 **and it has been approved 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. **The landowners have agreed to partially pay for one appraisal to see if easement value will be acceptable to them. The Township has received proposals to appraise the property and will chose an appraiser at Thursday's meeting. An additional complication is that CADB has insisted that the two lots be merged before preservation. That would entail Planning Board action and significant cost to the landowners, as well as slowing the process. SADC is suggesting that Federal language be used in any deed of easement that would allow preservation in the present configuration and preclude any separation of the lots in the future. The landowners have agreed to this and we will amend the application and try to have CADB amend their preliminary approval so we can go ahead with the appraisal in the near future.**

2. Tranquility Farms LP - For financial reasons, this farm is not eligible for Federal funds so County and Municipal PIGs were not feasible. **Certified value has been established and an offer has gone to the landowners**

3. Milford - (Block 15, Lot 1) - 39 acres. The landowners have rejected the appraised value. They could reapply in the future if the market improves. **They are also interested in acquiring other property in the Township, especially if they can get farmland preservation help. They are currently looking at Bl 8 Lot 26 (82 acres) and Block 9 Lots 26(13 acres) and 17(62 acres). They would like to know if the Township would be interested in supporting these properties for preservation.**

4. 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.

4.

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. A lot line adjustment has been completed on the family farm (Bl 6, Lots 12 and 13.01). **Closing is being held up by details, but should take place by the end of the month.**

5. Zander- (Block 5, Lot 3)- Closing is waiting on County Counsel and getting our funds out of the County account.

6. Helmer Farm (Bl 2, lot 5) - The County has sent the attorneys a letter to the landowner terminating the application due to multiple financial issues. They have been told they can reapply if the situation changes.

7. Varela (Bl 33 Lot 12 - 63 acres, Bl 32 Lots 5 - 11 acres and 6 - 16 acres) on Barbertown Idell Rd. This is a complicated estate situation with squabbling heirs. The heir that lives on the property wants to preserve so that she can keep the farm together as a farm. Others just want money out of it. They are presently getting a new appraisal on the property to see what is the realistic value in the current market. The State has no funds available for direct purchase and is sending pending applications to the Counties. Heir on the property wants to put in an application for consideration in the Harvest Round (fall). She will also have to apply for Federal funding to cover municipal costs. Do we want to do a municipal application or let her apply with the County? We also have to expand our Ag Development area to include the farm if we want to support the project.

8. 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 the property. There are wetlands on the property and an open lien from DEP. He (or maybe his estate) does not want to or cannot pay the lien off. NJDEP 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?

5.

9. **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.

10. **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.

11. **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.

12. **Perrotti** - (Block 23 Lot 11) - **No Change** - 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.

13. **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.

6.

Everyone thanked Liz Schmid for her monthly report.

Richard Dodds reviewed a few properties that could be a possibility to purchase within the bluff area along Route 29. He showed several properties from Google Earth up on the projector for everyone to review.

New Business

Planning Horseshoe Bend Park East Dedication for Saturday, May 21, 2016

Heather Haberle was present and discussed the details she worked on for the Horseshoe Bend Park East Dedication, which is planned for Saturday, May 21, 2016. She explained that she first planned a large event, but then realized since she has not been to a dedication before and after speaking to a few members that it would be a good idea to make it smaller. Richard Dodds offered to help Heather Haberle by meeting and discussing following up on the calls and making arrangements for the event.

It was discussed to make the time of the event at 4:00P.M. and that the sun does not go down until 8:00P.M., therefore, speeches, hikes and other activities could be planned.

Richard Dodds suggested to invite neighbors and organizations that were involved in the purchase of the farm. The Committees discussed several ideas that they would like to do and serve at the event. Richard Dodds suggested including a map of the property to hand out to everyone. He explained a trail grant, which he has applied for this property.

Richard Dodds and Heather Haberle will be meeting at the Horseshoe Bend East on Monday, May 9, 2016 to talk about the arrangements.

Old Business

2016 Kingwood Twp. Stream Bank Clean-Up and Native Species Planting - April 16, 2016 - Update and Review of the Event

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol and Richard Dodds reviewed the Stream Bank Clean-Up and Native Species Planting of April 16th at the Kingwood Park grounds. Sandra McNicol noted this was her third time participating in the Stream Bank Clean-Up and Native Species Planting. She was surprised at the lack of children that came, especially since the flyer was sent to the Kingwood School. Bob O'Neil provided the native species plants that were planted along the stream.

6.

Sustainable Aquaculture Systems

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that there will be the reopening of the Open Public Hearing at Franklin Township's Planning Board. Diana Haywood suggested that once Kingwood Township receives the notice of the meeting they can plan who will attend.

Sandra McNicol and Diana Haywood talked about what was discussed at the Environmental Commission meeting on March 22nd when the Sustainable Aquaculture Systems representatives attended a meeting. Sandra McNicol explained the concerns the Environmental Commission has regarding the amount of water that will be used each day when they are up and running.

Horseshoe Bend Park - Update

Richard Dodds gave a brief update of the Horseshoe Bend Park.

Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund Plan - Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed an update on the open space trust fund plan.

Liz Schmid explained a meeting she attended with several organizations in the county who were there. She gave a brief overview of the meeting.

PennEast Pipeline - Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol stated there was another delay for PennEast to file their report. The Committees discussed an article regarding groups that are suing the PennEast Pipeline for trespassing on private property. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that if anyone is interested in obtaining more on the Pipeline to contact her and she will forward the information.

Public Comment - Privilege of the Floor

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

It was moved by Richard Dodds, seconded by Phil Lubitz and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:45P.M. **All** voted **Aye** on **Roll Call Vote**.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Keller
Secretary