

SUSSEX COUNTY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 28, 2013

The meeting opened at 7:40 p.m. by Chairman Lundin in the Freeholder Meeting Room at the Sussex County Administrative Center, One Spring Street, Newton, New Jersey. The meeting was held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 of 1975, as amended. Notice has been forwarded to the newspapers and posted on the bulletin board maintained at the Sussex County Administrative Center for public announcement.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cliff Lundin, Chairman
Louis Caruso
Lisa Chammings (7:55 p.m.)
Wolfgang Gstattenbauer
Donald Ploetner
Wes Powers

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Glenn Schweizer, Vice Chairman

STAFF PRESENT: Donna Traylor, CADB Coordinator
Antoinette Wasiewicz, Recording Secretary

ALSO PRESENT: Richard Vohden, Freeholder Liaison

Chairman Lundin welcomed new members, Donald Ploetner and Wes Powers to the Open Space Committee. He asked each of them to introduce themselves to the rest of the Committee members.

MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:

A motion was made by Louis Caruso to approve the Minutes of October 25, 2012, as presented. The motion was seconded by Cliff Lundin. All were in favor, with abstentions from Wolfgang Gstattenbauer, Donald Ploetner and Wes Powers. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

A. SUSSEX COUNTY PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT, GREEN ACRES, 1/22/13:

A letter was received from Green Acres advising that Green Acres Project 1900-04-046 is in jeopardy of being cancelled for lack of progress. The Project Agreement for this expired on November 9, 2012. If the County is actively pursuing another parcel for which it would need some or all of the funds proposed for cancellation, Richard Osborn must be contacted immediately. This information was also being researched by the County Administrator regarding the most recently received P.I.G.

For the benefit of the new members, Donna gave an explanation of the Planning Incentive Grant.

B. SUSSEX COUNTY RAILROAD ROW, GREEN ACRES, 2/7/13:

A copy of a letter to County Administrator, John Eskilson from Green Acres was received. Green Acres made an offer to purchase the Sussex Rail Road Right of Way property. They have considered purchase of this site as a future Rail Trail and looked at it in two different acquisition scenarios.

The first is a fee purchase of the entirety with the County of Sussex retaining the right to install underground utilities within the trail right-of-way. The second scenario would be a public access easement purchase. This acquisition would include the top 12" of substrate to allow the installation of a non-motorized public access trail. Sussex County would retain all other rights. Under both scenarios, the proceeds of the purchase price would be used by Sussex County to cap and improve the proposed trail under the guidance and direction of NJ State Park Service according to the letter.

C. RESPONSE TO HAMPTON TOWNSHIP'S AMENDED OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN, 2/28/13:

Hampton Township recently updated their Open Space and Recreation Plan and they asked Donna to review it. Donna provided Eileen Klose, Hampton Township Administrator, with an update on some of their farmland preservation data and made some corrections/comments on the plan.

D. REAPPOINTMENT OF WOLFGANG GSTATTENBAUER TO OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE:

Notification was received from the Clerk of the Board's Office advising that Wolfgang Gstattenbauer was reappointed to the Open Space Committee for a three year term, to expire on December 31, 2015.

E. APPOINTMENT OF WES POWERS TO OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE, 1/4/13:

Notification was received from the Clerk of the Board's Office advising that Wes Powers was appointed to the Open Space Committee for a three year term, effective immediately and expiring on December 31, 2015.

Donna advised the Committee that Donald Ploetner was appointed to the Open Space Committee at yesterday's Freeholder meeting, but that she has not received the notification letter yet.

F. LAND CONSERVANCY OF NJ OUTREACH RE: SC OPEN SPACE PLAN, 2/14/13:

A letter was received from The Land Conservancy of New Jersey regarding the Sussex County Open Space and Recreation Plan. In 2003 The Land Conservancy worked with the Division of Planning, the GIS office and the Open Space Committee to create the County's first Open Space and Recreation Plan. This plan is now ten years old and, with changes in funding and in the economic landscape, they feel it is the right time for Sussex County to update the Plan.

Donna talked about the creation of Sussex County's Open Space and Recreation Plan. She said the bulk of the document is information that does not change, such as the history of the County, soils and geology. There are some chapters that do change, such as what is important to the County now. Unfortunately, the Planning Division does not have staff to work on this. Donna said she and Eric Snyder, the Planning Director, will meet with The Land Conservancy next week.

G. REIMBURSEMENT FOR LAKE ILIFF PROPERTY ANDOVER TWP., GREEN ACRES, 2/15/13:

A State payment voucher in the amount of \$11,500.00 has been received from Green Acres for the acquisition of the Lake Iliff property in Andover Township. The voucher represents final payment of the matching grant for which Sussex County is eligible, based on the eligible land and other costs associated with the acquisition.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. RULES AND REGULATIONS UPDATE:

Donna said she did check with County Counsel and there was one last change to the Open Space Rules and Regulations. She said the Rules and Regulations were originally written in April 2002 and were revised in May 2003 and again in July 2004. About six months ago, the Open Space Committee started examining the Rules and Regulations based on changes that have occurred over the years with the process of the program. Donna provided the members with a copy of the Rules and Regulations and the cover memo. After Chairman Lundin signs the memo, they will be sent to the Freeholder Board. Donna asked the new members to read through the document and to note questions which will be addressed at a future meeting.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Louis Caruso to accept the changes to the Open Space Program Rules and Regulation and to forward them to the Freeholder Board. The motion was seconded by Wolfgang Gstattenbauer and carried unanimously.

B. UPDATE ON FRANCISCO FARM PROJECT:

Donna said this is the only outstanding Open Space project. This project is in Andover Borough, Andover Township and Green Township. Andover Township did not do a Resolution of Support; and the County cannot proceed with an application unless a Resolution of Support by the municipality is received. Therefore, the County can only participate with Andover Borough. (The bulk of the land is in Andover Borough.)

Six months ago, County Counsel prepared the Grant Agreement and sent it to Trust for Public Land. This has yet to be signed and returned. In October, the Trust for Public Land provided the Open Space Committee with a chart showing who was most likely to provide funding for this acquisition. Donna said that yesterday she received an e-mail from Kathy Haake with a new update from Trust for Public Land. She reviewed and discussed with the Committee the confidential funding differences in this newest update as compared to the October update. There is still a gap in fully funding this project.

Chairman Lundin suggested inviting Kathy Haake to an Open Space meeting to address the Committee again.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. SUSSEX COUNTY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MEETING DATES:

A list of 2013 meeting dates for the Open Space Committee was provided to the members. Chairman Lundin said the Open Space Committee typically meets on the fourth Thursday of the month; however, in November and December, they have been scheduled for the third Thursdays due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Wolfgang Gstattenbauer to approve the 2013 meeting dates as scheduled. The motion was seconded by Louis Caruso and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Freeholder Liaison Rich Vohden suggested that the new members visit the Green Acres, Trust for Public Land and The Land Conservancy of New Jersey websites. He said these websites have a lot of good information on them. He also said that they would benefit by sitting in on the Sussex County Agriculture Development Board meetings.

ADJOURNMENT:

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Lisa Chammings. The motion was seconded by Louis Caruso and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.