

SUSSEX COUNTY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

JULY 28, 2016

The meeting opened at 7:35 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  
Glenn Schweizer, Vice Chairman  
Louis Caruso  
Donald Ploetner

MEMBERS EXCUSED: R. Michael Dolan

STAFF PRESENT: Autumn Sylvester, Program Coordinator  
Antoinette Wasiewicz, Recording Secretary

ALSO PRESENT: Carl Lazzaro, Freeholder Liaison  
Wolfgang Gstattenbauer, Frankford Township

**MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:**

A motion was made by Glenn Schweizer to approve the Minutes of May 26, 2016, as presented. The motion was seconded by Louis Caruso. All were in favor, with abstentions from Glenn Schweizer and Donald Ploetner. Motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Autumn said she received a letter from Vernon Township advising that they are withdrawing their first application for the parking lot. They are having difficulty finding additional funding sources to demolish the existing building and for lot improvements. They said they may come with another proposal in the future. They also said they will be sending in a new application for a new project.

Cliff said he has had the opportunity to drive by the site since the last meeting. The house is obviously still occupied and that it is in dilapidated condition. It appeared the lot could accommodate about 30 cars.

Glenn said there was an article in the newspaper regarding a 55-acre property that The Nature Conservancy bought from Brannigan's. Funding was also provided by their private donors and grants. The property is immediately adjacent to another Open Space parcel. He suggested that this parcel be included in the Open Space Plan update under mapping and information because it will not show under Municipal information.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

A. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE – RESOLUTION:

Cliff Lundin said the Open Space Plan update went before the Freeholders last night. He thanked Glenn and Lou Caruso for attending the meeting. Barbara Davis Heskins gave a presentation on the background for the plan. A member of the public talked about eminent domain. It was emphasized that the rules have always been that there be municipal endorsement and a willing seller. The County does not target properties for preservation. There were a few other comments along the same line, but overall, it was well-received.

Freeholder Liaison Lazzaro said in Fredon there were those that had a vision of connecting trails so that there would be a continuous connected trail. To do this, it was necessary to go through privately owned land. The owners were asked for permission to have a pathway go through their property. The property owners were against this. There was then some talk about acquiring the land. He also talked about a redevelopment plan in Hopatcong and that there is a clause in the plan that says the town may use eminent domain for the public good. The clause may never be used, but is part of the plan. He said the clause raises fear in the public. Glenn said the County's policy on land acquisition is implied in the plan but it is not specifically stated.

A draft Resolution was provided to the Committee which represents the Open Space Committee's endorsement of the Open Space Plan update. This Resolution is a revision from what was sent out to the Committee last week. Cliff reviewed the Resolution with the Committee members.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Lou Caruso that the Open Space Committee approves the Resolution and send it to the Freeholders for their approval. The motion was seconded by Donald Ploetner and carried unanimously.

B. DISCUSSION ON NEW COMMITTEE PERSON:

Cliff said in January, the Freeholders appointed two new members to the Open Space Committee, Mike Dolan and Toni-Lu Martin. Ms. Martin has resigned leaving a vacancy on the Open Space Committee. Donald said Stephen Skellenger, from Franklin has expressed an interest in serving on the Open Space Committee. He said he will ask him to submit a letter of interest to the Clerk of the Board.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A. VERNON TOWNSHIP APPLICATION:

This was discussed under Correspondence. Autumn said that the township is waiting for documentation. They came in last week to look at a prior application the town submitted for this property.

B. DISCUSSION REGARDING AUGUST MEETING:

There was some discussion about whether or not the Open Space Committee should have the August meeting. Cliff recommended that the Committee keep the option to having a meeting in case the application comes in from Vernon Township.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Wolfgang Gstattenbauer said that the Open Space Committee and Barbara Davis did an excellent job on the Open Space Plan update.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Donald Ploetner. The motion was seconded by Lou Caruso and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.