

SUSSEX COUNTY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

AUGUST 23, 2012

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
Glenn Schweizer, Vice Chairman
Louis Caruso
Lisa Chamming
Wolfgang Gstattenbauer

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Keith Utter

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

ALSO PRESENT: Freeholder Richard Vohden
Mike Danko, Planning Intern

MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:

A motion was made by Glen Schweizer to approve the Minutes of May 24, 2012 as presented. The motion was seconded by Wolfgang Gstattenbauer. All were in favor, with an abstention from Cliff Lundin. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

A. FREEHOLDER LETTER RE: A. HAMBEL, 6/14/12:

A copy of the Freeholder's Thank You letter to Ailish Hambel was received. The Freeholders expressed their appreciation for her years of dedication and service as a member of the Open Space Advisory Committee.

B. ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

Donna discussed articles relating to the new Smart Phone 'Guide to State Parks' app; the proposed swap of 34 preserved acres in Lebanon Township for 100 acres in Sussex County; and the proposed National Park Status for Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. UPDATE ON LAWLER CLOSING, LAFAYETTE:

Donna reported the Lawler property should close soon. County Counsel has been working with the County Treasurer to get the check cut because County funds are needed. The Land Conservancy contacted Donna for information for a Press Release on this acquisition which she forwarded to the Chair.

The problem with the soil contamination has been resolved. There was some adjustment with acreage; however, Lafayette is getting exactly what they had hoped for for their active recreation needs.

B. FREEHOLDER RESOLUTION FOR FRANCISCO FARM, ANDOVER BOROUGH, 6/13/12:

The Freeholders decided to approve the request to preserve the Francisco property. County dollars amounted to \$400,000 with a \$100,000 match from our Green Acres Planning Incentive grant. This is the amount that was originally requested by the applicant. Donna prepared the Grant Agreement and sent it to County Counsel a few weeks ago.

Donna said she received an e-mail from Kathy Haake, Trust for Public Land. She would like to provide the Open Space Committee with an update on their progress. She was unable to attend this evening's meeting but said she would like to come in September.

There was some discussion about the Planning Incentive Grant deadline. Ms. Haake said she would speak to Rich Osborn at Green Acres about this. Freeholder Rich Vohden said there was some concern by the Freeholders about preserving the Francisco property because it was originally designated as a development area and it was the perfect location for a transit village. However, since it is a beautiful piece of property and it will be attached to Kittatinny State Park, they felt preserving it was the right thing to do. The Committee expressed their appreciation on the Freeholder's decision.

C. DISCUSSION ON OPEN SPACE PLAN:

Donna reported that the Planning Division hired Mike Danko as a summer intern. He will be giving a presentation tonight on the work he has been doing. The Open Space Committee had a discussion on the Class 15's and how they would approach finding out what those acres were.

Mike Danko said he looked at the Open Space Plan to identify what is open space. He used the 15C tax code and determined what should be included as open space. The 15C tax code includes landfills and other things that don't belong as open space. Mike's work included the creation of current open space land categories, local government model editing and the creation of a database for open space based on classifications.

The current Open Space land categories include beaches, camps, historic sites, lakes, municipal parks, national recreation areas, playgrounds, rail trails/RR right of ways, recreational fields, State Parks, rookeries, state forests, trails, watershed protection areas, wildlife management areas and wildlife refuges. He removed landfills, vacant lands, "blanks," cemeteries, infrastructure, Fairgrounds and Schools. Once the Model was altered to include all Open Space land categories, it was possible to populate the database.

Mike said he still has work to do to identify certain parcels. Lisa Chamings asked him to send her the list of properties to be identified in Stillwater Township because the town just completed work on their maps.

D. RULES AND REGULATIONS – UPDATE:

Donna said she completed the rewrite of the Open Space Rules and Regulations and provided it to the Committee members. She asked the Committee to take a last look at the document before it goes to County Counsel.

In the Introduction, information on the second ballot question and the sunset of the first ballot question was added. Cliff Lundin suggested the sunset date of the second ballot question be added.

Eligible Applications remained the same. In Eligible Acquisitions, Item "E" was removed. This dealt with the extension of the application deadline.

In Ineligible Acquisitions, Cliff Lundin suggested that the wording be changed to, "Projects and/or aspects of projects ineligible..." Donna said that she added Items "G" and "H" as agreed. Cliff Lundin suggested that "H" stand on its own.

Allocation of Funds was reworded as agreed. Open Space Project Process had some minor grammatical changes. In the fourth paragraph, "ninety (90) days" was changed to "thirty (30) days." In the last sentence of the fourth paragraph, the word "total" was added before the words, "time frame."

In the first paragraph, Cliff Lundin suggested that all the wording following the words, "those projects" be changed to read, "those projects submitted by eligible applicants." Donna said she will check with County Counsel. The Committee suggested that the last sentence of the first paragraph (dealing with alternate projects) be removed.

In Creation of the Sussex County Open Space Advisory Committee, Donna said she make some minor corrections with proper names and removed the sentence regarding alternate members. The financial disclosure statement was also removed.

In Acquisition Strategies, "A" through "F" remained the same. "G" (multiple partners) was added. Glen Schwetzer suggested that "in municipalities" should follow the word "projects" in Item "F."

In Definitions, Department of Planning was changed to Division of Planning. Donna noted that "Division" should be moved to under "Debt Service" to keep the list alphabetized. Under Farmland Preservation Project, Donna said she clarified the name of the Act as the NJ Agriculture Retention and Development Act.

No other changes were recommended.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Glenn Schweizer to forward the Open Space Rules and Regulations to the County Counsel. The motion was seconded by Louis Caruso and carried unanimously.

Donna directed Mike Danko to speak to the Municipal Clerks to find out the last date of their Open Space Plan review.

NEW BUSINESS:

Donna provided the Open Space Committee with an up-to-date chart on the status of Open Space Projects.

Donna reported that the Harvest Festival is being held at the S.C. Fairgrounds on Saturday, October 13 from 10 am to 4 pm. The Festival will highlight our agri, eco and heritage tourism for Sussex County and northern New Jersey.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Freeholder Vohden said the Budget Committee met and that revenues are again lower than last year. However, it is the Freeholders priority to keep the Open Space tax the same or to raise it some. He also said he had a discussion with Scott Garrett who said that the County should be taking advantage of lower property values by making open space acquisitions.

Freeholder Vohden also said that Lisa Jackson stated under oath to the Congressional Committee that there has not been one proved incidence of water pollution caused by fracking. Also, all the water than has been used in 60 years of fracking in the Delaware Watershed, that much water passes Philadelphia in less than three hours.

ADJOURNMENT:

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Wolfgang Gstattenbauer. The motion was seconded by Louis Caruso and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.