

SUSSEX COUNTY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 17, 2011

The meeting opened at 7:45 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  
Wolfgang Gstattenbauer  
Lori Intoccia

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Glenn Schweizer, Vice Chairman  
Lisa Chammings  
Ailish Hambel  
Keith Utter

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

ALSO PRESENT: John Parke, NJ Audubon Society

Donna advised the Committee members that this is evening's meeting will not be an official meeting due to the lack of a quorum.

**MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:**

Minutes were not available.

Donna advised Lisa Chamblings that her term on the Open Space Committee is due to expire at December 31, 2011 and that she needs to let her know whether or not she wishes to remain on the Committee. Cliff Lundin and Lori Intoccia's terms will also expire on December 31, 2011. Cliff has already expressed his desire to remain on the Committee, Lori needs to decide.

Donna said she received correspondence from the Nature Conservancy regarding the Schuler property that was approved this past funding cycle. They've gone through their closing, submitted their paperwork and the voucher has been executed. This project is one of the three remaining projects in the works. There is nothing new with the other two projects.

Donna prepared a Resolution for the Andover Borough project and it was submitted to the Freeholders at their Agenda Meeting early this week. The Resolution was pulled as there are a number of concerns.

The Governor has given the State Plan new life and it will reinstate the center designations. Andover Borough was one of the County's first centers. Cliff Lundin said most of the center designations have expired so the protections that the towns had with the town centers and the advantages were no longer there. Two weeks ago, the Christie administration announced they have now come up with a new draft State Plan. It basically reinstates the centers without the plan endorsement process. Wolfgang Gstattenbauer said that Frankford Township dropped out of the Plan Endorsement process because of that. This puts Andover Borough back as a center and that particular parcel happens to be the designated area where all the new development was to go. The Freeholder's policy on open space has been they are not going to acquire open space within designated town centers. (The same policy applied to Farmland Preservation.) Also the County's Strategic Growth Plan provided that as a growth area and the County's position has always been that they are not going to spend County dollars on open space within a Strategic Growth designated area. Cliff thought Donna should reach out to the Trust for Public Land and explain to them the present situation.

This leaves the Planning Incentive Grant funds back in the hopper and there are no other projects for Open Space. An outreach went out to all the environmental non-profits and the municipalities but no other applications came in. There has been some discussion about doing another funding round early next year. Donna said this will probably have to be cleared with the Freeholder Board.

Cliff Lundin said there is a group called Common Waters which has representatives from New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. These are states that have watersheds as part of the Delaware River. The group meets on a quarterly basis and shares

experiences and encourages similar efforts throughout the watershed. There are several projects that they are working together on. One of them is project called Common Waters Fund in which they've made monies available to owners of forested land. It will pay for the development of forest stewardship plans with a forester, which is greater than a typical woodland management plan. If the forest stewardship plan requires some best management practices on the forest land, the fund will share it. To date they've had five successful applications from Sussex County. It is being run by the Soil Conservation Districts in the three states. It has to be a stream that reaches the Delaware upstream of the Watergap to qualify.

The Nature Conservancy is involved in Common Waters and their theme has been, "From Forest to Faucet." They are starting to look downstream to see if they can get contributors downstream from the water users.

When asked, Cliff said that fracking is a major issue and there is a subgroup working on that. Common Waters has also worked on land use training for municipal officials.

Donna said the training (called LULA) was a four day event over a month long period. Cliff said three weeks ago he was at an environmental congress run by ANJAC where the DEP Commissioner talked. It was the State's position at that time, that they were going to encourage the installation of 300 wells and when it reaches the 300 number, stop doing the IS and evaluation and determine if additional regulations were necessary. Cliff said that Eric Snyder said there is another geologic formation called the Utica Shale which underlies a good portion of Sussex County. This formation is deeper and can be fracked.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **A. PRESENTATION BY JOHN PARKE, NJ AUDUBON SOCIETY:**

John Parke said the NJ Audubon Society is the oldest conservation organization in the State, founded in 1897. They have no affiliation with the National Audubon Society. NJ Audubon Society works only in New Jersey. They have centers from Cape May to Warren County with their headquarters in Bernardsville.

The NJ Audubon Society's mission is to promote environmental awareness and a conservation ethic. It protects endangered and threatened species and promotes the preservation of New Jersey's natural habitat.

The NJ Audubon Society has three different departments: Education, Research and Conservation. Mr. Parke works in the Conservation Department. He discussed the NJ Audubon Society's work with farmers, USDA and NRCS. He also talked about the "SAVE" program, the success of sunflower crops and local sunflower mazes. Another program Mr. Parke discussed was "Made with Jersey Grown Wood." Wood from properties that are in a Forest Stewardship Plan in the Pine Barrens are making and marketing bird houses made from Atlantic White Cedar wood.

WRP is a Wetlands Reserve Program that NRCS runs. It pays for an easement on a farm property in areas that are either degraded wetlands or farmland that may be marginally productive and brought back to wetlands. They also pay 100% of restoration costs.

The meeting closed at 9:05 p.m.