

OPEN SPACE & AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2009

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Open Space and Agriculture Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:47 P.M. Chairwoman Sandra McNicol called the meeting to order and read the following notice requirements.

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News on January 15th, 2009, and by telefaxing a copy of the notice to the Star Ledger , and the Express Times on January 8, 2009. A copy of the notice was also posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building and Post Office on January 8, 2009.

In order to ensure full public participation in this meeting, all members of this committee or Board, 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 further, all persons are ,the Township. Your cooperation is appreciated.

ROLL CALL

Open Space Advisory Committee

Present - James Burke (arrived at 8:05PM)
Phil Lubitz
Sandra McNicol
Richard Dodds

Absent - John Mathieu
Lee Frank
Linda Pfingst Oesterwinter

2.

At the time of Roll Call Vote, the Open Space Advisory Committee did not have enough members to meet a quorum.

Agriculture Advisory Committee

Present: Elaine Niemann
William Pandy
Cynthia Niciecki
Pete DeCosta

Absent: None

Guest Speakers

Hunterdon Land Trust - To Present the Draft of the Delaware River Stewardship Initiative - Management Plan

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol introduced Katherine Suttle from the Hunterdon County Land Trust. Katherine Suttle was present to introduce a power point presentation of a draft of the Delaware River Stewardship Initiative - Management Plan. Richard Dodds, Co-Chairman of the Open Space Advisory Committee for Kingwood Township has been involved with working on the plan as well. Ms. Suttle explained that the overall goal of the plan is a long-term protection and enhancement of public lands along the Delaware River. Its primary focus is to improve public access to the parkland in Hunterdon County and create a sense of stewardship by engaging local leaders. She explained that the Delaware River corridor within Hunterdon County stretches from Holland Township to West Amwell Township, which includes 9 municipalities having project areas that need attention with two areas located in Kingwood Township. She explained that the Hunterdon Parkland Partnership will be meeting with the State to approach this as a project. She explained that once this is completed, future projects will be easier. She reviewed several aspects of the plan, which include the background, managing the plan, goals, issues, and the challenges and opportunities.

There was a lengthy discussion with the both Advisory Committees. Richard Dodds reviewed the mapped out areas of the Cedar Valley Farm, the Kugler Woods and the old Trap Rock property, which are all located in Kingwood. He described these areas to be very nice walking for hiking. He explained that he would like to put signs up along open roads to mark that these areas are public property.

Phil Lubitz suggested inviting the local rescue squads and police when everyone meets with the park representatives to make them aware of the dangers that could happen along these public properties.

Katherine Suttle would like to see the Governing Body of Kingwood Township adopt a resolution of support for the plan.

3.

A sample resolution will be discussed at the next open space/agriculture advisory meeting to pass on to the Township Committee to consider adopting.

Everyone thanked Katherine Suttle for coming to present the plan.

At this time of the meeting there are now enough members of the Open Space Advisory Committee present to continue the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the June 4, 2009 Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Dodds, seconded by Mr. Burke and carried to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2009 Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committee.

Roll Call Vote: Aye	- Sandra McNicol, Richard Dodds, Phil Lubitz, James Burke, Elaine Niemann, William Pandy, Cynthia Niciecki, Peter D'Costa
Nay	- None
Abstain	- None
Absent	- John Mathieu, Lee Frank, Linda Pfingst Oesterwinter

Correspondence

Invitation to a Volunteer Picnic - Sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Committee

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol review the information regarding the picnic and asked everyone to R.S.V.P. to Secretary Keller.

Copy of Letter from the Environmental Protection: Green Acres Program - Land Offer Number 6032 (1016), re: Mary Louise Haring

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed the letter and stated they are not interested in purchasing this property at this time.

"Celebrating the Land" an invitation from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and preservation partners the State Agriculture Development Committee, Hunterdon County, Delaware Township, and the Federal Natural Resources Conservation Service

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Letter to Jamie Kyte Sapoch - Support Letter from Richard Dodds

Richard Dodds review his letter to Ms. Sapoch, and noted that they requested a letter of support from the Open Space Advisory Committee.

4.

Memorandum from Kevin Richardson, Open Space Coordinator
Re: (New Revised) Hunterdon County Open Space, Farmland and Historic
Preservation Trust Fund Policies and Procedures Manual, 4th Edition
(Available for you to review in Clerk's Office)

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed. There was a lengthy discussion with both Committees regarding the memo. It was noted that the manual includes updates, and revisions regarding the County's application requirements and submission deadlines. This includes requests to bank and reserve County Open Space Trust Funds for future consideration. Sandra McNicol noted that a copy of the manual is in the Municipal Clerks office for anyone to review.

Copies of Letters sent to the Township Committee requesting their approval - From the Open Space/Agriculture Advisory Committees

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed and stated that the Township Committee has agreed to approve their requests.

Reports

Farmland Preservation - Liz Schmid

Liz Schmid was present and reviewed a report she prepared for the month of August:

In mid-June, we closed on the Augustine Farm from our 2007 FIG. It is now permanently protected farmland with the County holding the easement.

We have received two appraisals on the Felix Farm from our 2008 FIG. They have been sent to Trenton to get a certified value to present to the landowner. We hope to move this as quickly as possible in order to close by next March in order to qualify for the Federal Farm and Ranchland funding.

We have received notification that the closing package for the Crouse property has been sent to the State. Hopefully that means that this farm will close in the near future.

The Committees thanked Liz for her report.

Attendees for Farmland Status Meetings/June 17, 2009
Attendees for Farmland Status Meetings/July 15, 2009
reviewed who attended.

Hunterdon Land Trust - Activity Update

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed an update of the activities the Township is working with the Hunterdon Land Trust, which include the Clark property, and the Trstensky property. Jim Burke gave an update of the Polopoly property.

5.

Old Business

Info from Hunterdon CADB re: Farm Market Directory Makes Progress

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol reviewed.

Preservation Signs

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that she has been in touch with a representative from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. She explained that the signs cost approximately \$400 each. They recommend the higher quality sign and explained that it will not rust or fade.

Cynthia Niciecki noted that she has applied for a preservation sign for her property.

Lockatong Preserve (Harms Property)

- Trail work

Vice Chairman Richard Dodds explained that the Scouts are applying for an application to work on the trails. He explained that it may be difficult for them to obtain a permit and that he may need to find volunteers to do most of the work on the trails and let the Scouts assist. Mr. Dodds explained that he has a temporary route mapped out for the trails that will go down to the falls.

- Hike Announcement - October 3, 2009

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that she is working on an announcement that is almost completed.

New Business

ANJEC 2009 Smart Growth Planning Grant Project Agreement
ANJEC Fact Sheet on Open Space Plans

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that the Township was awarded a \$7,000 Smart Growth Grant towards an Open Space and Recreation Plan. She explained that Banisch Associates will be helping with the project. ANJEC would like to have more participation from the public. Mrs. McNicol explained that between now and the Planning Board Meeting they will need someone from the Open Space Advisory Committee to participate. She suggested that Linda Oesterwinter be elected for the position. She announced that there will be a kickoff meeting on Thursday, September 3, 2009 at 6:30PM with ANJEC present to speak. She recommended that the Chairman of the Parks and Recreation be present at the meeting.

Sustainable Jersey Program - Update on Green Team; Looking for Volunteers

Elaine Niemann explained what the Green Team was all about.

6.

She noted that there was a meeting at the end of each month if anyone is interested they are welcome. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 19th at 6:00PM. She suggested to everyone to look on the Sustainable Jersey Website to review all the different projects available. She stated that there are two white binders in the municipal conference room if anyone would like to stop by to review.

Preserved Farms by Township - Information provided by Sandy McNicol

Chairwoman Sandra McNicol noted that she found this information on a website. It is a list of all the farms/acres that have been preserved and wanted to share with everyone.

Public Comments - Privilege of the Floor

Jack MacConnell, Spring Hill Road Commented on the Fisher Water Project in Delaware Twp. He feels that it will affect the water table in Kingwood Township. The Committees feels this is an environmental issue, and that a representative from the environmental commission should write a letter of concern as representation from the Township. It was suggested to ask Lois Voronin a member of the Environmental Commission to write the letter.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Lubitz, seconded by Mr. Dodds and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:45PM. **All** voted **Aye** on **Roll Call Vote**.

Respectfully submitted,

**Cynthia L. Keller, RMC
Secretary**