

ANDOVER TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Minutes of Committee Meeting June 26, 2007

The Chairman, Dan Freed, opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Present were members Dan Freed, Lois deVries, Diane Gillespie, Carladeen Kostelnik, Michael Morel, Cece Pattison (Alternate). Absent: Mary Grace Perruti-Padolth, Gail Phoebus. Also present: Sandy Uργο from the Morris Land Conservancy; Mary Spector, Secretary.

The meeting opened with the roll call, flag salute and OPMA statement. There was a motion by Lois deVries, seconded by Diane Gillespie, to adopt the agenda. All in favor. Motion carried.

Executive Session: The Committee went into executive session for an update from the consultant Sandy Uργο on confidential outreach activities at 7:38 p.m. on a motion by Diane Gillespie, seconded by Michael Morel and approved unanimously. The Committee came out of executive session at 9:10 p.m.

Application for County Grant: A motion was made by Carladeen Kostelnik, seconded by Lois deVries, to support the pursuit of acquisition of property for open space preservation owned by Rolling Greens Golf Course Inc., Block 74, Lot 22.02; to pursue support for an application for a Sussex County Open Space grant for the purchase of this property; and to recommend funding from the Township Open Space Trust of \$30,000, contingent on the property owner's agreement. All in favor. Motion carried.

There was discussion about how to proceed with this measure. Dan Freed agreed to speak with Gail Phoebus as the liaison to the Township Committee. Sandy Uργο will talk to the Township Attorney, Fred Semrau. She recommended that the Committee not take action until owner has agreed to the purchase. She asked if there were similar projects of 30 acres or less that the Township should consider. Discussion followed about this prospect. Lois deVries suggested that they look at acquiring property along the railroad bed out to the Lafayette border as the State is interested in having connecting trails through that area.

Minutes of the May 22, 2007 meeting: A minor correction was offered. A motion was made by Michael Morel, seconded by Diane Gillespie, to adopt the minutes as amended. All in favor. Abstained: Cece Pattison. Motion carried.

The meeting was opened to the public. There were no public comments.

Discussion re. pursuing the grant: Sandy Uργο noted it would be advisable to have several people from the Open Space Committee accompany her to the concept hearing and to the formal hearing for the grant application. The concept hearing is on July 26. It was suggested that Dan Freed and Gail Phoebus attend at that time. Ms. Uργο also advised that copies of the application will need to be made, and letters of support obtained from the Recreation Commission and the Environmental Commission. A resolution of support should be adopted by the Township Committee at their July meeting. The deadline for the application is August 15th at 4:00 p.m. They will request a waiver of the Open Space Plan until it is completed.

Sandy Urgo suggested the Committee ask the Township to go ahead with the appraisal of the property. She noted they will also want to enter into a contract with the property owner, contingent on getting the County grant. She stated it is helpful to have the property owner under contract prior to the hearing for the grant. It also helps if the Township has agreed to get an appraisal. Ms. Urgo noted all sides need to agree on the lot yield prior to the appraisal. Carla Kostelnik asked about acquiring adjoining properties. Ms. Urgo stated if the County funds a property they are more likely to fund an adjoining piece in the future.

New Business: Dan Freed asked for volunteers to update the historic sites list. Carla Kostelnik and Cece Pattison agreed to take on this task.

Open Space Plan priorities and objectives: Diane Gillespie offered a list she had compiled of possible objectives for the plan. Discussion followed concerning the items she had enumerated which included educating the public about environmental resources in their neighborhoods; protecting waterways and surrounding areas and vernal ponds; connecting neighborhoods through trail systems; creating open space in each part of the community; more agricultural uses; use of native plant species where feasible in public areas; identifying historic sites and publicly recognizing them. Lois deVries noted funding is available for this last item.

Dan Freed stated the Open Space Committee is a recommending body and presenting a focused voice should be one of its priorities. Carla Kostelnik pointed out one reason parts of the Township are isolated is because of the ridges and lack of connecting roads. DeVries noted there are natural greenways that can be utilized for connection. Kostelnik recommended they suggest to the Land Use Board that bike paths be part of new developments. Dan Freed recommended that finding creative ways to encourage stewardship of open space be part of the priorities. He stated it is important not to overlook the responsibility that open space entails. The Committee agreed to allot more time to consideration of objectives and priorities.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m. on a motion by Diane Gillespie, seconded by Cece Pattison. All in favor. Motion carried.

Submitted by Mary Spector, Secretary