

Open Space Committee

Andover Township

April 22, 2008

The Chairman, Dan Freed, opened the meeting at 7:37 pm. Present were members Lois deVries, Dan Freed, Diane Gillespie, Carla Kostelnik, Mary Grace Rudolph. Absent: Alex Gilseman, Michael Morel. Also present: Mary Spector, Secretary.

The Chairman called for the flag salute, roll call, and OPMA statement.

Minutes: A motion was made by Diane, seconded by Carla, to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2008 meeting. In favor: Mary Grace, Diane, Lois, Carla, Dan. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Adoption of Agenda: Dan noted that Sandy Urgo from the Morris Land Conservancy would not be attending the meeting tonight. He stated there will be a brief executive session to report on his discussion with Sandy today. In reference to item #8 on the agenda, it was agreed to use the term "acquisition" rather than "planning" as recommended by Sandy at the last meeting. A motion was made by Lois, seconded by Mary Grace, to adopt the agenda as amended. All in favor. Motion carried.

The Chairman opened the meeting to the public. There were no members of the public in attendance.

Open Space Plan: Dan reported that the Open Space Plan was adopted as an amendment to the Master Plan at the Land Use Board meeting on April 17, 2008. Dan noted that Board member Bob Smith had some questions about municipal land as described in the Plan. Dan had sent a note to the Board Chairman clarifying the information. The question pertained to lands owned by the municipality.

In discussing these matters Dan noted the County GIS program has excellent mapping technology available for municipalities to use. He will send Committee members a link to that information. Dan pointed out they can use the County parcel layers to get a visual perspective on Township properties.

Dan confirmed that the Land Use Board has signed a resolution memorializing the decision to approve the Plan and that resolution will go to NJ Green Acres with a copy of the final plan.

Executive session: A motion was made by Carla, seconded by Mary Grace, to go into executive session at 7:53 pm. to discuss matters of active property acquisitions. In favor: Mary Grace, Diane, Lois, Carla, Dan. Opposed: None. Motion carried. The Committee came out of executive session at 8:05 pm.

Green Acres Application: Dan announced that the Green Acres application for funding is due in June. Morris Land Conservancy will assist with this first application. It is expected that Green

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Acres will make a funding commitment for the Township to pursue implementation of the Open Space Plan.

Review Action Items and Planning Activities: The Chairman referred Committee members to Section 7, 1-3 of the Open Space Plan. He suggested they read through the items listed to be addressed "within one year." He pointed to the large Greenway Map on the easel and asked how the Committee wants to see things happen in relation to greenway acquisitions.

Diane suggested that the Committee members divide up sections of the map to look more closely at specific greenways and to identify specific properties of interest for acquisition. She referred back to the greenways information described in Section 6 of the Open Space Plan. There was some discussion about using the County parcel data in this investigation. Dan suggested having a demonstration of this technology at the next meeting.

There was further discussion about the Greenways Map. Carla volunteered to take the Pequest Farmbelt. Diane agreed to investigate the Ballantine Greenway. Lois was interested in the area northeast of Newton-Sparta Rd. which includes the Paulinskill Recreation Greenway and the Paulinskill Farmbelt. Dan stated he will take the Sussex Branch and the Muckshaw Ponds Greenways. Mary Grace agreed to take the Kittatinny Hillside Park Recreation Greenway. Mike who was not present was assigned the Perona Lake Greenway.

Dan stated the idea is to become an expert on the areas they've chosen. At the next meeting they would be called on to give a two minute summary noting what the priorities might be for acquisitions and how the area fits into the overall plan. By sharing information in this way the Committee will get a better understanding of the Open Space Plan. Dan encouraged the members to go out to the area of their choice and become familiar with the physical surroundings.

Lois noted some people on the Township Committee would like to eliminate the open space tax. Dan noted the Township Committee has the power to readjust the tax and the Open Space Committee has the obligation to deliver value to the Township. Carla stated it is important that taxpayers know they can use the property acquired through the Open Space Committee's work and in this case it will not cost them anything because of the grants received. Mary Grace asked about funds for stewardship of acquired open space properties. Dan noted funds collected by the open space tax can be used for stewardship and maintenance.

Diane referred to the item concerning work with the Land Use Board on zoning regulations. Lois noted the Board Master Plan subcommittee is working on zoning issues now. Dan emphasized that the Open Space Committee does not make zoning decisions but that it is important to communicate the Committee's vision and priorities to the Board. Carla noted it is important for the Board to look at the Open Space Plan when new development is proposed.

As to the action item on geographic information systems (GIS), Dan stated he will help facilitate this one. He stated he will send Committee members the link to the County GIS which will make the job easier. Lois asked about data management capacity. Dan noted the two main maps in the Plan that have GIS layers are already out of date. He suggests working with the County on

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an annual basis to adjust and update the maps to keep them current. He stated the Committee needs to manage the data to show changes and to reflect current thinking.

New Business: Dan stressed the importance of presenting accurate information about the work of the Open Space Committee so that it can be discussed with confidence. He noted the contract with Morris Land Conservancy for the work with Sandy Uργο is coming up for review. Barbara Davis sent a report of the past year's activities to the mayor this week. Dan stated he will give a financial report at the next meeting so that everyone knows what the budget is and how the money is being spent. Carla suggested giving a financial report to the Township Committee.

Diane asked about reporting of volunteer hours. Lois stated the Open Space Plan is now finished but any hours since February 15th should be reported on the sheets she provided.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Carla, seconded by Diane, to adjourn at 9:00 pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

Submitted by Mary Spector, Secretary