

Open Space Committee

Andover Township

June 24, 2008

The Chairman, Dan Freed, opened the meeting at 7:45 pm. Present were members Lois deVries, Dan Freed, Diane Gillespie, Carla Kostelnik, Michael Morel, Mary Grace Rudolph; alternate Laura Gilsonan, sitting for absent member. Absent: Alex Gilsonan. Also present: Mary Spector, Secretary.

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

Minutes – May 28, 2008: Mike raised a question about the phrase “commitments for funding” in the section on the budget. A further description of that phrase was recommended. A motion was made by Mike, seconded by Carla, to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2008 meeting as amended. In favor: Mary Grace, Mike, Diane, Lois, Carla, Dan. Opposed: None. Abstained: Laura. Motion carried. Executive session minutes for the meetings on March 25, April 22 and May 28, 2008 were approved unanimously, with Laura abstaining.

Adoption of Agenda: Dan reported that Sandy Urgo will not be present tonight. He will update the Board on acquisitions during the executive session. Diane pointed out that her name was omitted from the list of individuals assigned to prepare planning reports. She will report on the Ballantine Greenway. A motion was made by Diane, 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.

Executive session: A motion was made by Lois, seconded by Diane, to go into executive session at 7:57 pm to discuss matters of active property acquisitions. In favor: Mary Grace, Mike, Diane, Lois, Carla, Dan, Laura. Opposed: None. Motion carried. The Committee came out of executive session at 8:26 pm on a motion by Carla, seconded by Lois.

Budget Report: Dan stated this item will be carried to the next meeting. He will have the necessary information to give a full report at that time.

Green Acres Application: Dan reported the Green Acres application has not yet been submitted. He noted Sandy will give an update on the status of the application at the next meeting.

Planning Activities: Dan stated the Committee might want to put aside the consideration of property acquisition at this time and focus on other activities as outlined in the Open Space Plan and that they can realistically achieve. He noted the individual summary reports are a part of this process. Dan reminded the Committee one item in the Plan was to draft a trails plan. He stated they could proceed with that item, noting that as they work with one specific area other things will become clear that they can do. In this way the Committee builds a vision. Lois noted the

trail plan needs to be constructed in a specific way in order to get funding. She suggested they could research the guidelines themselves or ask Morris Land Conservancy for help.

Diane pointed out that section 7.2 of the Plan listing activities includes a review of Township zoning and working with the Land Use Board on recommendations. Carla commented that she thought this item had been removed from the list. She remembers the Morris Land Conservancy advisor stating that the Open Space Committee should not act as a planning board. There was further discussion about this activity. Dan noted this is a contentious issue. He suggested the Committee should keep focused on building a foundation. Lois stated the Open Space Committee should be supporting the constraints ordinance proposed by the Land Use Board. Diane stated she brought up the issue of zoning because it is in the Plan but she understands it may not be the thing to do now, given the circumstances. Dan asked the members for comments on what they think about the suggestion to support the constraints ordinance. Mike stated no to the recommendation. Mary Grace was doubtful about its effectiveness. Laura thought the Committee should stay focused on its primary goal. Carla noted they have to be careful. Lois stated it was good that Diane mentioned the subject but it is not necessary to do that at this time.

Planning Area Summaries: Carla was the first to give a report. Her areas included the Pequest Farmbelt and Muckshaw Ponds Greenway. She pointed to their location on the large map. She noted many properties in the Muckshaw Ponds Greenway extend into Fredon, the neighboring municipality. Property in the Pequest Farmbelt is for the most part owned by the Kirby family. The Miller's Sheep Ranch property is also included in the beltway. Carla noted many properties along Rt. 206 are farmland assessed. She called attention to the 20 ac. piece owned by the Smith family that could be of interest as well as a large piece behind the strawberry farm. Most of the Pequest Farmbelt is owned by the Kirbys or The Abbey. Carla stated farmland preservation is most suitable for these properties. She didn't see that the area would lend itself to a trail component. She also mentioned a piece near the corner of Rt. 206 and Fredon-Springdale Rd. that could be of interest.

Diane followed with a report on the Ballantine Greenway. This stretch of land is divided by County Rt. 613. She focused first on property to the west of the road, beginning at Cliffside Way and the adjoining property owned by Piraneo. She referred to six property owners between Cliffside Way and Kilroy Rd. Stryker has 105 ac., Tallon, 85 ac., Tyson, about 80 ac. on both sides of the Rd. She noted Piraneo also owns on both sides of the road. On the other side, to the east, Kellogg owns from Roseville Rd. almost to Kilroy. Diane noted there is a JCP&L easement that cuts through many of the properties over to Rt. 517 by the church. It could possibly be used as a connector between some of the properties. Lois noted a flat part of the Ballantine property south of the pond could possibly be used as a ball field. Carla asked about the proposed train station. Diane pointed to its location. She noted the Tyson and Tallon properties are rugged and contain steep slopes while the Piraneo and Tryker properties are multi-purpose. Diane stated they could research the restrictions on the JCP&L easement. She noted two properties on the east side owned by Stag Lake will not sell. There was discussion about the Stryker property. Mike stated there is a dam on it. Diane noted it is a beautiful piece.

Dan thanked the Committee members for their contributions. He noted they are developing a lot of information. He asked for each member to summarize their findings on paper. Mike suggested that the summary include recommendations and the reasons for them. These would be

kept as master documents. It was decided that Lois and Mike would present their research at the next meeting.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Diane, seconded by Lois, to adjourn at 9:22 pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

Submitted by Mary Spector, Secretary