

Open Space Committee

Andover Township

November 18, 2008

The The Open Space Committee Chairman Dan Freed opened the meeting at 7:30 pm. Present were members Lois deVries, Dan Freed, Diane Gillespie, Mike Morel; alternate Laura Gilsenan. Absent: Alex Gilsenan, Carla Kostelnik, Mary Grace Rudolph. Also present: Sandy Urgo, Outreach Consultant, The Land Conservancy of NJ; Mary Spector, Secretary.

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

Minutes: A motion was made by Diane, seconded by Lois, to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2008 meeting. In favor: Diane, Lois, Laura, Dan. Opposed: None. Abstained: Mike. Motion carried. A motion was made by Lois, seconded by Laura, to approve the minutes of the executive session at the August 28, 2008 meeting. In favor: Diane, Lois, Laura, Dan. Opposed: None. Abstained: Mike. Motion carried.

Adoption of Agenda: Dan noted Alex Gilsenan had made a suggestion relating to a discussion of the ballfields. Dan recommended adding this topic to the agenda between numbers 8 and 9. A motion was made by Laura, seconded by Mike, to adopt the agenda as modified. All in favor. Motion carried.

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

Dan requested that Sandy Urgo bring Committee members up to date on her work to complete the NJ Green Acres application. Sandy reported that the governing body agreed to support the application. Both she and Dan commented that they addressed a number of questions from the Township Committee about the purpose of the application and what the Township was committing to. Once the township resolution of support was approved Dan submitted all the necessary documents. Sandy noted the ROSI (Recreation and Open Space Inventory) was at least 20 years old and was not accepted. The Township had until October 31 to redo the ROSI. The State also wanted different language in the Township resolution.

Sandy stated they needed to add two properties to the ROSI, one, the rail-trail and the other, a landlocked parcel of dedicated open space. The application is now deemed complete; it takes awhile for funds to be allocated. Sandy noted in the future the Township will need to prepare a ROSI with detailed information on every township property. She recommended that records be kept to substantiate how these properties are acquired.

The county grant application was discussed. Sandy noted the application went in under the open enrollment program because they missed the deadline. She stated the application was rejected because the property involved is in the Highway Commercial (HC) zone and the County won't fund properties in ratable zones for open space. Sandy pointed out the highest and best use of the property in question is for residential and residential is permitted in the zone. She thinks the County's main concern is to avoid preserving lands using any Green Acres funds along the

Lackawanna cutoff. She noted the Township could acquire the land without county involvement.

Executive session: A motion was made by Lois, seconded by Diane, to go into executive session at 8:15 pm to discuss matters of active property acquisitions. In favor: Mike, Diane, Lois, Laura, Dan. Opposed: None. Motion carried. The Committee came out of executive session at 9:30 pm on a motion by Mike, seconded by Diane. All in favor, motion carried.

Discussion of Sports Fields: Dan agreed with Alex's observation that the Committee needs to get a specific idea of what is needed in the way of ballfields. He circulated a letter from Jackie Huelbig, Director of the Recreation Dept. which he noted is a good starting point. Dan stated he would follow up with Tom Walsh. In the course of discussion Dan noted the Committee needs to determine how many fields are needed for which sports and what population. They also need information about the need for parking and other amenities. Lois commented that teams that aren't sponsored by the Township shouldn't be using township property. Mike stated local sports teams are not run through the Recreation Dept.

Diane stated she was concerned that Open Space funding would be needed to maintain the fields and that would be expensive. Dan noted the Township Committee will need to consider these maintenance issues. It was decided that Dan and Mike will follow up with Tom Walsh and Ed Burgio to begin with a list of the number of leagues and where they play now as a way to frame the discussion and then go from there to consider the amount of land needed, etc. Mike noted teams in the Township use fields in other towns now. The field on Goodale Rd. is only used for games, not for practice. He stated the Dept. of Public Works (DPW) has the final say on how the fields are used. When they use fields at the schools they work around the Board of Education schedule. Mike stated the airport property would be reasonable to develop for sports fields because it is level and it has good access and is centrally located.

Lake Iliff Property Stewardship: Dan turned the discussion to property stewardship at the Lake Iliff property. Lois stated the Committee needs to define how the property will be used. She questioned what can be done there besides boating and fishing. She recommended they begin with a presence/absence report on threatened and endangered species. Dan recommended that a vision statement be prepared for use of the property and ways to promote it. Lois suggested a school project of wood duck houses for habitat enhancement. Mike noted the Township has two active Boy Scout troops who are looking for community service projects. Dan asked if the Recreation Dept. had discussed the Lake Iliff property. Mike stated they are waiting until it is actually acquired. Dan stated he will prepare an outline for a vision statement.

It was noted the next Committee meeting is scheduled for Weds., December 17th.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Diane, seconded by Mike, to adjourn at 10:00 pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

Submitted by Mary Spector, Secretary