

## **Open Space Advisory Committee – November 8, 2011**

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 p.m.

### **Attendance**

Present: Cronce, O'Brien, Pfeiffer, Sommers-Sayre

Absent: Andreoli, Ashton, Fisher (Twp. Committee Liaison), Hess, Kilmer

### **Opening Statement by Chair**

It was noted that this was the first formal meeting since June due to lack of available quorums. Pfeiffer noted that an attendance ordinance was adopted last month however similar attendance requirements were already specified in the Committee's by-laws.

### **Opportunity for Public Comment**

No members of the public were present.

### **Approval of written record for 10May2011 meeting**

(Cronce, Kilmer, Hess – ineligible)

Motion to approve the record was made by Sommers-Sayre with a second by O'Brien. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes.

### **Approval of written record for 14Jun2011 meeting**

(Andreoli, Kilmer, Hess – ineligible)

Motion to approve the record was made by O'Brien with a second by Sommers-Sayre. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes.

### **Future Open Space Planning – Discussion**

Farmland Preservation Projects – Pfeiffer noted that several things have come up recently. The PIG application is due December 15. Two potential projects were discussed

The potential Mountford project on Goat Hill Road was the first project. O'Brien recused herself from the discussion due to living within 200' of the property. Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance has filed a farmland preservation application with the County for this parcel. Pfeiffer noted that the property was not in the Township's ADA which may negatively impact the application. The Township may be receptive to modifying the ADA, however to date HLTA hasn't yet formally made that request and we will need to determine what is involved with that process.

The Toll North project on Route 179 was the second project. Cronce recused himself from the discussion due to living within 200' of the property. Pfeiffer recounted the background of the project. In 2006 Toll Brothers came to the

Planning Board for an informal review to develop the property. Representatives from the West Amwell Elementary School Board advised that if the development occurred it would require construction of a new elementary school. Subsequently Pfeiffer worked with Toll Brothers to file an application for farmland preservation with the County. It was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the County in 2008, however in November, 2008 Toll decided to withdraw the application due to objections to the County's option agreement and in order to keep development options open, noting that they knew about the Fulper GDP and if sewers became available Toll could realize more value. Subsequently the Fulper lawsuit was settled. Toll Brothers also explored installing a 20 megawatt solar facility on the property but that fell through. Toll's Vice President has indicated they are again interested in preservation via an easement and would be willing to sign the County's option agreement. Pfeiffer spoke with the Township Committee in October, which was receptive. Pfeiffer is working with staff at the Hunterdon County Planning Board to advance the application. Township's cost share on the easement would ultimately be 20% of the land costs.

Open Space Plan – Sommers-Sayre has a draft but will incorporate some relevant statistics and information provided by Pfeiffer from Governor Christie's state plan regarding return on investment on preserved land.

#### **Easement Monitoring**

Update on easement monitoring activities – Cronce will touch base with Glenn Baran re: process. Cronce inquired about who currently should have access to the Toll property with respect to hunting licenses. Pfeiffer asked the Township Clerk and Mayor, who advised Cronce would be provided with a list of authorized people and should continue to check to ensure no unauthorized people are visiting the property.

#### **Miscellaneous Project Updates**

Open Space Newsletter – Newsletter will just be an online publication again this year providing an update on preservation activity in 2011.

County Municipal Grant Application – O'Brien noted that the County Open Space Committee is meeting on December 14 to approve the grant application.

Open Space Map Updates – Pfeiffer noted that the Township has finally received the record easement deeds on the Kaluzny property. In addition to Kaluzny, Lawson and Gulick III still need to be added to map.

#### **Project Assignments**

No additional assignments were made.

#### **Farmland Preservation Project Update**

- Amwell Hunt, Block 8, Lots 20 & 36, 130.36 acres, Route 179/Rock-Lamb Rd.

(Kilmer - recused due to owning property within 200')  
 Toll Brothers South, also known as West Amwell Ltd. Soil conservation plan has been signed. Pfeiffer noted that Bryce Thompson and his son came in and spoke with the Township Committee. Pfeiffer provided the Township Committee with some talking points and suggested that consideration be given to possible preservation of other Thompson properties in the Township as part of a sale of the Toll property. Thompson was receptive to further discussions. The SADC staff would be receptive provided that the sale still includes \$385,000 in cash so the SADC can recoup its cost share. Low appraisal on the property was \$690,000. The culvert/bridge washed out during Hurricane Irene and has been replaced; the Township is applying for FEMA funding for the replacement.

- Gulick III (Block 14, Lot 33.05) ~17 acres, Gulick Road  
 County PIG project. County closed on easement. Project completed.
- Nunn (Block 8, Lot 29.01) ~30 acres, Mill Road  
 Liaison: Pfeiffer  
 Appraisals will begin upon receipt of "green light" approval from SADC.

#### **Green Acres Project Update**

- Adam (Block 32, Lot 21.01) ~22 acres, Barry Road  
 Potential Fee Simple Partnership with D&R Greenway. Township Committee has approved using up to \$175,000 of our Green Acres grant funding for purchase of property. No municipal funding will be utilized.
- Bowers (Block 28, Lot 26) ~21.5 acres, Goat Hill Road  
 Conservation easement project. Green Acres certification of appraisal still pending. Pfeiffer advised regarding status.
- Foran (Block 7, Lot 16.03) ~22 acres, Frontage Road.  
 Potential public access easement project. Green Acres has authorized moving forward with appraisals. One bid for appraisal received, two more will be required due to bid exceeding the bid threshold.

#### **Bill List**

No bills were received.

#### **Correspondence**

No correspondence was discussed.

#### **Opportunity for Public Comment**

No members of the public were present.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Cronic with a second by Sommers-Sayre.  
Motion approved on voice vote – all ayes.

**Next Meeting**

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 13, 2011, 7:30 p.m.