

Open Space Advisory Committee – January 13, 2009

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m.

Attendance

Present: Baran, Cronce, Hess, Kowalski, Pfeiffer, Sommers-Sayre

Absent: Andreoli, Corboy (Twp. Committee Liaison)

2009 Open Space Committee Reorganization

Introduction of New Member – John Cronce introduced as a new member. It was noted that Cathy Urbanski asked not to be reappointed to the Committee following the expiration of her term at the end of 2009. The Committee thanked her for her service and contributions.

Nominations for 2009 Chairperson – The floor was opened for nominations. Hess nominated Pfeiffer for chair, with a second by Baran. There were no other nominations. The floor was closed to nominations. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes; Pfeiffer – abstain. Pfeiffer elected chair for 2009.

Nominations for 2009 Vice-Chairperson – The floor was opened for nominations. Baran nominated Hess for vice-chair, with a second by Kowalski. There were no other nominations. The floor was closed to nominations. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes; Hess – abstain. Hess elected vice-chair for 2009.

Nominations for 2009 Secretary – The floor was opened for nominations. Hess nominated Kowalski for Secretary, with a second by Sommers-Sayre. There were no other nominations. The floor was closed to nominations. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes; Kowalski – abstain. Kowalski elected Secretary for 2009.

2009 Subcommittee Appointments:

By-laws Subcommittee – Cronce, Pfeiffer

Easement Monitoring Subcommittee – Baran, Andreoli

GIS Mapping Subcommittee – Hess, Baran

Opportunity for Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

Approval of written record for 09Dec2008 meeting

(Cronce – ineligible)

Deferred to next meeting.

Future Open Space Planning – Discussion

County Funding Situation – County farmland preservation funding situation was recapped and discussed. The County is now saying only \$2 million will be available for farmland preservation for the entire county, of which only \$1.7 million will be available for acquisitions, with the remaining \$300,000 being allocated for soft costs. All farms in the County will now be ranked against each other to determine funding availability.

Municipal Farmland Preservation PIG Application (2009 funding round) – Township Special Planner hired at December Planning Board meeting, and is coordinating with Ag Advisory Committee to complete revisions to draft master plan element.

Municipal Farmland Preservation PIG Application (2010 funding round) – Kowalski delivered application to SADC in December.

Easement Monitoring

Letter from DEP Green Acres re: Easement Monitoring – Baran reported on his conversations with DEP compliance inspector and Hunterdon County Steward. Baran also reported that he has posted signs on the Titus property.

Update on easement monitoring activities – No activity to report.

Update on complaint about alleged easement violations in Calton – No activity to report.

Easement Markers for New Development – Baran will review marker design for recent Heritage subdivision and will make a recommendation for a general standard for easement markers for new development.

Miscellaneous Project Updates

County Parkland Discussion – We are still waiting for the specific recommendations of the Parks & Recreation Committee.

Open Space Newsletter Status Update – 2008 newsletter was sent out in late December. The Committee thanked Sommers-Sayre for her efforts as newsletter editor. A number of compliments have been received regarding the newsletter. The Committee was asked to start thinking of ideas for articles for the 2009 newsletter.

Open Space Map Updates – No changes since last month.

Fundraising Discussion – \$2,000 donation from Wolfes was received and noted.

Project Assignments

No additional project assignments were made.

Farmland Preservation Project Update

- Next Farmland Preservation status meeting at the Hunterdon County Planning Board is on January 21.
- Amwell Hunt, Block 8, Lots 20 & 36, 130.36 acres, Route 179/Rock-Lamb Rd.
 - Toll Brothers South, also known as West Amwell Ltd. Under contract. Initial draft of survey received and is being reviewed. Pfeiffer reported that he had walked the property with Alex Greenwood recently, who advised that the larger farmhouse might be worth restoring as a historic structure and suggested we should present any eventual buyer with the option of restoring the property. There was also some discussion about costs associated with the eventual removal of the other structures on the property.
- Comly (Block 32, Lot 12.01 & Block 32, Lot 12) ~145 acres, Barry Road (Andreoli – Recuse due to his brother owning property within 200') SADC Direct Easement project. SADC and Comly have reached agreement on price. Formal contracts being prepared.
- Fulper Heifer I & II (Block 20, Lots 2 & 2.01) ~88.55 ac., Rocktown-Lamb. Rd
 - Closed with the county on March 7, 2007. Soft cost reimbursements from county and state are still pending.
- Fulper Stoy I (Block 19, Lot 5) ~93 acres, Mt. Airy-Harbourton Road. Traditional PDR 2008 round application. Closed with Fulpers in 2005, and in 2006 Township applied to PDR 2008 program for reimbursement. County and State reimbursements are still pending.
- Gulick I (Block 14, Lot 33.02) ~52 acres, Gulick Road
 - Closed with Gulicks on September 19. County/State reimbursements are pending.
- Gulick II (Block 13, Lot 34) ~38 acres, Gulick Road
 - Closed with Gulicks on September 19. County/State reimbursements are pending.
- Gulick III (Block 14, Lot 33.05) ~17 acres (TBD), Gulick Road
 - Agricultural division of land from Gulick I. As a condition of CADB approval for Gulick I, the Gulicks have signed an option agreement granting West Amwell Township and Hunterdon County a five year option agreement, expiring February 28, 2013, to purchase a development rights easement for CMV, which remains to be determined. Farm submitted as a targeted farm as part of municipal and county PIG applications. Since farm cannot be “active” in more than one program at a time, County staff has advised we should hold off processing a municipal PIG application for this farm until availability of funding in County PIG is determined.
- Hanover Shoe Farm (Block 19, Lot 3.01) ~68 acres, Rock Road West
 - Liaison: Pfeiffer
 - Farm submitted as a targeted farm as part of municipal and county PIG applications. Application being completed for municipal PIG.

- Holcombe II (Block 5, Lot 15) ~60 acres, Route 179
Home Farm. Liaison: Pfeiffer.
Township closed with Holcombes on easement on May 1 and closed with County on September 11. Soft cost reimbursement package submitted to county in September.
- Janyszeski/Kutz (Block 17, Lot 4) ~36 acres, Stymiest Road
Liaison: Pfeiffer
Traditional PDR 2008 round application. Farm is under contract. Funding ordinance for Township cost share was adopted on November 7, 2007. Survey completed. Closing anticipated in early 2009.
- Nunn (Block 8, Lot 29.01) ~30 acres, Mill Road
Liaison: Pfeiffer
Farm submitted as a targeted farm as part of municipal and county PIG applications. Application for municipal PIG being completed

Green Acres Project Update

- Bowers (Block 28, Lot 26) ~21.5 acres, Goat Hill Road
Conservation easement project, pending determination of funding availability. Green Acres preappraisal forms being worked on for project.
- Jolley (Block 16, Lots 8 & 15) ~35 acres, Route 518
Green Acres Fee Simple project. Under contract.
- Kilmer (Block 8, Lots 14 & 15), ~80 acres, Route 179
Conservation easement project. Revisions to project map requested by Kilmer completed. Draft contract being prepared.
- King (Block 13, Lot 65) ~14 acres, Mt. Airy-Harbourton Road.
Potential conservation easement project. Mr. King has been advised that funding will not be immediately available and that the Township is giving priority to larger farms. Green Acres preappraisal forms being worked on for project.
- Kurtz Family Trust (Block 16, Lot 2) ~25 acres, near Stymiest Road
Green Acres fee simple project. Under contract.
- Salata (Block 29, Lot 18.02) ~76 acres, Goat Hill Road
Potential conservation easement project. Mr. Salata contacted Pfeiffer after receiving our recent newsletter to inquire about preservation options.
- Stiefel (Block 23, Lot 25) ~60 acres, Linvale-Harbourton Road
Conservation easement project. Survey approved by Green Acres. Baseline data report completed and submitted to Green Acres. Closing anticipated soon.

Bill List

The following bill was received from Bohren & Bohren:

\$13,520.00 – Toll Brothers (West Amwell Ltd) – Reserve for Preliminary Expenses.

The following bills were received from Sharon Dragan, Esq.:

\$73.50 – Attend County Meeting – Billed to Reserve for Preliminary Expenses.

\$764.40 – Kilmer – Billed to Reserve for Preliminary Expenses.

\$764.40 – Stiefel – Billed to Stiefel Ordinance 08-2008.

\$1,042.18 – Toll (West Amwell Ltd.) – Billed to Reserve for Preliminary Expenses.

Correspondence

Correspondence regarding SADC water allocation requests for former Holcombe and Case farms was distributed and discussed. The consensus was that the amount of water being requested isn't feasible. The Township is requesting a meeting with SADC staff to discuss the request.

Additional Discussion

Pfeiffer noted that Mayor Corboy had inquired about the possibility of using Green Acres grant funding to place a conservation easement on a portion of the municipal property. History of the property was discussed. It was agreed the concept should be explored further. Cronic and Baran both offered to be involved in this investigation. More information will be sought from the Mayor regarding this concept.

Opportunity for Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

Closed Session (Purchase, Lease, or Acquisition of Real Property)

Between 8:50 p.m. and 8:58 p.m., the Committee held a closed session to discuss the Purchase, Lease, or Acquisition of Real Property.

Motion to enter closed session was made by Kowalski with a second by Baran. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes. Closed session began at 8:50 p.m.

Motion to return to open session was made by Hess, with a second by Sommers-Sayre. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes. Closed session concluded at 8:58 p.m.

There were no results to report at this time.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Hess with a second by Sommers-Sayre. Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Next Meeting

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 10, 2009, 7:30 p.m.