

## **Delaware Township Open Space Committee Minutes**

**Monday, June 17, 2019**

Prepared by Katherine Fullerton, Open Space Coordinator

Open Space Chairperson Rosalind Westlake called the meeting to order at 7:35pm. Open Space Coordinator Katherine Fullerton took the roll call. In attendance were: Larry Coffey, Joshua Goldman, Susan Lockwood, Steven Smotrich, and Rosalind Westlake.

Member Coffey made a motion to approve the April 15, 2019 meeting minutes and Member Smotrich seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

### **Update of Existing Applications**

The OS Committee received an update on the following applications:

- Maresca – The County has hired Borhen and Borhen to do the survey for the preservation. They are working on it and close to completion. Regarding the cemetery easement, there have been some challenges working with the attorney for the neighboring property, but the Township Attorney and Coordinator Fullerton are trying every angle to get an access easement to the cemetery without the Township needing to pay for the easement. There would need to be extra costs for the survey for the easement, and for the extra work of the Township Attorney, which was not included in the February 28 memo on anticipated costs for the Township to acquire the cemetery property. The Committee recognized that a decision about using the Open Space Trust Fund for these expenses had not been made. After a short discussion, Member Goldman made a motion to use the Open Space Trust Fund for charges relating to the acquisition of and the access easement to the Moore Cemetery as well as any other necessary legal work. Member Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken in which everyone approved the spending.
- Lee/Lau –The Township is using Newton Land Surveyors and we are still waiting for the survey to be completed. Requests for the ROW were sent out to the County and the Township. Neither wanted ROW, although the County requested a maintenance easement for a bridge on Route 519.
- Bellsflower – The Township has merged the lots and removed the ROW request from this property, allowing the State to move forward with preservation.
- Kohler Farm – At the May 23 SADC meeting, the SADC decided to move forward on applications where the landowners have NOT entered into a ROW agreement with PennEast. They will appraise these properties based on the hypothetical assumption that they are not subject to a taking.
- Cizek – Jay Watson has moved from D&R Greenway to NJCF. Linda Mead is looking for a replacement, but in the meanwhile is working on the open space projects. The closing is anticipated for later in the summer, which is around the same time Green Acres should announce the grant funding.
- Curtis Farm – NJCF discovered that if Delaware Township pays for the appraisals, we need to go through a proper municipal bid process. They would prefer to pay for the appraisals outright and have more flexibility to use the appraiser they prefer.
- Kulas Farm – no update.
- Prutzman Farm – no update.

- Pierman – NJCF pulled this application due to its size.
- Application for Municipal Grant Funds from Hunterdon County – the Township was granted the funding from the Municipal Allocation. The Township is waiting for the Freeholders to approve the funding and to receive the money.

### **New Applications/Updates**

Green Plan – The proposed Green Plan was discussed. The idea of the Green Plan is that Township properties would be evaluated for improvements and projects. These projects could be good for volunteers who need projects to work on. The Township should be proactive about needs. The proposed rain garden at the Police Department was mentioned. There was a question about whether the Planning Board should do this plan, or some other committee. It was suggested that a subcommittee could be formed with liaisons from each affected Committee. Member Lockwood offered to take this concern to the Township Committee to determine the structure of this endeavor. It was noted that the Planning Board will not be meeting until September, so there is time to coordinate this. It was determined that this document should be incorporated into the Master Plan. It should be a larger project of making the Township greener, connecting open space and recreation areas, through green areas. The Green Plan should not just be a list of projects.

The proposed Improvement and Maintenance Plan was discussed. This Plan is for the purpose of the County to provide Municipal Allocation funds to the Township for improvement and maintenance projects on Township open space properties. So far most of the document has been copied from the existing Open Space and Recreation Plan. Goals and projects for the Improvement and Maintenance Plan are needed. It was noted that this document would be a good starting document for the Green Plan. There is no particular deadline for the submission of this document to the County. It is not a Master Plan document and does not need to be approved by the Planning Board, but it should be approved by the Township Committee.

In preparation for the SADC annual application for PIG funding, the SADC target list was reviewed. The most recent document was more than 2 years old from Jim Border's applications to SADC. There were minor changes to the list, but overall, it was considered accurate. Similarly, a list of preserved Farmland has been created. Lists of Township own property, non-profit owned property, State property, and County property were created from the official Township Tax list. The Farmland Preservation list was created using both the Township Tax list and a list of preserved farms from the County. The Open Space Committee felt that the list was accurate. There was a request to make a list of all properties greater than 40 acres, to add to the priority list. A useful tactic has been to watch for a change in ownership of any of these properties, then discuss preservation with the new owner.

C-1 Stream Reclassification – Member Lockwood gave an overview of the C-1 stream status and potential changes. It was noted that overall, the proposed reclassification of Township streams to C-1 streams will not have a detrimental impact on Township properties. It is due to the Township's good open space stewardship that the Township has such healthy streams.

It was noted that the SADC is expected to give grants for updating the Farmland Preservation Plan. The grants should be up to 50% and will be part of the 2020 appropriations.

Heritage Conservancy Invoice – An invoice was submitted to the Township for \$1,000 to review the Holcome House Façade easement. The Township Committee wanted to pay for this charge out of the Open Space Trust Fund. The Township holds the historic easement on the property, but the house is privately owned. It was noted that the Wescott house charged \$500 to the Open Space Trust Fund in the past. This bill came from the request from the property owner for changes to the structure and to confirm if the changes met the historic easement. It was noted that the land is not preserved. Therefore, the Open Space Committee felt that the charge does not fall within the funding mandate of the Open Space Trust Fund. Member Coffey made a motion that the bill from Heritage Conservancy Inc. in the amount of \$1,000 not be paid out of the Open Space Trust Fund. Member Goldman seconded this motion. A roll call vote was taken and all were in favor.

#### **County Open Space Committee Update**

Member Goldman reported on the County Open Space Committee. The County voted to give D&R Greenway the necessary funds for Cizek. The County Open Space Committee has recommended to the Freeholders that Deer Management Plans should be part of any application for open space funds. It was proposed that the Township should have something in writing about Deer Management.

#### **Open Space and Recreation Plan Update**

Member Smotrich reported on the OSRP. The Open Space and Recreation Plan is in process. There was a question about when it needs to be completed and submitted to Green Acres. There was also a question of having a Professional Planner do the plan. It was noted that the Township has done the plans in the past without any issue. If needed, Coordinator Fullerton is a Professional Planner and can seal the plan.

The meeting schedule for the summer was reviewed. It was noted that the Township Committee will be meeting on July 15, the same night that the Open Space Committee should be meeting. The County Open Space Committee should be meeting that night, as well, so two of the five Open Space Committee members will be unable to attend the Open Space Committee meeting, creating a lack of quorum. It was decided to not have a meeting in July and hold all business until the September 16 Open Space Meeting.

Chairperson Westlake opened the meeting to the public. Seeing no public, she closed the meeting to the public.

Member Goldman made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Member Smotrich seconded the motion. The meeting ended at approximately 8:55pm.