

Delaware Township Open Space Committee Minutes

Monday, November 18, 2019

Prepared by Katherine Fullerton, Open Space Coordinator

Open Space Chairperson Rosalind Westlake called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Open Space Coordinator Katherine Fullerton took the roll call. In attendance were: Larry Coffey, Susan Lockwood, Steven Smotrich, and Rosalind Westlake.

Member Smotrich made a motion to approve the September 16, 2019 and October 21, 2019 meeting minutes and Member Lockwood seconded the motion. All voted in favor, except Member Coffey who abstained.

Update of Existing Applications

The OS Committee received an update on the following applications:

- Maresca –
The Amended Resolution has been approved by the Township Committee and the Freeholders have approved the necessary Amended Resolution in order to remove the requirement for access to the cemetery. The survey has been approved by the County and Martins and is being reviewed by SADC.
- Lee/Lau – This application is tabled until April, when the Lee/Lau family has returned from Hong Kong.
- Cizek – The Township has received a letter from Green Acres awarding \$500,000 to the Township. This is more than adequate to assist D&R Greenway to purchase the Cizek property. However, due to procedural events, the Township may not have the actual funds until after the anticipated closing date. D&R Greenway has asked the Township to provide gap-funding out of the Township Open Space Trust Fund, which will be reimbursed by the Green Acres funds.

It was also realized that the Township needs to approve an ordinance in order for the Township to approve the use of funds to close on the property and convey the Township's interest in the property to D&R Greenway. The ordinance was introduced at a Township Committee meeting on November 12 and there will be a second reading and a public hearing on November 25. The Township Clerk thought it would be good to have members of the Open Space Committee available for support at the public hearing.

It was noted regarding the gap-funding that the State would be reimbursing the Open Space Trust Fund soon after the closing, if it is even needed. The anticipated closing date is January 23, 2020. The Township's portion may only be \$400,000, depending on closing costs. The Township can not go over \$500,000.

A motion was made by Member Coffey to support the proposed gap-funding and ordinance for the Cizek preservation. The motion was seconded by Member Smotrich.

- Curtis Farm – NJCF is still in negotiations with Mr. Curtis. NJCF is reviewing the funding mechanism for preserving the property. The Agriculture Advisory Committee feels strongly that the farm should be preserved through the SADC Direct Easement process. It definitely should not be open space with trails, as this is a good working farm. NJCF recognizes this and plans to get funding through SADC, which could allow for the State to take over the preservation as a Direct Easement. It was noted that if the Township spends money on this application, there will not be money in the Open Space Trust Fund to preserve other properties.
- Herrman Farm – Block 17 Lot 20. The application has gone in front of the CADB and would like to get appraisals for the property before going through the Planning Board to change the lot line so he has road frontage. As it is now with a shared driveway, he can only have one extra lot on the 54 acre property. There was a question about two access points for a County Road, which would need to be determined by the Planning Board, or the Zoning Officer.

New Applications/Updates

The materials for the SADC proposals for the Special Occasion Events and the Soil Preservation regulation changes were reviewed and discussed. The impact that the proposed Special Occasion Events regulations would have on septic systems was noted. The Committee expressed concerns that the Special Occasion Events regulations do not support farmland preservation, and they are getting into Land Use, not preservation. There was a question of frequency of events. It was also noted that municipalities need to revise their codes to prepare for potential special events on preserved farms. Comments can be referred to the CADB or to the SADC.

County Open Space Committee Update

There was no County Open Space Committee Update, as Member Goldman was not in attendance.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update

Member Smotrich updated the Committee on the OSRP and the Recreation Committee. Draft comments have been discussed for the OSRP. There was a question regarding the timing for the Improvement and Maintenance Plan, which has no deadline. It is used for funding from the County, and the Township isn't able to access those County funds until next year. It was reported that the Girl Scouts installed picnic tables and there are new benches, firepit, and preparation for a new bocce court at the park.

Committee Comments

It was announced that the NJCF Land Rally is scheduled for March 20. The courses have just been finalized. Registration should be open. It is not in downtown New Brunswick this year, it is at a venue called The Palace.

The Township Committee is looking at appointments for the Open Space Committee.

The Township Committee will be reviewing Committee budgets soon. This could be applied for Committee members to attend the NJCF Rally.

Chairperson Westlake opened the meeting to the public.

Member Smotrich made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Member Coffey seconded the motion. The meeting ended at approximately 8:40pm.