

Delaware Township Open Space Committee Minutes

Monday, October 21, 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: Susan Lockwood, Steven Smotrich, Joshua Goldman, and Rosalind Westlake. Bob Hornby from the County Agriculture Development Board attended the meeting.

The minutes for the September 16 Open Space Committee meeting were tabled, as they were not available at the meeting.

Update of Existing Applications

The OS Committee received an update on the following applications:

- Maresca – Mr. Hornby had provided a timeline of events relating to the Maresca/Martin application, especially regarding the request for an easement to the Moore Cemetery by the SADC. The County Freeholder and Delaware Township Resolutions for Final Approval for this preservation reference an access easement. The Martins have made it clear that they don't want an easement. They are comfortable with the handshake deal that currently exists. If they are forced to provide an access easement, they will not preserve the property. The SADC has provided language for an Amended Resolution for Final Approval. The added language clearly states that a request for an access easement was denied and that no future easements will be granted. This lack of an access easement will not prevent people from crossing the property to access the cemetery. The Martins are willing to continue to allow Historic Preservation members and Moore family members to access the cemetery through their property. It was noted that since the historic access has been through the Martin property, it could be a proscriptive easement. If someone were to sue for access, the Martins might not have control over the terms of access.

It was noted that the wording of the Amended Resolution solidified the handshake deal, as opposed to negating this access option. In fact, since it would be in the Resolution, the handshake deal would be harder to revoke than it is currently. It was also noted that there are alternatives for the interested parties to gain access to the cemetery.

It was suggested that the paragraph added to the Amended Resolution for Final Approval should be added to the Farmland Preservation easement, so that future owners are aware of this historic access.

Member Smotrich made a motion, seconded by Member Goldman to recommend this Amended Resolution for Final Approval to the Township Committee. All in favor, with Member Lockwood abstaining.

- Lee/Lau – This application is tabled until April, when the Lee/Lau family has returned from Hong Kong.

- Bellsflower – This property is closing on October 23, 2019.
- Cizek – Coordinator Fullerton is waiting to hear from Linda Mead from D&R Greenway for a status update. It appears that the Green Acres funding has been decided, we are just waiting for an official notice.
- Curtis Farm – It was reported that there have been conversations, but NJCF has not made anything official.
- Herrman Farm – Block 17 Lot 20. This property is landlocked, with a shared driveway across lot 18. Delaware code allows for 4 lots to access a private driveway. As there are two other lots using the same shared driveway, this allows for only one extra lot to be developed on lot 20, which comprises 54 acres. There is not a strong development pressure, but it would be a nice property to preserve. The owners of lot 18 were involved in a lot line adjustment last month, and the Planning Board Secretary recommended that the owner of lot 20 come to the Township to apply for a lot line adjustment to create a driveway access.

New Applications/Updates

The draft SADC Annual Report was handed out to Committee members for comments. There were some changes regarding the active applications.

Member Smotrich updated the Committee on the Improvement and Maintenance Plan. The Recreation Committee discussed it at their October meeting, and they are working on modifying it. When they are done with their changes, they will send it back.

Member Smotrich also updated the Committee on the Open Space Recreation Plan at this time. The Recreation Committee is considering modifications and updates to the playground at Dilts park. They are thinking of installing improved bathrooms, a water fountain, perhaps updating the Snack Shack, and installing a dedicated cross walk. As part of reviewing these improvements, the Recreation Committee is also considering securing funding for the services for a professional planner to review the uses and layout of Dilts park and the adjacent open space. The Recreation Committee also expressed a request for a Township map of open space and trail locations. There was a discussion of the appropriate entity to pull together the necessary data to create the map, as D&R Greenway may have trails with the Plum Brook, but NJCF has the majority of trails. The County has provided Township Open Space maps in the past.

Meeting dates for 2020 – it was confirmed that the Open Space Committee wants to continue to meet on the third Monday of each month, except for the first two months, when there are Federal holidays on the third Monday. The Township Clerk had proposed that the Delaware Township Open Space Committee should meet on the third Tuesday of each month, which would be January 21 and February 18.

County Open Space Committee Update

Member Goldman updated the Committee on the actions of the County Open Space Committee. Readington requested funds out of its Municipal Allocation, there was a continued discussion on Deer Management, and they reviewed Historic Preservation Grant requests.

Comments from the Committee

Member Lockwood reminded members that the NJCF Rally is accepting proposals for sessions. November 4 is the deadline. So if anyone knows of interesting topics to discuss, please mention it to NJCF.

Meeting Open to the Public

Chairperson Westlake opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Hornby mentioned the proposed Special Occasion Event regulations by the SADC. There was a special presentation at the CADB meeting in October. There is a slideshow on the SADC website that explains the idea. Mr. Hornby suggested that the way that this is proposed, much of the enforcement would be at the Municipal level. Comments can be given to Mr. Hornby or submitted to the SADC.

Member Goldman stated, in relation to the Penn East, that there is an importance to preservation with State funding in protecting the lands from other interests. The Committee agreed that the State funding and the planning behind the preservation are important to this effort.

Member Goldman made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Member Smotrich seconded the motion. The meeting ended at approximately 8:30pm.