



Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund Program

Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting Notes of May 18th, 2015 - DRAFT

The POSAC convened on Monday May 18th, 2015, at the Route 12 Hunterdon County Complex, Flemington, NJ. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chair Steeves.

MEMBERS PRESENT: EARLE STEEVES, Chair, BILL BOWLBY, H. JORDAN GUENTHER, CAROL HOFFMANN, SUZANNE WILDER, JAY KELLY, CAROL BODDER, BILL MILLETTE, SUE DZIAMARA, AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Excused: JOHN GRAEFE, JOHN M. HALE, ROB TUCHER, RENEE MCNAMARA, KIM TESTA, SUZANNE LAGAY

AGENDA 1. Chairman Steeves welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that due to the members of the public in attendance to speak toward the proposed Disability Playground, that item was moved to the beginning of the meeting.

AGENDA 7. – NEW BUSINESS

- Disability Playground – Celeste Marie Lane presented the group's proposal to install a disabled persons playground at Deer Path Park. She and other members of the public spoke toward their choice of Deer Path Park as an ideal location as it is centrally located and provided great access and parking, as well as appropriate space. The group proposes the dedication of approximately one quarter of an acre for the playground. The equipment would be installed at the group's expense and it is proposed that volunteers would provide future maintenance. POSAC members expressed concerns regarding insurance and liability and on-going maintenance and upkeep that would fall to the County. POSAC members were supportive of the idea and asked the group to formalize their proposal. The Parks Department should work with representatives of the group to choose an ideal location suitable to both the County and the group and return to POSAC with additional details regarding the proposed location as well as the status of funding.

AGENDA 2. Approval of the Jan 20th Meeting notes: Carol Hoffmann made a motion to approve the minutes. Suzanne Wilder seconded. Motion passed.

AGENDA 3. Review/Final Recommendation Municipal Grant Program Applications

- **Lebanon Borough:** Staff gave a brief overview of the proposal to utilize the balance of the Borough's municipal grant funds to compete Phase III of the 96 Main Street Historic restoration and renovation. Suzanne Wilder made a motion to approve the application. Jay Kelly seconded. Motion passed.

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AGENDA 4. Review/Final Recommendation NonProfit Grant Program Applications

- **Tewksbury Land Trust and Raritan Headwaters Association – Weber Acquisition:** Staff presented both applications for the acquisition of the Weber parcel and went over the Priority Evaluation score. Jay Kelly made a motion to approve both applications. Suzanne Wilder seconded. Motion passed.

AGENDA 5. Review/Final Recommendation Historic Grant Program Applications

- **Tewksbury Historical Society** – POSAC members requested more information regarding the proposed upgrades to the Wagon House and how the Society plans to restore the historical nature of the building due to the more modern changes to the building, such as the large garage-type door. Action was tabled pending more information.
- **Hunterdon County Historical Society** – Suzanne Wilder made a motion to approve the application. Bill Bowlby seconded. Motion passed.
- **Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead** – Staff gave an update to the application regarding the recent work that the Farmstead has done with NJSHPO to get the property listed as eligible for the NJ Register of Historic Places. Bill Bowlby made a motion to approve the application conditioned on the receipt of SHPO designation. Suzanne Wilder seconded. Motion passed.
- **Hunterdon Land Trust** – POSAC members requested an overall plan for the site to fully understand the scope of the various historic preservation projects occurring at the site. Suzanne Wilder made a motion to approve the application. Carol Hoffman seconded. Motion passed.
- **Holland Township, Riegel Ridge** – Staff presented a request by Holland Township to accept an application past the application deadline of March 31st for a grant to further restore the Riegel Ridge Community Center. Suzanne Wilder made a motion to not accept the application citing the deadline for the program and needing more information regarding the historic nature of the request. Jay Kelly seconded. Motion passed.

AGENDA 6. – PARKS OPERATIONAL

- **Student Conservation Association** – Staff gave an overview of the work done in past years by SCA and the proposal for the upcoming year including the request for an additional grant of \$25,000.00 to cover operational costs. Suzanne Wilder made a motion to approve the grant request citing the positive work they have provided in the past. Bill Bowlby seconded. Motion passed.
- **Ranger Fees** – Staff presented the information previously provided to the Committee at the May meeting and the fee schedule proposed by the County Rangers. POSAC Members asked staff to explore with County Counsel if any fees collected could be returned to the Open Space Trust or to the Parks Department instead of the County's general fund. Jay Kelly made a motion to approve the proposed fees. Bill Bowlby seconded. Motion passed.

AGENDA 7. – NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS

- **Hamden Rd Access change request** – Staff gave an overview of the request and the issues surrounding the county's use of the access as well as the concerns regarding the public's right of way to the Landsdown Trail that is currently accessed through the Hamden Rd dead end. POSAC members expressed concern about the closing of the street as many members of the public utilize it as a parking area for access to the trail and the river. The County and Water Supply Authority also need maintenance access to the bridge and properties located at the end of the dead end. Members

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requested that staff work with the landowner and the township to address these concerns in a new proposal. Concerns about the intersection were also expressed and suggested that the County Engineering Department work with the Township on reconfiguring the intersection to be greater than a 90 degree turn without a stop sign. Jordan Guenther made a motion to direct staff to work with the landowner on these issues and formulate a new proposal that could be reviewed by POSAC, Engineering and County Counsel. Suzanne Wilder seconded. Motion passed.

- Proposed County Acquisition – Plimpton – Staff gave an overview of the Plimpton parcel and the subdivision initiated by the original application configuration. Due to the conditions imposed on the subdivision, D&R Greenway has requested that the County consider purchasing the entire lot, eliminating the need for a subdivision of the property and potentially eliminating a hazardous driveway along the county road. POSAC members discussed how the original configuration of the application makes the most sense for preservation. Bill Bowlby made a motion to recommend that the County not pursue the purchase of the entire property and to encourage the County to approve the subdivision. Jordan Guenther seconded. Motion passed.

AGENDA 8. – POSAC/PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Carol Bodder gave an update on the parks programs, specifically the upcoming Summer Concert Series, the installation of new trees at Echo Hill, the popularity of the newly installed fitness trail and the on-going improvements to ADA fishing access. The contract for use of the Lechner House by the Sea Cadets was also discussed. Parks Staff is working with County Counsel on an update to the contract as it is extremely outdated and doesn't cover the current use of the property. Staff also passed out copies of a draft Request for Proposals for a contractor to complete a Strategic Parks Plan for the County. POSAC members were requested to review the RFP and provide comments.

AGENDA 9. – FREEHOLDER COMMENTS - NONE

AGENDA 10. - ADJOURN – Having no further business, Suzanne Wilder made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bill Bowlby seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by: *Bill Millette* July 20th, 2015