



HUNTERDON COUNTY DIVISION OF PLANNING SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
Hunterdon County Administration Building
314 Route 12, Suite 140
County Complex, Bldg. # 1
PO Box 2900 Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund Program

Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting Notes of Nov 16th, 2015 - DRAFT

AGENDA 1. POSAC convened on Monday November 16th, 2015, at the Route 12 Hunterdon County Complex, Flemington, NJ. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chair Steeves.

MEMBERS PRESENT: EARLE STEEVES, Chair, H. JORDAN GUENTHER, BILL BOWLBY, CAROL HOFFMANN, JAY KELLY, SUZANNE WILDER, BILL HARCLERODE, BILL MILLETTE, SUE DZIAMARA

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

Chair Steeves introduced Bill Harclerode as a new member to the Committee. Bill gave the Committee a brief overview of his experience with open space and was welcomed to the Committee.

AGENDA 2. Approval of the Sept 16th Meeting notes: Carol Hoffmann made a motion to approve the minutes. Jordan Guenther seconded. Motion passed with Jay Kelly and Bill Harclerode abstaining. Bill Bowlby and Suzanne Wilder were not in attendance for the vote.

Agenda items were reordered to accommodate members of the public in attendance.

AGENDA 4. Review/Final Recommendation Non Profit Program Applications

- **New Jersey Conservation Foundation & Raritan Headwaters Association** – Lisa MacCollum and Greg Romano from NJCF were in attendance to present the applications by NJCF and RHA for the Higgins Acquisition in Ease Amwell Township. The applications represent phase 1 of a larger acquisition project that will total over 1000 acres and span over the county border with Somerset County. This application is for the first 150 acres in Hunterdon County. Ownership of the property was discussed, with questions as to whether the County would want to be the fee owner of the property and enter into a management agreement with NJCF. Staff was directed to explore this as a possibility. The applications requested a larger cost share than is available. Suzanne Wilder made a motion to approve the applications, splitting the remaining Nonprofit Grant Program balance equally between the two applications. Jay Kelly seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed with Bill Bowlby voting against.

AGENDA 6. –PARKS OPERATIONAL

- **Landsdown Meadows** – Pittstown Trail Association request. Chris Ely and other members from the Pittstown Trail Association gave a presentation that requested that equine uses be added to the list of approved uses of the Landsdown Meadows parcel owned by the County as open space. The association currently uses the Landsdown Trail for horseback riding and would like to continue on to the adjacent Landsdown Meadows parcel along the existing grass paths that border the fields. It would also help connect the Landsdown Trail to the park at Milligan Farms owned by Union

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Township. The Committee was supportive of the change and directed staff to consult with the Parks Department to determine if the request can be accommodated.

AGENDA 3. Review/Final Recommendation Municipal Grant Program Applications

- **Stockton Borough – debt service:** Staff gave an overview of the application from Stockton Borough to utilize \$24,873.28 of their municipal grant balance to pay off debt service related to the My Ben open space acquisition. Bill Bowlby made a motion to approve the grant request. Suzanne Wilder seconded. Motion passed.

AGENDA 7. – NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS

- **Nominating Committee** – Carol Hoffmann and Suzanne Wilder volunteered to serve as the nominating committee for 2016. The re-organization meeting of the Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee was set for Tuesday January 19th, 2016.
- **A Place for Everyone to Play** – Staff gave an update to the status of the playground. The Freeholders directed staff to work with the organization to determine a location for the playground and to move the project forward.
- **Open Space Trust Fund Plan** – Staff introduced the draft plan and the committee discussed the updates. Concerns were expressed about the phrasing of the plan to imply that the focus of the Trust Fund was to shift away from acquisition and move toward stewardship or maintenance of the parks. Concerns were also expressed that stewardship and maintenance responsibilities were going to garner a greater share of the Trust Fund to the detriment to the acquisition programs. Julie Allen from Readinton Township was present and added to the discussion, pointing out specific items in the draft that need to be addressed. Staff will take the comments from both the Committee and the public and make recommendations on additional changes to the draft plan.
- **Strategic Parks Plan** - Staff gave an update to the status of the Strategic Parks & Open Space Plan. The County has received bids back on the Request for Proposal and is evaluating the proposals. Bill Harclerode and Jay Kelly volunteered to review the top proposals and make a recommendation for the award.
- **Church Farm** – Trail Plan Proposal – Kingwood Township is nearing closing on the Church Farm parcel and presented a draft trail plan for the property. The Committee reviewed the plan and commended the Township for having a plan in place to allow the public to utilize the property.
- **Ewing Proposal** – CADB letter – Staff gave an update to the Committee regarding the CADB's stance on the proposal to develop trails on the Ewing property. The CADB believes that the use of the property for farming should be factored into whatever public access is planned for the property and expressed their interest in being included in any future discussions surrounding improvements impacting farm fields on the County's open space parcels.

AGENDA 8. – POSAC/PUBLIC COMMENTS – NONE FURTHER

AGENDA 9. – FREEHOLDER COMMENTS - NONE

AGENDA 10. - ADJOURN – Having no further business, Bill Harclerode made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Earle Steeves seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by: *Bill Millette*, January 19th, 2016