

Readington Township Open Space Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

June 7, 2017

Attendance:

Member	JAN 4	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 5	MAY 3	JUN 7	AUG 2	SEP 6	OCT 4	NOV 1
Mrs. Allen	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Mr. Becker	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Mr. Heller	X		X	X	X	X				
Mr. Huelsebusch	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Dr. Hendrickson	X	X			X	X				
Dr. Kelly	X	X	X							
Mrs. Madon	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Mrs. Duffy	X		X	X		X				
Mr. John	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Mr. Klotz	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Mrs. Owen	X	X	X	X	X	X				

Members of the public: Lynnette Skowronek.

1. The Chairman calls the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. announcing that all laws governing the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised.
2. Approval of the minutes: The May 3, 2017, minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Communications / Meeting Calendar / Monthly Walks / Event Updates: The Open Space Advisory Board received a copy of a letter sent by Mr. Robert O'Brien, Township engineer, to the owners of the property at 72 Lazy Brook Road informing them that their property and structures built on the property encroach on Township Property. The correspondence includes a copy of a portion of the property survey. Mr. Huelsebusch will follow up on this with Vita Mekovetz.
4. Regular Reports:
 - Farmland Preservation and Green Acres Updates:*
 - a. Readington Township got \$125,000 back from the Green Acres PIG (Planning Incentive Grant) for the Csepi farm on Mountain Road. The property is next to the DeGeronimo farm, and both have access to the south branch of the Rockaway Creek.
 - b. The Lorenzen's sent a letter to the Township stating that they are no longer interested in preserving their property.
 - c. Mr. Huelsebusch mentioned that PSE&G is working on a license agreement with Readington Township on two properties in which trails and kiosks can be built. One parcel is on Mountain Road. It connects the Cushetunk Nature Preserve to the DeGeronimo property. The other is at the top of Round Mountain. The Township gets the right of first refusal if PSE&G wants to sell the parcels, which is good protection.
 - d. Mrs. Allen mentioned that there is an access to the Yard's property as well as to the land owned by PSE&G, both located near the top of Round Mountain, via an access easement from West Woodschurch Road.

Hunterdon County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee Updates:

- a. At the Freeholders meeting of June 6, 2017, a property of 40 acres on the South Branch in Stanton Station was discussed. They would like us to work with them on this property, with the County contributing \$300,000 and the Township contributing \$25,000.
- b. Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation has a new walking trail near Three Bridges, in the Woodfern section of the South Branch. It is an old section of the Black River and Western rail line. The County would like to continue this trail to Three Bridges.
- c. There is no final news on the strategic plan yet

Hunterdon County Shade Tree Commission Updates: Dr. Hendrickson gave a presentation about the emerald ash borer to the Freeholders at their meeting on June 6, 2017. The Commission knows this is an important issue and would like to get information out to other towns and townships. The Freeholders would like the Commission to bring the towns together to do something. So far there have been four official sightings of emerald ash borers in Hunterdon County. The USDA has some traps.

Environmental Commission Updates:

None.

Readington Township Updates:

- a. The State Green Acres program would like the Open Space Advisory Board to have a form when we apply for funds from them. The form should include block, lot, acreage, cost, and funding sources. The form needs to be developed.
- b. A sign for leashing dogs needs to be created.

5. Old and Ongoing Business:

- a. The Township will not do anything about emerald ash borers until the tree inventory is completed. This is being done by Dr. Kelly's students. The treatment of choice, an injection, costs \$5 to \$8 per inch of tree, with a two-year treatment. Average cost per tree is \$100.
- b. Mr. John will set up a date in June for repairing trails. The May date was cancelled. He would like to get a group together to repair the White Trail portion of the Round Mountain Trail system. It was damaged due to excessive horse usage.

6. New Business:

- a. The Open Space Advisory Board needs to make a plan for pollinators, with flowers favored by bees, bee houses, etc. Xerxes has good information on such flowers. Flower blends could be put in the ground. Possible locations include the Cushetunk Nature Preserve and Lazy Brook.
- b. The Recreation Commission would like for us to support their memorial tree and bench project. Mrs. Duffy made a motion to support this project, and Dr. Hendrickson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. We need to ask what kind of protection they plan for the newly-planted trees.
- c. Mrs. Owen pointed out that the native grass field, which is located near the kiosk of the Cole Road Greenway, still has not been mowed.

- c. Mr. Becker mentioned that approximately 100 trees were planted in the Pleasant Run Greenway.
- d. A suggestion was made to put in obstacles on trails to stop dirt bikes and other motorized vehicles.
- e. Regarding deer management, Readington residents did the best harvests on our properties. Mr. Becker will put together a step-by-step management on four additional properties for bow hunting. The Museum Committee voted not to allow deer hunting on the Bowman-Stickney property.
- f. The driveway to the parking area up Woodschurch Road from the Doboinski Farm Park needs repair due to ruts.
- g. There is no meeting of the Open Space Advisory Board in July. The next meeting will be on August 2, 2017.
- h. Mr. Huelsebusch had a discussion with Hunterdon County naturalist Tom Sheppard regarding two breaks that currently exist in the path of a potential County trail along the South Branch near Round Mountain. These breaks will be discussed further with the County and landowners in the future. The Open Space Advisory Board will be discussing further cooperation with the County regarding this and other sections of an expanding trail network along the South Branch.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.