

# Readington Township Open Space Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

January 4, 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									
Mr. Becker	X									
Mr. Heller	X									
Mr. Huelsebusch	X									
Dr. Hendrickson	X									
Dr. Kelly	X									
Mrs. Madon	X									
Mrs. Duffy	X									
Mr. John	X									
Mr. Klotz	X									

Members of the public: Anne Owen, Lynnette Skowronek, Jerry Cook.

1. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes: Meeting minutes of November 2, 2016, were approved.
3. Correspondence/Other information:
  - a. 109 Pine Bank Road (Lot 66, Block 61) was referred to the Board by the Township for a recommendation as the result of an offer by the owner to sell it. It was noted that the lot has no easement to connect to Pine Bank Road. Its main value would be to connect trails, but there is currently no easement. The consensus of the members was to recommend the Township not consider buying the property. Someone suggested the owner may benefit taxwise to consider making it a charitable donation from the owner, with the Township as the recipient. Mrs. Duffy will make sure the township attorney sends a letter to the owner regarding this.
  - b. Mrs. Sabin resigned from the Board at the end of her three-year term, given conflicts with other commitments. Mr. Heller, previously an alternate member, was appointed to occupy the four-year seat. It was recommended to ask the Mayor to consider naming Mrs. Owen as second alternate.
4. Regular Reports: The OSAB annual report was distributed to meeting attendees and will be forwarded to Vita Mekovetz for distribution to the Township Committee.

Events:

- a. Open Space Hike Sun., Jan 15. 1:00 Whittemore Wildlife Sanctuary, Tewksbury.

- b. Potential Open Space Walk for february: Round Mountain trail system. Because of length, it could be one way. Route to be decided later.
- c. Annual Report was handed out.

Farmland Preservation and Green Acres Developments: Mrs. Allen

- a. Farmland Preservation: The purchase of the development rights on the Schley property on Island Road will close within next couple of months, as will the Cole Farm on Readington Road.
- b. Green Acres: The Lorenzen property near Dreahook Road. This property will be discussed at a future Board of Adjustment meeting to finalize open items.
- c. Mrs. Allen and Mr. Huelsebusch are In process of drafting a letter and listing potential properties that are candidates (20 acres or more) for farmland preservation. Annual amount for preservation has shrunk due to action by Governor Christie.

Hunterdon County Parks and Open Space:

- a. Mrs. Duffy heard that Mr. Huelsebusch will be appointed to the Hunterdon County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC). It was confirmed on January 6 by a letter from the freeholders.
- b. Darts Mill house is a candidate for a joint effort by POSAC and Readington Township as a possible COAH property. Committee should write a letter recommending acquiring the house for COAH and getting access to the river for kayaks. Mrs. Fort should see it, also. If the County follows through, they will get about acre with parking and access for kayaks.

Readington Township Update: Mrs. Duffy

- a. Mr. Smith is the mayor and Mrs. Fort is the deputy mayor.

Environmental Commission Update:

- a. 319h grant for water management has been approved by the DEP. The main areas of concern are Pleasant Run and Holland Brook. The Stanton Ridge retention basin does not work. Princeton Hydro will be involved in this. Mr. Huelsebusch will talk with the chair of the Environmental Commission about this.

5. Old and Ongoing Business:

- a. Tree seedling distribution for spring: there are about 40 seedlings left at the nursery. It was suggested we get 2,300 seedlings, like last year. River birch, sycamores and sweet gums good for wet areas. Scouts need a lot of notice for plantings. We can get grants for trees, which will enable us to get bigger trees, but we need a specific reason in order to get the grant. We are running low on cages.
- b. Deer control: Mrs. Duffy needs list of forms required and what we will provide from Mr. Becker for four properties.
- c. Forest management plan. The plan requires us to have an ordinance. Training is completed for inventorying streetside ash trees. Fifty percent of the recipients completed the surveys. Tree ordinances of other cities are being

reviewed. Some discussion points made: What would Tree City USA impact be on the Township? Main goal: the Township can have "teeth". For example, if you cut a tree, you need to replace it. Start in small ways. (For example - not within 100 feet of a water course or on a slope).

d. Forest Hill Preserve: The ribbon cutting and public presentation took place on November 20. Mr. Becker purchased two benches for the Preserve, closing out the funds for a grant.

e. Lazy Brook Trail: A split rail fence was put up off Summer Road. The dirt pile will be removed and gravel improved.

f. Emerald Ash borer: The State has not officially identified emerald ash borer in Readington. Dr. Hendrickson has ongoing concerns about ash trees and branches breaking onto roads.

g. Mr. John mentioned that, depending on weather, he will be cleaning up the dead trees at the Doboinski Farm.

h. It was asked whether it would be possible to put a loop on the Pleasant Run Trail by Van Fleet Road for use by the local residents and others.

i. Mr. Kelly suggested possibly doing a major trek on all of our trails - perhaps in the fall, looping around the Township. Mrs. Allen suggested a possible First Day hike, with multiple hikes around the Township.

#### 6. Questions/concerns from visitors:

a. Anne Owen asked if the Tower Field parking lot will be made bigger. The Cole Road parking lot nearer to Pleasant Run can be used by RTA if it's mowed. This parking lot would work, but the Tower Field parking lot is easier to use with a trailer. We can try to make changes when contract with the farmer comes up in April.

b. Mr. Huelsebusch suggested a farm tour. Mrs. Allen will plan and confirm to OSAB as details become available.

c. In February, OSAB members should share plans for projects and open space efforts/activities planned for 2017.

#### 7. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.