

Readington Township Open Space Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

January 3, 2024

PRESENT:

| MEMBER | JAN 3 | FEB 1 | MAR 13 | APR 3 | MAY 1 | JUN 12 | AUG 7 | SEP 4 | OCT 2 | NOV 6 |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Juergen Huelsebusch, Chair | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Emanuel Bola, Vice Chair | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Julia Allen | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Thomas Davitt | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Neil Hendrickson | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Christopher John | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Adam Mueller | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mario Orlandi | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Anne Owen | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Ryan Dunn, 1 st Alternate | X | | | | | | | | | |
| John Klotz, 2nd Alternate | X | | | | | | | | | |

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Theresa Burgher, Monica Nieto, Brian Skowronek, Peter Rodgers, Paul Grassie, Frank Lesnik

Chair Huelsebusch called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM announcing all laws governing the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised. All board members introduced themselves for the benefit of new members of the board and the public.

COMMUNITY:

- 1) **Communication:** John Klotz stated that the January Open Space Walk has been posted to the Township website.
- 2) **Event Updates:** Chair Huelsebusch spoke on a formal dedication planned for the Dale Haver Whitehouse Greenway to be held on May 4th. More information to follow at a later date.
- 3) **Open Space Walks:** John Klotz stated that the next open space walk will be held on January 21st at Natirar Park in Somerset County. The following month's walk will be held on February 18th on Lazy Brook Greenway. The March 17th walk will be held on

Round Mountain. Julia Allen stated that over 40 people participated in the annual 1st Day Hike held on January 1st on Cushetunk Mountain.

- 4) **OSAB Meeting Schedule:** Chair Huelsebusch discussed the upcoming 2024 meeting schedule and highlighted a few changes in dates. Meeting schedule is as follows:

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| January 3, 2024 | July NO MEETING |
| February 7, 2024 | August 7, 2024 |
| March 13, 2024 | September 4, 2024 |
| April 3, 2024 | October 2, 2024 |
| May 1, 2024 | November 6, 2024 |
| June 12, 2024 | December NO MEETING |

Anne Owen made a motion to accept the 2024 meeting schedule, seconded by ?, motion approved.

- 5) **Volunteer Sessions:** Chris John stated that the 2024 volunteer sessions will start in mid-February (after hunting season). Chris will present more info at the next Open Space meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Emanuel Bola made a motion to approve the November 1st minutes, seconded by Anne Owen, motion approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORTS:

- 1) **Farmland Preservation / Green Acres:** Ryan Dunn and Julia Allen stated that the Township is still waiting to close on two (2) farms with SADC. Ryan stated that the six (6) acre parcel on Readington Road has been appraised.
- 2) **Hunterdon County Parks / OSAB:** Chair Huelsebusch stated that the next meeting will be held the end of January. Chair Huelsebusch presented an overview of Township Open Space acquisitions since 2018.
- 3) **Environmental Commission Update:**
 - a. **Environmental Resource Inventory:** Neil Hendrickson stated that the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) has been completed and has been posted to the Township website.
 - b. **Reusable Shopping Bags:** Neil stated that he is working with Public Works Director, Ron Christy, on a program to collect and distribute reusable shopping bags.
 - c. **Annual Seedling Give-Away:** Neil also stated that 1,500 seedlings have been reserved from the state nursery for the annual seedling give-away on April 6th. In addition, up to 1,000 larger seedlings are available and have been reserved.

- 4) **WaterWatch Update:** Mario Orlandi stated that the Environmental Commission will be working with WaterWatch to test and track local streams for salt levels.
- 5) **Township Updates:** Nothing to report.

ONGOING BUSINESS:

- 1) **Trails Subcommittee:** Anne Owen stated that the next Trails meeting will be held on January 23rd. Anne updated the board on the condition of the trails. Anne stated that the wooden bridge at Deer Path Park has been taped off and is currently not in use. The County will contact Anne when the bridge has been fixed. Anne stated that several trails have tree limbs that need to be cleared and Anne has contacted Public Works for removal.
- 2) **Stewardship:** nothing to report.
- 3) **Roadside Garbage:** John Klotz discussed the ongoing issue of garbage/debris left on the side of the road on Indian Purchase Road, and a section of open space in Three Bridges, etc. John will present a list of properties involved at the next open space meeting and discuss possible enforcement on this issue.
- 4) **Rockaway Creek foot bridge:** Township resident, Peter Rodgers, presented his updated plan for a foot bridge along Rockaway Creek that will possibly connect a current trail with open space. The current condition of the trail calls for clearing and cutting back underbrush and growth. Peter stated that part of this property lies in Tewksbury Township and is part of the Stavola property and is located near Whittemore Wildlife Refuge. Juergen stated that he has a meeting scheduled with NJCF (New Jersey Conservation Foundation) and he will speak with them about this property. Chris John stated that he will help with the general permits if the Township moves forward on this.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) **Telleri Trail:** Chair Huelsebusch stated that the purchase of this six (6) acre parcel acquisition is proposed and once completed, it would allow additional trails in the Dale Haver Whitehouse Greenway

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD: None

ADJOURN: Emanuel Bola made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Klotz, followed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg A. Slutter