

BYRAM TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

MINUTES, AUGUST 8, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. Present were Chairman Ray Bonker, Joseph Sabatini, Daven Baez, Andy Kimm, Scott Olson, William Schilling, Caryn Segal and Secretary Cindy Church. Also present was Sandy Urgo, from The Land Conservancy of New Jersey.

Closed Session 7:34 p.m. (see separate minutes)

Open session 7:50:

Approval of June 2011 minutes: Scott made a motion to approve and was seconded by Joe; all in favor. June 2011 minutes approved.

Business:

Financial Report – Joe reported that there is \$552,224.58 in the local open space trust fund. In the reserve for debt service there is \$541,428.80.

Green Acres Reimbursement Requests – Received check for reimbursement of Buis/Smith soft costs on July 11, 2011 in the amount of \$10,425.

Revaluation Impact on OS Funds - Ray questioned the possibility of the potential loss of Open Space funds. There is a possibility of a 1/6th loss of revenue. There is not much information on this yet; more information may be available in October.

Tamarack Park / Engineer Status Report – Cory attended the pre-Highlands meeting on July 23, 2011 regarding the proposed recreation fields located at Jones Lane and provided the Township with a summary of the meeting. Cory, Joe and Scott met with Partick Ryan of the DEP; also present was a representative from Water Allocations and Land Use. Discussions at the meeting included:

- Highlands Open Waters: It appears that no Highlands Open Water is on the site; however, a 300 foot Highlands buffer applies to the wetlands. Linear development may occur within the buffer; the proposed 44 parking spaces must be removed from the buffer and reconfigured outside of the buffer. Linear development must comply with all appropriate sections of N.J.A.C 7:38, including but not limited to sections 3.6 and 3.8.
- Impervious Coverage: No more than 3% of total land area of property can be covered by impervious surfaces. If needed, non-contiguous Township owned properties may be

aggregated in the calculation if those additional properties are deed restricted from future disturbance and recorded with the County clerk.

- Steep Slopes: Linear development is the only construction that can occur on steep slopes.
- Threatened, Endangered and Rare Species: A preliminary review of I-Map indicated that Conservation Rank 5 wetlands are present offsite. A more detailed E&T review will be conducted by Department staff upon application submission.
- Water Supply: If the onsite well is to be used for irrigation of the proposed sports fields and it pumps under 50,000 gal/day or 35 gal/min pump no formal permit will be needed. If the proposed use is greater than those thresholds, a water use registration would be required.

The biggest issues that the OS is facing are with the parking area and the house that is currently located on the property.

An application will have to be submitted to the Highlands. Joe recommends setting up a meeting with the representatives from the Highlands.

Forestry plans: Under the Community Forestry Plan – Ron Farr submitted the following report:

- Japanese Knotweed was cut at Arnell. When it re-sprouts it will be chemically treated (some may be pulled to see which is more affective).
- Some Japanese Barberry was pulled from Arnell with a weed wrench.
- Trees were all planted on Beckmann.
- Ron will be taking one more trip to Beckmann to look for rare plants. They have not been noted yet but that does not mean they are not there.
- The Chestnut tree on Arnell is not well and will likely be dead next year.
- Hazard tree field inventory is complete. Final report will be done around September. This is being paid for by a \$7000 federal stimulus grant.

Andy voiced a concern that Ron has not located one of the corner points on the Arnell Parcel. According to Joe, Ron has actually located the corner point, and it is marked. He will be marking the entire property line. Ron should be scheduling a meeting with Andy to discuss and walk the trail. The goal is to come up with an agreement and propose a trail to the Township Council.

Scott advised that Ron also put up Asian Long Horn Beetle traps (purple boxes) in a couple of places around town.

Trail Progress on OS Parcels – Scott addressed the need for kiosks vs. trail markers. There is a recommendation to come up with a standard trail marking system. The recommendation is a post with some signs on it (including the name of the trail). Scott will bring more information on

the posts to the October meeting. Scott recommended that this should be a joint effort between the Open Space Committee, Environmental Commission and the Recreation Committee.

Kostrey/Beckmann/ Arnell Owners Maintenance Grants – When they were submitted it was assumed that there would be parking in certain areas. For Arnell, it was assumed that there would be parking off of the County Route. At this point the county will not be permitting this to occur. For Kostrey and Beckmann parking was to be put on the corner of Old Indian Springs Road, it was determined that it would not fit. The Town is requesting a recommendation for a safe pedestrian crossing that would support parking on the Johnson Lake side.

Annual Re-Organization (6 month re-appointments) – Re-Appointments will be again in January 2012.

North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development – Organization is looking to do a Stewardship work of open space programs. Open Space Committee discussed the letter that was received and have no comments or actions at this time.

Heritage Conservancy – A letter was received on July 22, 2011 from the Heritage Conservancy, looking to work with individual committees to meet mutual open space and historic preservation objectives. Open Space Committee had no comments.

Foreclosure Properties – Sandy from TLC-NJ provided a spreadsheet of the foreclosure properties and mapping where appropriate, which the Township can utilize to make determinations about prioritization and disposition of the properties. TLC-NJ provided recommendations, particularly in regards to properties that could be offered to the Green Acres program preservation or by the Township for park or conservation purposes (“conservation properties”). The parcels highlighted in green (regardless of the pink in the acreage) have potential; they are all foreclosure list parcels, and can be packaged. TLC suggests that these parcels would be good for a preservation sale to the state. The parcels highlighted in white with pink under acreage are undersized lots. These parcels have to be auctioned, with the adjoining property owners invited. Sandy will send the spreadsheet electronically to Joe. Cindy and Margaret will work together on looking more into the parcels and the geographical grouping. The parcels highlighted in green are the recommendations of the Open Space Committee for possible preservation. The Committee would need to make a recommendation to the Township Council and get their approval for funding through the Open Space Trust. It was agreed to go forward with the foreclosure process on “Package A”; Kash (B 208/ L 16.01), Byram Land Trust (B 76/ L 71), EGRI Group (B 94/ L 323), Catanzarite (B 103/ L 396), and Fusco (B 80/L 136), and then on “Package B” the three Mohawk View parcels (B 337.05/ L 5, B 337.07 / L 10, B 337.08 / L 13).

Tamarack Park Trail Plan – The timeline for this plan had to be revised, as initial GPS work of the Charity Hike Trail route indicated that the trail ran off of the property in two locations. Using GPS over GIS mapping is not accurate enough to determine whether or not the trail actually does leave the property; TLC has contacted the surveyor of the property to obtain the survey in a digital format that could be used with a GPS unit, which was finally received on August 3rd. The Conservancy staff went out to the property again on August 4th. The Charity Hike route did leave the property; staff will attempt to locate an alternate route that is within the property boundaries. A revised draft Plan should be ready by the end of August. TLC and the Open Space Committee will set a date to walk the trail to determine the best possible trail on the existing easement.

Deer Culling – Scott wanted to discuss deer culling on open space properties. In particular Scott is interested in the parcels in Lake Mohawk near Owner's Maintenance and surrounding areas. The Council would need to waive the restrictions on hunting on public lands. Sandy will send over more information on deer culling. Cindy will call to Lake Mohawk County Club to see what they are planning.

Adjourn: 9:42 p.m. Motion by Scott; second by Joe.