

OPEN SPACE MEETING MINUTES - MAY 11, 2020

CALL MEETING TO ORDER - Chairman Scott Olson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting has been electronically sent to the newspapers and uploaded to Byram's website, www.byramtwp.org not less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. In addition, a copy of this notice is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

ROLL CALL - Ray Bonker, Scott Olson, Joe Sabatini, John Morytko, Erik Duch, Scott Yappen, Earl Riley. Ben Spinelli and Doris Flynn were also on the call.

OS FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

- a. Reserve for Open Space - \$401,258
- b. Debt Service - \$185,966
- c. Debt Service P & I - \$329,925
- d. Planning Incentive Grant - \$400,000

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - April 13, 2020 Regular & Closed Meeting Minutes – Motion by Ray Bonker, Earl Riley second. Scott Yappen stated that all his comments didn't get included and in the future he will be more proactive in reviewing the minutes. Scott Olson asked to add Doris Flynn to the forester discussion in the closed session minutes as she participated in the discussion. Motion was amended. All members in favor.

OLD BUSINESS - Review of Final Draft of Open Space & Recreation Plan with Ben Spinelli

Ben, Doris, Joe and Scott O. went over all the maps last week and made final changes. Ben reviewed each map with the committee.

- Preserved open space
Erik Duch said that Ben didn't have the numbers on all the pieces. Ben stated the numbers are there. Erik asked to label the NJ Conservation property. Ben said he could put 8 on those. Scott Olson suggested putting 8A on NJ Conservation parcels since Byram is not the owner.
- Targeted preservation properties – the superfund site has to be removed and the 'tail of the dog' LLIC parcel added. Scott O. asked if we should remove the numbers. After some discussion, it was decided to remove the numbers and the legend.
- Existing Trails Map – No comments
- Proposed Trails Map – Ben walked a lot of the Hudson Farm properties – the trails shown are only approximate. We would need to get access easements from JCP&L or PSE&G to use the power line rights-of-ways. Hudson Farm doesn't want trails through part of their property near Mohawk View because they use that for bird hunting. The trail on

Wolf Lake property follows a woods road and it comes out to Roseville Road. It would be a spur that would come off of Tamarack Park Trail. The Cranberry Overlook trail can be extended through the Johnson parcel, and through the property across the street, previously owned by Larry Johnson. Ben has had conversations with the new owner who is willing to work with the Township. Scott O. stated that when the Tamarack Bed and Breakfast was operating the owners were not opposed to a trail going through their property. The NJ/NY Trails conference had 2 suggestions to reroute the Highlands Trail. Erik said the properties have to be hiked to see if some of the new trails are feasible. If we could bring the trail through the proposed town center, it would have a lot of economic value. There is text that gives a description of the proposed trails within the report. Ray said the proposed acquisition map showed the LLIC property, but it is not shown on the proposed trail map. He thought we should have a proposed trail that goes from the Buis property, through the LLIC property to the Mansfield Bike Path. Ben thought that was a great idea. Earl Riley agreed with Ray and said for 20 years we have talked about acquiring the LLIC property. Erik suggested tying it into Old Wolf Lake Road.

- COJ Field Map – Ben added the field numbers to the map
- Mohawk View, Tamarack Park, East Brookwood, and Riverside were reviewed.

Ben will add what we talked about tonight before everyone goes through the trails section. He will have the map adjustments done tomorrow.

Ray stated that on Page 55 Ben should add a paragraph about the LLIC properties. Ben suggested blazing trails different colors. We should start with blazing Tamarack Trail one color, and Cranberry Overlook another color. We could tie Tamarack Trail into the Waving Willie Trail which is green. We could put intersections and number them. This is valuable to let people know where they are on a map and it is also helpful if someone gets hurt because they can be easily located by emergency services. Hudson Farms is interested in assisting in creating additional trail heads--Ben stated that it can be a simple design. Hudson Farm is interested in the aesthetics of the trail heads because they want them to look nice. A trail road crossing on Route 206 would be very valuable. We should have trail crossings at Briar Ridge, and one on Lackawanna Drive for the Highlands Trail. For the proposed trails, we need to decide what trails should be hiking and which should be multi-use trails. Maintenance of trails are covered in the report and also in the asset inventory.

Scott Yappen said that the maps look great, but he is wondering how can we simplify this report for the average reader to understand. Scott Y. stated that if we look at the open space trust fund section, it talks about the bond that was taken out for the purchase of the Tamarack Park. We want the reader to understand how we fund projects. In the future, we can bond for other projects. Scott Y. asked Ben if he can put an example so that the reader can understand how the open space tax fund can be used for other projects. Scott Y. asked what happens when we are done paying the bond in 2024. Ray explained that once we created the OS tax, Byram went out for a bond to have money to purchase open space. Ray said it will free up \$40,000/year when bond is paid off in 2024. Ray suggested using Tamarack Park as an example which we leveraged other sources with a small amount from Byram open space funds to purchase the property.

Scott O. would caution laying out an example because every purchase we have made has been different. Joe said that we could talk about how we paid for all the improvements made at Tamarack Park out of open space funds.

Scott Olson said it would be interesting to have a chart showing the amount of money spent on land acquisition compared to the amount of money spent on park improvements. We haven't spent a lot of Open Space money in Byram on land acquisition because we have been very fortunate to get funding from many other sources.

Action Items:

- Ben will have the executive summary done by Monday, May 18.
- Everyone has to provide comments on the entire report by May 22. Trails Management, Economic Development, Executive Summary will need to be reviewed.
- Ben will have a final draft to us by May 29.
- We have to have final draft done by June 8.
- We will be having a presentation of the final OS and Rec Plan to the Council on June 16.

Ray Bonker said that we will not know if we will be having actual meetings by June 16. Ben will need to prepare for both a virtual meeting and live meeting. After the Council listens to the presentation, it will go to the Planning Board. The PB will need to have time to look at this document and then have a public hearing since it is an element of the Master Plan. Ben said it is designed to be a single document with 4 elements. Joe suggested having a joint meeting with the Planning Board for the presentation of the document. We will discuss it with the Planning Board secretary.

NEW BUSINESS - Timeline for remaining deliverables

- Branding & Marketing Materials will be tabled until next meeting. Ben will provide to the schedule prior to the next meeting for discussion.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – No comments were made.

CLOSED SESSION – 9:04 pm - Contract Negotiations – Forester

Motion by Joe second by Erik to end executive session and return to open session. All members in favor.

Motion by Joe, second by Ray to adjourn the meeting at 9:57 pm. All members in favor.

Meeting minutes prepared by Doris Flynn