

## **OPEN SPACE MEETING – April 13, 2026**

Members Present: Messrs. Sabatini, Dlugos, Duch, Bogardus, Esposito, Morytko, Mayor Rubenstein  
Also present: Secretary Caitlin Phillips

This meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mr. Morytko.

### **OS FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT:**

Reserve for Open Space: \$435,686.33.

Mr. Dlugos asked about the timeline for the grant. The Town Council approved it in December, so he's looking for a status. Mr. Duch asked about Diaco services; Mr. Sabatini said it has to do with Field 8.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – March 9, 2026 minutes. Mr. Dlugos motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Duch. Mr. Sabatini noted the grant is due May 15<sup>th</sup>, not March. All in favor with that edit.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### *Trails Grant Updates*

Mr. Morytko had a pre-application meeting recently, and the group was receptive to project. They discussed parking, and agreed it would be eligible for the project. He noted there's not much engineering involved. They'll need volunteers for the work. The group noted the design part would not be eligible. There are opportunities for things to be covered, so they should ask for more detail on that to see which costs can be covered. Mr. Duch said they should tailor the proposal for help on the building portion. Mr. Morytko noted the layout and design won't be covered. They could have workshops to train people to help volunteer-- that's not design, so maybe they can include that for costs they'd like the grant to cover. Mr. Duch asked if legal fees are covered. Mr. Morytko said they are likely eligible. He doesn't think they'll be high costs, but it would be good to be covered. The volunteering could be a matching part of the grant. Mr. Dlugos noted it's odd that a trails grant wouldn't pay for the design of a trail. Mr. Duch said maybe engineering may be more complicated if the proposed work had features like a bridge. Mr. Morytko said they should get the Trails Conference to break down the quote more. Mr. Duch asked if Mr. Morytko knows if anyone else is applying for the grant. Mr. Morytko said they have applications submitted, but the group hasn't received other requests for pre-application meetings. They noted they need objective measurements for their grants. They didn't seem like they were overwhelmed by the amount of project requests. Mr. Morytko expressed that they appreciate that the amount for the grant was increased. He said it'd be good to try to meet as many items as they can. Mr. Duch said he looks at the usage of trails, and this will help draw people to the Hudson Farms trails.

Mr. Morytko talked about trail easements at the pre-application meeting. He noted they can follow the NJDEP model, and work out an agreement with CAD. Mr. Dlugos said he and Mr. Duch flagged the route. He thought Mayor Rubenstein was waiting to hear from Mr. Ursin and CAD for the agreement. Mayor Rubenstein said he will coordinate with Mr. Ursin. He noted they've done this with other places in the past, and will use one of the agreements as a template. Mr. Morytko said they should put the parking location in, and define it on a map. Mr. Sabatini will reach out to Mr. Stoner for an estimate on the work. Mr. Morytko said they should also review budgeting for signage and trail blazing, which is grant eligible. Mr. Dlugos said it would be good to have a map of the trail and a spot to put it. They can do this by using a MyMap screenshot, and putting it on weather-resistant material. Mr. Morytko said they would need to see who builds and maintains it. The next meeting is a week before the submission date, so they will need to get the work done before the next meeting. Mr. Sabatini said the May 5<sup>th</sup> Council meeting has a resolution to authorize this, so it needs to be done before then. Mr. Dlugos noted they discussed at the last meeting about signage without having an official crosswalk. Mr. Sabatini said they can't do any signage, and would need to comply with certain conditions that they can't meet.

### *Forestry Projects*

Mr. Morytko said the mushroom work has been pushed until the fall because of the winter weather. Mr. Dlugos said Mr. Sabatini spoke with the warden, and was told because of the moisture they'll wait until fall for the prescribed burn. They want to suppress barberry, so they want it at a better time. Mr. Dlugos said there's a lot of barberry at the Briar Ridge trail, which extends out to the road. He spoke with Ms. Gracie about a herbicide treatment, and she has two people to recommend. For an acre, it'd be a few hundred dollars. Another area has a lot of stiltgrass. Mr. Sabatini said the herbicides need to be approved, and they would likely not be able to do this on their own, so would need DPW.

### *Property Foreclosure Updates*

Mr. Sabatini said this process would be at least a year if not more, as the complaint is being filed, but will take time to go through.

### **MEMBER REPORTS**

Mr. Dlugos said they have an Earth Day event on Sunday by the interpretive trail at the Byram Schools. They will clean the trail, and volunteers will get a white oak sapling. They re-booked a nature photography class for May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Roseville Schoolhouse, and then they'll walk to Lubbers Run trail to practice what they learned. They want to do a mechanical removal of barberry in Glenside.

Mr. Morytko said Tomahawk Lake will be in front of the Planning Board at some point. Ms. Phillips said 10 Route 206 is coming up, but doesn't have much that's Open Space-related.

Mr. Sabatini discussed herbicides, and noted they'd need to close for 48 hours after treatment.

### **OPEN TO PUBLIC**

No public was present.

Mr. Dlugos said a trail map was done in 2013. The Conference offered MyMap help, and there's one on the site. He suggested Avenza, which uses a pdf. Mayor Rubenstein said he doesn't like the idea of using multiple mapping systems, and asked what people mainly use. Mr. Sabatini asked that the Environmental Commission put together recommendations on what they'd like to see, for the Council's review. He noted they need to think about who people call if there are issues with the mapping system.

**ADJOURN** – Motion by Mr. Duch, second by Mr. Dlugos, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. All members in favor. Motioned carried.