

**Franklin Township
(Virtual)
Open Space Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes of the January 22,2022**

Bob Puskas	<i>Chair/AAAC</i>	P	Melba Battin	<i>Citizen</i>	P
Arnold Schmidt-	<i>Vice Chair/Environmental Commission</i>	P	Robert LaCorte	<i>Historic Commission</i>	P
Bill Connell-	<i>Secretary/Citizen Member</i>	P	John Moon	<i>Recreation Commission</i>	
Tara Kenyon	<i>Consultant</i>	P	David Triggs	<i>Citizen Member</i>	P
Bob Vornlocker	<i>Town Manager</i>	P	Ted Chase	<i>Planning Board</i>	P
Mark Healy	<i>Town Planner</i>		Deana Luchs-	<i>Citizen Member</i>	P
Phillip Kramer	<i>Mayor</i>	P	John Herrling	<i>Citizen Member/Trails Advisory Committee</i>	P
Ed Potosnak	<i>Council Liaison</i>	P	Chris Williams	<i>Shade Tree Commission</i>	P
William Byrtus	<i>Director - Recreation Department</i>	P	Mike Smith	<i>Board of Education</i>	P
Chuck Martin	<i>Trails Advisory Committee</i>	P			

1. Call to Order in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6)

Mayor Kramer called meeting to order 7:03

2. Roll Call

3. Annual Reorganization of the Franklin Township Open Space Advisory Committee

Schmidt moved, Triggs Seconded, a motion to elect Bob Puskas as Committee Chair. All agreed and the motion passed unanimously.

Connell moved, Triggs seconded a motion to elect Arnold Schmidt as Vice-Chair. All agreed and the motion passed unanimously.

Schmidt moved Triggs, seconded a motion to elect Bill Connell as Secretary. All agreed and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

Schmidt moved, Triggs seconded a motion to open to the Public. All agreed and the motion passed.

Seeing no one from the public present, Puskas moved, Connell seconded a motion to close the Public Comment portion of the meeting. All agreed and the motion passed.

5. Approval of October 2021 Meeting Minutes

Schmidt moved, Lacorte seconded a motion to approve the October 2021 meeting minutes. All agreed and the motion passed.

6. Old Business

Stewardship at Grasslands

Chuck Martin returned to the topic of invasive species management on grasslands lands, including herbicide application and reseeding. Recommendations from the Grasslands Management Plan include implementing these treatments in the Fall and Spring. Tara and Chuck continue to work on this research and will keep the Committee informed.

Update on Implementation of Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study

Dr. Obropta at Rutgers University continues to work on the Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study, being completed through a \$20,000 grant awarded through Sustainable Jersey. Kenyon updated that there is approximately \$2,500 left in grant, which is to be used for installing a rain garden at a township-owned site. Tara will continue to work with this group until the appropriate site is found.

Bob Puskas requested a financial report of the Open Space Trust for the next meeting.

Update. Tulipwood

Bob Vornlocker reported that the Township is currently looking into the feasibility of the Tulipwood structure serving as satellite classrooms for Raritan Valley Community College. Tara and Bob met with Staff from NJDEP's Green Acres and the State Historic Preservation Office onsite to discuss the allowances and restrictions if this project was to move forward. Staff from the State offices felt that this project would be compliant with existing regulations and would require approval from both Offices as well as public hearings. Bob will continue to work with Township Council and Raritan Valley Community College. It should also be noted that funding from the American Rescue Act may be eligible for use in the needed repairs and upgrades.

Bob Puskas asked for an update on the Diversion process for the Dunn House. Tara stated that the Façade Preservation Easement (required as part of the Diversion) was approved by the State Historic Preservation Office. Once Green Acres approves the Diversion, this Easement will be filed. The next step in the Diversion process is to hold the Scoping Hearing. Tara will look into the requirements and report back at the next meeting.

7. New Business

Presentation of Girl Scouts Gold Award Project at Middlebush Park

Grace Glynn presented her idea for installing sensory stations at the Nature Trail at Middlebush Park to add to its inclusivity for all children. LaCorte moved, Moon seconded motion to approve this project, which Grace will receive her Gold Award for. All agreed and the motion passed.

The Committee noted Graces' focus during her presentation, despite remote technology issues at beginning. They applauded her for her extensive research and presentation skills.

Re-establishment of Demonstration Plots at Negri-Nepote Grasslands Preserve

Chuck Martin and Tara Kenyon continue to work on creating a cost list as well as determining the appropriate herbicide protocol and seeding requirements for the demonstration plots at the Negri-Nepote Grasslands Preserve. Martin recommends adding an ADA-compliant loop trail in the area with signage.

8. Consultant's Monthly Activity Report

Tara Kenyon submitted her Consultant's Monthly Activity Report to the Committee ahead of the meeting.

9. Updates from other Committees

Tara reported that the Environmental Commission is now working with Justin Cairns, an Intern from Rutgers University. Justin is a Junior interested in Environmental Policy and Law and will assist the Commission in the application for Sustainable Jersey Re-Certification, researching environmental policies and legislation, and more.

For his efforts, he will receive 5 credits, and will work with the Commission for 125 hours between January 2022 and May 2022.

10. Public Comment

Luchs moved, Triggs seconded a motion to open to public. All agreed and the motion passed.

Samir Patel (17 Balboa Lane, Franklin Park) commented that he enjoys listening to the Committee meetings.

Hearing no other comment, Williams moved, Triggs seconded a motion to close the Public Comment portion of the meeting. All agreed and the motion passed.

11. Executive Session

The Committee did not hold Executive Session.

12. Adjournment

Luchs moved, Connell seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. All agreed and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Connell
Secretary