



Franklin Township Trails Committee Meeting

January 11, 2023

7:00PM

Franklin Township Municipal Building

475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ 08873

Large Conference Room

Note: A video archive of this meeting is located at; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSKlesscZ2Y>. As noted on the video, audio quality is poor and may be distorted.

1. Call to Order in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) The meeting was called to order with a reading of the Open Public Meetings Act by VJ at 7:07 PM.
2. Roll Call Vanessa Jones (VJ); Chair, Anne-Marie Orlusky (AMO), Vice-Chair; Charles Martin, (CM) Secretary; Mark Fortin, Christopher Gonda, (CG); John Herrling, (JH); Phillip Kramer (PK) Mayor and Council Representative; Tara Kenyon, Consultant. Absent: None: There are now 2 vacancies on this committee. Diana W. Martin, resident citizen attended parts of the meeting.
3. Annual Reorganization of the Franklin Township Trails Advisory Committee: The committee was called to reorganize the committee by PK. The Committee approved the appointment of Vanessa Jones as Chair, Anne-Marie Orlusky as Vice Chair and Charles Martin as Secretary by acclamation.
4. Approval of December 2022 Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes was made by AMO and seconded by MF There were no revisions to the minutes. Minutes were approved with 7 Aye, 0 Nay votes.
5. Public Comment: There were no members of the public present at this point in the meeting.
6. Pathways and Trails Plan (45-minute work session). Discussions in this session involved revisions to the "Trails Assets" section of the new PTP and affirmed that descriptions of additional Township, County and State Park trails that lie within the boundaries of the Franklin Township should also be included in that section. The committee affirmed that this information in a publicly available document would be useful for informing discussions with Township administrative staff, Township advisory committees, including the Planning Board, Open Space, Environmental Commission, Shade Tree Commission, and other government entities. Information in the document would also be useful informing and assisting future volunteer hike leaders for Township trails and their relationship to public open space lands.
7. Site Plan Review – There were no new properties opened for discussion at the most recent Environmental commission meeting.
8. New Business
 - a. Sustainable Jersey Grant opportunity (due February 2023). Discussion focused on the suitability of applying for a grant to establish a trail through the wooded section of Naaman Williams park. This area is primarily wetland and would require further planning and consultation with Township engineers and Council members pertaining to the suitability of

establishing a trail in that area. The sense of the committee was that the initial proposal should include a plan to remediate flooding and icing of the asphalt exercise trail area that lies inside the wetland area. The committee agreed that the Councilman from Ward 4 should be consulted pertaining to this matter. The sense of the committee was that scheduling a volunteer cleanup of the wetland area would be a useful event in terms of gaining support for the project.

9. Old Business

- a. Trail Walks and Events – VJ reported that Girl Scout Gold Award candidate Molly Haus is working to prepare a trail hiking guide for girls on Franklin Township trails. She would like to schedule a hike for girls through Parks and Recreation at Inman Park on February 5th or 12th as part of her project. The Franklin Astronomy club may have an event at Griggstown around mid-January. This will be scheduled through Parks and Recreation with limits to attendance.
- b. Expanding Land Near Existing Parks to Access Nature
 - i. Potential Trail at Naaman Williams Park – discussed in New Business
- c. Advanced Signage for Trails – No updates - concerns were expressed about signage for trails that would be suitable for colorblind people and also at junctions of trails with similar colorations. The committee considered the possibility of including symbols in addition to specific colors for trail marks.
- d. Local Health Assessment and Action Plan – in progress; ~ 350 responses to date. Also information obtained from a number of focus groups.
- e. Paint Blazes – no progress due to weather conditions, hunting restrictions.
- f. Updates on Trails Conditions from TAC Members – TK noted that 4 benches installed with 3 remaining. The committee should consider additional locations that could be included in new budget. MF inquired about how memorial benches might be established. TK indicated that there is no program in place right now for this procedure. JK suggested that relocating sections of the trail at Inman Park to remove parts that go along the roads and parking areas would be beneficial.

10. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn by AMO and 2nd by MF. Meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM.