



## Franklin Township Trails Advisory Committee

May 10, 2023

7:00pm

Franklin Township Municipal Building – Large Conference Room  
475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ 08873

*Note: A video of this meeting is posted at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARBigEbCZ7A>, Franklin Township IT has noted that due to technical difficulties, the audio portion is poor and some parts are unintelligible.*

1. Call to Order in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) Committee Chair Vanessa Jones called the meeting to order 7:07 PM
2. Roll Call: Vanessa Jones (VJ); Chair, Anne-Marie Orlusky (AMO), Vice-Chair; Charles Martin, (CM), Secretary; Mark Fortin (MF), Jignasha Patel (JP), Jim Kuligowski, (JK), John Herrling, Phillip Kramer (PK) Mayor and Council Representative, Tara Kenyon, Land Management Consultant: Absent: Christopher Gonda, (CG) There is now 1 vacancy on this committee. Citizen members attending: Nancy Cole (former TAC member), Stefan Holzer, Eagle Scout Candidate, Cara Holzer, Diana Martin
3. Approval of April 2023 Minutes: moved by MF, VJ second minutes approved by unanimous vote following abstention by JH.
4. Public Comment CM, MF Stefan Holzer presented a proposal to do work on the Simonson Brook, Environmental Center Trail as a project for completion of his Eagle Scout award. He asked for advice and approval of the committee for the project. Suggestions from the committee included clearing and maintenance of the trail, completion of trail markings, construction of puncheons or bog boards to cover wet ground, installation of benches, (possibly including memorial benches) at locations along the trail. Nancy Cole mentioned that she liked the marked road bike trails on the township and appreciated efforts by the TAC with respect to this project. Motion to close by AMO and seconded by MF, motion approved.
5. Pathways and Trails Plan (45-minute work session) – TK noted that trail maps continue to be worked on– CM mentioned that stream crossings, parking areas and kiosks need to be noted on related maps., Negri corrections on trail colors were discussed.
6. Site Plan Review – no new information related to potential trails was on recent docket items of the Environmental Commission or the Planning Board.
7. New Business
  - a. **National Trails Day:** June 6, 2023 (Saturday) Events were planned and discussed including partnering with Parks and Recreation. TK has been discussing this event with Superintendent Beau Byrtus. The committee proposed to have 4 parts to this event. Sessions held at the Environmental Center at 326 Bunker Hill Road, would include disc golf lessons and a 55+ senior and family hike along the Blue trail. Events scheduled at the John Clyde Memorial Grasslands would include an advanced hike through grassland and woodland trails and an Environmental Hike for children.
  - b. **Safety and Security Concerns at Trails and in Parking Areas.** AMO reported on recent

car burglary event at the Negri-Nepote parking area. Members noted that other parking areas in the township and D&R Canal and Six Mile Run state areas have also been recently targeted. MF moved that in light of the increased criminal activity that security cameras and appropriate signage be installed at the parking areas of all Franklin trails. Motion seconded by AMO and approved unanimously by the committee.

- c. Parking Lot at County Route 518 Property: TK noted that DPW is working on the construction of a parking area on Rt 518 on township property block 5.02 Lot 30 for hunting access and as a possible trail head through the heavily wooded property. The curb cut for the lot would be in the area near 76 CR 518 (GPS: 40.41028, -74.60142)

## 8. Old Business

- a. Trail Walks and Events
  - i. Trail Runs Christopher Gonda is looking to schedule a trail run at J.C Memorial Grasslands June 10, June 17, July 2
  - ii. Members mentioned that the Annual Firefly Hike (and Astronomy Event) should be planned for the first or second weekend of July
- b. Concept Plan for Improvements at Memorial Forest – Planning is in progress for a memorial tree tract, parking areas and access to the Memorial Forest area from an entry site on newly acquired township property at subdivided 613 Elizabeth Avenue lot Block 508.02 , Lot 52.01 (GPS: 40.50313, -74.55297) [Note; this information is not available on the Township Interactive Map]
- c. Updates on Trails Conditions from TAC Members: JP noted that a number of trail markers and marker posts were missing from the Griggstown grasslands trails. MF indicated that he had received inquiries about establishing a disc golf course at Middlebush Park. TK suggested that a map of a potential course could be presented for discussion at the next trails committee meeting.

9. Adjournment 9:05 PM AMO moved with MF second. Unanimously approved.