

Franklin Township Trails Advisory Committee

Date: April 10, 2024

Location: Franklin Township Municipal Building (Large Conference Room).

Open Public Meeting Act Policy

- Read into the record by Vanessa Jones, Chairperson, TAC

Roll Call

Present	Absent
Vanessa Jones, Chair	Christopher Gonda, Secretary
Anne-Marie Orlusky	Councilman Alex Kharazi
Robert Kovacs	Jim Kuligowski
Michael Morosco – Intern	Jignasha Patel
Pravesh Lal	
	Tara Kenyon, AICP/PP – Consultant

Approval of March Meeting Minutes

Anne-Marie proposed an amendment regarding the attribution of trimming of the trees at Negri-Nepote Preserve. March 2024 Meeting Minutes passed with an amendment.

- Motion to Approve: Robert Kovacs, seconded: Anne-Marie Orlusky
- All voted to approve the minutes of the March meeting, subject to the amendment

Public Comment

- Motion to open Public Session: Anne-Marie Orlusky, seconded: Robert Kovacs.
- All agreed and the meeting was opened to the public

A journalist, representing the Franklin Reporter, introduced himself and stated that he was attending the meeting to observe. No other comments.

- Motion to close the Public Session: Anne-Marie Orlusky, seconded: Robert Kovacs.
- All agreed and the public portion of the meeting was closed.

Site Plan Review

- No site plan review for this meeting.

New Business:

Micromobility Study

The *Micromobility Study* for the Hamilton Business District was initiated on April 2nd at a virtual meeting with the consultants NV5, the members of the TAC, Environmental Commission and Township staff. The study is being done to find ways of making safe and energy efficient connections from the Hamilton Business District moving west towards DeMott Lane, Amwell Road, and Easton Avenue. There is an additional section in the study, planned for using the existing East Coast Greenway route, for a connection with Winston Avenue.

Prescribed Burn

- The Prescribed Burn was conducted at the John Clyde Memorial Native Grasslands Preserve on Tuesday, March 20th. Tara was with the NJ Fire Safety Service at the location along with Michael, our TAC intern. Michael showed some pictures he took of the Prescribed Burn. He reported in the meeting that the Burn was successful in clearing the fields. As per the Fire Safety personnel, this process will help the Grasslands Preserve deal with various invasive plant species and encourage the native plants and wildlife to regenerate and repopulate.

Negri-Nepote updates

- The date for a Prescribed Burn at Negri-Nepote is being planned.
- Tara is communicating with the New Jersey Audubon to find out who created and funded the signage for the Negri-Nepote, and how it was funded.
- With regards to the Bird Blind Repair/Replacement, Michael reported that he is still in the information collection phase. He is collecting various ideas and options before making recommendations.

National Trails Day

- National Trails Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 1st and a program will be held at Bunker Hill Natural Area this year. Tara is awaiting a response from a meeting being held on April 11th, before discussing activities that can be planned by the TAC at the location.

Old Business:

Franklin Township Pathways and Trails Advisory Plan

- The Open Space Advisory Committee is meeting on April 16th to discuss the Franklin Township Pathways and Trails Advisory Plan and will provide us with recommendations and any updates.

Green Infrastructure and Trail Development at Naaman Williams Park

- The Green Infrastructure plan is progressing well, Tara has been overlooking the project, working with DPW and Rutgers. The money is being allocated as per priorities and the project is moving ahead.
- Based on the progress that has been made, the TAC is planning several public outreach meetings at the Town Hall and Naaman Williams Park in May, June, July and August.

Updating and Printing of Trails Maps

- The Purchase Order has been confirmed and sent to the Somerset County Print Shop for printing.
- Tara has sent in the updated maps to the Information Technology Department to be posted on the Township website.

Trail Marker Updates & Paint Blazes

- Robert offered the services of his scout troops in September / October for Trail updating the markers.

Trail Walks & Events

The following flyers have been posted for the public at Franklin Parks and Recreation and Township website

1. Trails Run Series for this Spring, hosted by Christopher Gonda at John Clyde Memorial Native Grasslands Preserve starting from April 22nd through May 20, 2024, at 6:30 pm.
2. Eco-Walk, hosted by Jignasha Patel at the John Clyde Memorial Native Grasslands Preserve on May 25, 2024, at 10:00 am
3. Storybook Hike, hosted by Jignasha Patel at Inman Park Pavillion on May 4, 2024, at 10:00 am.
4. National Trail Day Program and Hike, hosted by Tara Kenyon and Vanessa Jones at the Bunker Hill Natural Area. Date & Time TBD

Trail Reports and Conditions

- The Committee will continue to use the Google Form to submit items in need of repair and/or maintenance

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn: Anne Marie Orlusky, seconded: Robert Kovacs.
- All agreed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm
- ***Next meeting of the Franklin Township Trails Advisory Committee:***