

**Franklin Township
Open Space, Recreation and Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund
Advisory Committee
Minutes**

March 20, 2012

Melba Battin-P
Robert Mettler-P
Bill Connell-P
Jack Connolly-P
Craig Novick
Mark Healy-P
Randy Jones-
Richard Seamon-
Ted Chase-P

Robert LaCorte-P
John Moon-P
Alice Osipowitz-P
Bob Puskas-P
Arnold Schmidt-P
David Triggs –
John Herrling –P
Chris Williams-P (late)

1. Call to order Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Puskas in accordance with the Sunshine Law at 7:05pm Members present indicated above by (P).
2. V Chair Puskas asked for a Motion to pass minutes form February 21st. Schmidt moved, Connolly Seconded, motion to pass minutes with corrections. Motion Passes
3. Financial Report. Financial report dated 3/20/2011 was reviewed. The balance in the OSTF is \$15,064,397.64 LaCorte moved, Schmidt seconded motion to except report. Motion Passes
4. Connell moved, Connolly seconded motion to Open first opening to public

Peter Dehaan, 12 Denherder

Questioned why Open Space was discussing roof repairs on Kingston School. It was explained to him that the Kingston School is on Open Space Property therefore it comes under the purview of the committee. The official title of Open Space is ***“Open Space, Recreation and Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund.”***

Mr. Dehaan explained back in 2007 that the Kingston School was considered for the Bicycle Hall of Fame, it wound up in California at the time the building was considered unsuitable because of the repairs

needed. If the building could be made usable it could be considered for the NJ Bicycle Association. He said he would reach out to them and confirm their interest

Connolly moved, Connell seconded motion to close meeting to public

5. New Business

- a. Article regarding Civilian Conservation Corp Jobs for veterans
Among other things it discussed having veterans restore habitats and manage invasive species. Chairman Jones thought this would be of interest to the committee to help manage properties. It is one of the many ideas put forth in a campaign year but may be of use to committee if it comes to be.
- b. Kingston School roof repair. The committee was informed that The school is in need of immediate roof repair. Historic is currently getting estimates for roof repair. A ball park figure of \$150,000 to \$200,000 was discussed. It was discussed that within the last two years the committee was asked to consider demolition of this building. To date no viable tenant has been found for the building which includes effort by the Kingston Historical Society. Mr. Healy was requested to also get a turnkey number (complete), on the full amount of work required on the building in addition to the roof. The committee felt it would be short sighted to put a roof on the building without knowing what additional work is required to bring it up to code. Mr. Healy was also asked to clarify what the intended use is for the Cultural Art Center that is currently being discussed.
- c. Varacalli reported they apply for a Green Acres Grant to defer a portion of the cost of the preservation of the Scalzone Property

6. Old Business

- a. Osipowitz updated the committee on Middlebush Park
 - The entrance improvements are almost complete. The new poles are in place, waiting for the wires to be transferred. The vendor will put a rough coat on the pavement . The final Paving will be done in conjunction with the paving of Demott Lane.
 - The final specs for the turf field are being reviewed and will be going out to bid shortly.
 - It was noted that a “your tax dollars at work” sign was put up outside Middlebush Park. The committee wanted to know if any reference to Open Space was made on the sign. The

committee thought it would have been an important thing to reference.

-The committee had previously asked if Road improvements were an appropriate and allowable use of Open Space funds. Osipowitz reported that a review by the lawyer confirmed it was.

Connell asked what the balance in the developer trust fund was, and it was estimated at \$400,000 but will confirm.

LaCorte moved, Battin seconded a motion to have all developer trust fund monies applied and depleted on the road improvements before Open Space dollars are spent.

Motion passes

- b. Middlebush Park Trail Plan. Varacalli reported the initial proposal was for 2.7 miles of trails. The committee previously approved \$80,000 in hard costs, \$45,000 in kind public works costs along with the \$25,000 grant. They are currently getting estimates for what they can accomplish from the initial plan for \$150,000 is broken out above.
- c. Healy reminded the committee they were invited to Land use meeting March 26th to discuss first wave of park plans including Middlebush Park.
- d. Negri-Nepoti-Battin reported April 1st and April 28th will be work day
Williams commented that Griggstown Natural are is starting to be in need of some attention in regard to invasive species
- f. Varacalli reported that Audubon walk dates have not been released yet. She will report to committee next meeting
- g. Things to do maps/trails are at printer
- h. Committee was reminded April 17th meeting be at Van Liew House 280 South Middlebush lane.
- l. (4) benches are being made by a boy scouts earning his Eagle Scout award for Negri-Nepoti.

7. Consent Agenda

The following were reviewed

- a. Consultants work log
–clarification was requested regarding Loos working on N/S trail
- b. Historic Preservation Consultant work log
- c. Scout project list

8. Committee Reports

a. Trails:

- Connolly reported the details of the Photo Contest
And that the design of the hats have been approved
- The Tour De Franklin, is April 29th-proceeds go to help the Franklin food bank

b. Varacalli reported both her and Chairman Jones will be going before council to present the Open Space Budget on March 27th
-at this time a conversation ensued regarding creating a line item for Recreation as we do for Historic. Healy suggested this be brought up at the Joint Land use meeting.

- concern was raised regarding what the minimum balance for the trust fund should be. Greater demands are being put on the trust fund that could easily deplete the annual balance to the point that the committee can not react appropriately to large property opportunities.

c. Puskas reported that the Ag Committee sent out a letter to approximate 12 land owners in regards to their interest in having their land in the Farmland Preservation Program.

c. Schmidt noted with interest that they are clearing a wood area by the canal between south bound brook and bound brook. It was assumed it was part of the Flood control project but Varacalli was requested to reach out to Loos for confirmation on what this was.

9. Connell moved, Connelly seconded motion to Open second opening to public

Motions passes

Seeing no one

Connolly moved, LaCorte seconded, motion to close meeting to public

Motion passes

10. Executive Session

Connell Moved, Williams seconded, motion to adjourn, Motion Pass 9:25

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Connell
Secretary