

Ronald G. Rios
Freeholder Director

Charles E. Tomaro
Deputy Director

Kenneth Armwood
Charles Kenny
Leslie Koppel
Shanti Narra
Blanquita B. Valenti
Freeholders



Charles E. Tomaro
Freeholder Liaison

Richard Lear
Chairman

BOARD MEMBERS
Antonio Abano
Joe Pruiti
James L. Campbell

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Open Space and Recreation
Public Advisory Committee

MINUTES OF THE
MIDDLESEX COUNTY OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION
PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 12, 2017

Attendance:

Committee Members

Richard Lear, Chairman (present)
Freeholder Carol Bellante (present)
Jim Campbell (present)
Laura Kuehner (absent)
Antonio Abano (present)
Joe Pruiti (present)

Other

Cara Pfundston, Office of Parks and Recreation
Paul T. Clark, M.C.I.A
Eric Gehring, Office of Parks and Recreation
Mark Nonesteid, County Cultural and Heritage Commission
Mike Sica, Borough of Carteret
Mayor Eric Steeber, Borough of Milltown
Denise Biancamano, Administrator, Borough of Milltown
Mike McClelland, Milltown Borough Engineer

I. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Richard Lear at 3:00 p.m. Mr. Lear stated that the notice of the special meeting was distributed in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.



II. Roll Call

Cara Pfundston called attendance. A quorum was present.

III. Minutes of March 25, 2015

A motion was made by Jim Campbell to accept the minutes of the March 25, 2015 meeting. Motion was seconded by Joe Pruiti. Motion was approved and accepted. Minutes were adopted.

IV. Old Business

Paul Clark distributed a current summary of Open Space and Farmland Acquisition Projects. This Memorandum is part of these minutes. Richard Lear summarized the Memorandum with the recent closings of both Open Space Properties totaling 18.28 acres in South Plainfield and New Brunswick and Farmland in South Brunswick totaling 36 acres. He also identified there are over 244 acres of current and ongoing projects in various towns and 17 acres of farmland in the Township of Monroe.

V. New Business

1. Carteret

Carteret Waterfront Park

Block 304, Lot 2.01 and 2.02

9.97 acres total

Mike Sica from the Borough of Carteret presented a proposed acquisition consisting of almost 10 acres to connect to the already present Carteret Waterfront Park and Marina. He stated this is premier open space and a great example of the opportunity to expand this waterfront as community public access. Also, this would be a unique opportunity to open the entire waterway on the Arthur Kill. Carteret would maintain the property.

Jim Campbell raised a concern about the environmental conditions of the land. Mike Sica explained Dupont, with their own LSRP will be remediating under a NJDEP Permit. The property would be capped and completely remediated at the finish of the project.

Antonio Abano asked about the cleanliness of the water. Mike Sica explained the Arthur Kill does have contaminants, but not to the effect of harm. This waterway is safe for recreation and is presently always used at Carteret Waterfront Park and Marina.

Freeholder Bellante questioned the future expectations listed to which Mike Sica replied these ideas could happen relatively quickly.

Richard Lear added the 2003 linkage with the present pier is consistent with the Open Space Master Plan.

Antonio Abano motioned to forward this property to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for their consideration with the recommendation they be made part of the acquisition process. Joe Pruiti seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion was approved.



2. Milltown

Milltown Post Office

Block 60 Lot 1.02

.89 acres total

Mayor Eric Steeber presented the Milltown Post Office as a property in need of purchase in order to restore this property to its natural flood plain. This property gets inundated with water when there is flooding in the Lawrence Brook at times four times a year. Thus, destroys many properties surrounding this building. Mayer Steeber wants to demolish the structure to leave the land as a flood plain. There has been no luck with support from the State of New Jersey, and further stated Milltown is not prepared for this kind of destruction. At this point, Milltown has spent \$25million to relocate the public works building and the utility building from future flooding damage.

Michael McClelland further presented pictures of the area in a flooded stage and revealed there has been significant flooding since a study done in 1980. The concept is to have a pavilion and parking area remain in this location, as a center for a town wide footpath plan that would be ADA accessible. The Borough of Milltown would own and maintain the property as well as do Due Diligence.

Antonio Abano asked if this property floods on average four times a year, how much damage remains after flooding? Michael McClelland explained the damage is greater with the structures there. This property would have no permanent structures and be a useable flood plain.

Jim Campbell asked if the parking area would be pervious, asphalt or gravel? Michael McClelland suggested there are many options for this area.

Jim Campbell motioned to forward this property to the Board of Chose Freeholders for their consideration with the recommendation it be made part of the acquisition process. Joe Pruiti seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. Edison

Ferrante Property

Block 415 Lot 5.N

13.12 acres total

Shea Property

Block 415 Lot 7

1.62 acres total

Richard Lear proposed both these properties be presented together. Mark Nonestied presented the Ferrante property as an historically significant piece of property associated with the Battle of Short Hills. The Battle of Short Hills was on June 26, 1777 and went from Metuchen to Westfield. The Battle was named because of the rolling hills on this land. President Washington camped in the Watchung Mountains, but was lured into these



rolling hills. There has been Deed research and found a claim filed for damage to the property. This property is significant to the Revolutionary War History in Middlesex County. The Shea property will help connect County properties and prevent housing development. The County parcel will petition for National Historic area acquired.

Antonio Abano motioned to forward these properties to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for their consideration with the recommendation they be made part of the acquisition process. Jim Campbell seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion was approved.

4. Monroe

Kurczeski Property

Block 31 Lot 6
47 total acres

Eric Gehring presented the Kuczeski property as a property significant to the location directly across from the historic 103 acre Story Farm. This property is predominately cranbury bogs with a structure. The owner of this land has been approached by developers already. The water is by spring fed ponds and is a tree farm.

Richard Lear added in acquiring this land, the County would be forging a connection to preserve County owned land.

Antonio Abano motioned to forward these properties to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for their consideration with the recommendation they be made part of the acquisition process. Joe Pruiti seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. Monroe

Reiner Property

Block 76 Lot 23.05
3.63 total acres

Eric Gehring presented this property which is located directly within the County owned Matchaponix Forest. The owner is ready to sell to the County to add to the Matchaponix Brook and the Manalapan Brook. There is a building and a shed on the property as well as a driveway.

Jim Campbell motioned to forward this property to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for their consideration with the recommendation they be made part of the acquisition process. Antonio Abano motioned to forward these properties to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for their consideration with the recommendation they be made part of the acquisition process.

VI. Public Comment

No Public Comment.

VII. Next Meeting



To be determined

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Cara Pfundston
Recording Secretary

