

**Franklin Township Open Space Advisory Committee**  
**Tuesday, December 14, 2004**  
**Minutes**

1. **Call to order in accordance with the Sunshine Law provision.** At 7:10, a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order in accordance with the Sunshine Law.
2. **Introductions/roll call.** Present were members Jones, Battin, Puskas, Sherwood and Orsini. Arriving later were Clyde and Chase. Also present was Consultant Loos.
3. **Approval of the November 9, 2004 minutes.** Puskas moved and Orsini seconded a motion to approve the November 9, 2004 minutes. Motion carried.
4. **Opening of the meeting to the public.** There being no members of the public present, this matter was waived.
5. **Financial Report.** (At this point, Chase arrived.) The financial report was reviewed. There is \$12,700,411.24 in the open space trust account. The members also reviewed the status of pending purchases. If all properties currently targeted for purchase were to be acquired, it is projected that there would be \$5,583,282 left in the trust fund. Upon a motion by Orsini, seconded by Puskus, a motion carried to approve the financial report.
6. **Old Business.**
  - a. **Property management status report.** Loos reviewed the status of various property management projects.
  - b. **Memorial Forest—Review of proposals for site plan preparation.** The committee reviewed two proposals for the design of the memorial Arboretum. One was from CME Engineering and was for a total of \$48,200 and the other was from Schoor DePalma for \$16,455. Loos had contacted Schoor DePalma to see if everything in the CME proposal was included in the Schoor DePalma proposal. Loos was informed that there was one difference: CME included “final Design Phase Services at a cost of \$9,500 and Schoor DePalma did not. Schoor DePalma was asked what it would cost if this was added to their proposal and was told that it would be somewhere between \$2,500 and \$8,545. Even if the cost was \$8,545, the total cost of the Schoor DePalma proposal would be only \$25,000, compared to \$48,200 for CME. Orsini noted that the township may not even need the final design phase services. Upon a motion by Puskus, seconded by Sherwood, a motion carried to recommend to the Council that the township award a contract for the design of the Memorial Arboretum to Schoor DePalma in accordance with submitted proposal.
  - c. **Hunting on Open Space Property: Goals, objectives and report form.** The committee reviewed the draft goals and objectives and the report form. Upon a motion by Orsini, seconded by Sherwood, a motion carried to approve this
  - d. **Historic grant subcommittee.** The committee will meet early in January.
7. **New Business.**
  - a. **Community Garden.** Loos reported that Tom Sanderson, a Public Works employee, recently went to a seminar on community gardens. He wants to help establish one here in Franklin and department head, Tom Zilinek, approved of him working on this. Loos has contacted Al Puchalek, the lessee of the Catalpa property, and Puchalek is willing to give up a small portion of the leased lands for this project. Upon a motion by Puskus, seconded by Orsini, a motion carried to

have a small portion of the Catalpa site dedicated to a community garden. The committee clarified that they were not approving associated expenses therefore.

- b. **Thompson Park.** (At this point, Clyde arrived.) The committee reviewed county-prepared plans for a possible realignment of So. Middlebush Road and Amwell Road. After much discussion, Puskus moved and Sherwood seconded the following motion that carried, with Clyde opposing:
  - That the OSAC recommends to the Council and the Planning Board that the Township take a position that favors preserving as much of Thompson Park as possible by (1) realigning S. Middlebush Road as far east as possible; (2) that the road be re-aligned with DeMott Lane by moving DeMott Lane to the west through the “Mindel” tract; (3) that little or no parking be created in the vicinity of So. Middlebush Road; and (4) that parking possibly might be created on a church-owned lot adjacent to the church rectory.
- c. **Resolution establishing meeting dates in 2005.** Upon a motion by Clyde, seconded by Puskus a motion was made to approve the attached Resolution establishing meeting dates in November.
- d. **Proposed donation of open space by Van Cleef.** Chase advised the committee of a proposal by Van Cleef to donate approximately six acres of land to the township as open space, in return for which he would get approval to build a house on a two-acre adjacent parcel. Chase and Puskus explained that there are possible environmental problems on the property. It was the consensus of the committee to not accept the donation unless an environmental assessment is first made and it is determined that the site is not contaminated.
- e. **ATV problem.** Puskus asked that the problem of ATV’s on open space be placed on next month’s agenda.
- f. **Eagle Scout projects.** Clyde reported that three Eagle Scout projects will likely be conducted on open space: building the observation blind, constructing trails in Griggstown and constructing a butterfly garden in Griggstown. Jones suggested that an astronomy project be explored.
- g. **Walgash property on Bennetts Lane.** Chase reported that an endangered species, the red shoulder hawk, has been spotted in the vicinity of the Walgash property on Bennetts Lane. Loos was asked to bring a map of this area to next month’s meeting so that the committee can see what open space might be available.
- h. **Hilpert.** Battin inquired about the status of this property. Loos reported that Hilpert asked to withdraw his PIG application and that he has a contract with a developer.
- i. **NJDEP award.** Jones reported that the township received an award and plaque (which he showed the committee) at the NJ League of Municipalities for the Township’s work on the Griggstown Native Grasslands Preserve. The award was an “honorable mention” in the “Healthy Ecosystems” category. The plaque will be displayed in the Municipal Building.
- j. **Letter from Nina Cornyetz.** The committee reviewed a letter addressed to the OSAC from Nina Cornyetz. Loos was directed to respond.

8. **2<sup>nd</sup> opening of the meeting to the public.** Upon a motion by Sherwood, seconded by Battin, a motion carried to open the meeting to the public.
  - Tom Gale addressed the committee and stated that he felt that any realignment of So. Middlebush Road should take into consideration the historic nature of Middlebush.
9. **Executive Session to discuss possible purchase or sale of property.** Upon a motion by Orsini, seconded by Sherwood, a motion carried to go into Executive Session to discuss property negotiations.
10. **Adjournment.** At 10:20 PM the committee came out of Executive session and Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting.

**Franklin Township Open Space Advisory Committee**  
**Hunting on Open Space parcels**  
**Goals and Objectives**

It is well documented that white-tailed deer are browsing on the understory of New Jersey forests to a degree that is detrimental to the regeneration of NJ's native hardwood trees. And with this lack of a viable forest understory, an environment for non-native, invasive species is created and is thriving. This newer invasive understory is not conducive to many species of birds, mammals and amphibians that once inhabited the forest understory. One way to assist the forest in regenerating and in creating a more conducive environment for native, forest-understory dwelling species is to limit the number of white-tailed deer that inhabit the area.

The Township of Franklin owns over 2000 acres of land that is preserved as open space. Much of this land is leased to local farmers who have the right and obligation, under the lease provisions, to implement a wildlife control plan on their leased acres. However, there are two other open space parcels<sup>1</sup> that are not leased to farmers and for which the Open Space Advisory Committee has implemented a white-tailed deer management plan in an effort to create an environment in the understory of the forest where native species can thrive. There are hundreds of acres of forest on these two parcels. Additionally, the township will soon be managing hundreds of acres of meadows for grasslands and native wildflowers. An over-population of deer grazing in these meadows will likely greatly reduce the native wildflowers that can survive.

Simply stated the goal of the hunting program on township open space is as follows:

- To limit the number of white-tailed deer that live off of the township open space parcels in order to create an environment whereby native species may have a better chance of thriving.

In order to achieve this goal, a hunting-by-township-permit-only program is being implemented for the 2004-2005 hunting season. A copy of the "Hunting Guidelines for Franklin Township Open Space Property, 2004-2005 Deer Management Program, Rules and Regulations" is attached.

Objectives of the program for the 2004-2005 season are:

- To reduce the white-tailed deer population through a firearms hunting program.
- To increase the likelihood of native species thriving in the forest understory and in the grassland meadows.
- To measure, at the conclusion of the 2004-2005 hunting season, the effectiveness of the program and to make a recommendation to the township as to whether or not to continue and/or amend the program for the 2005-2006 hunting season.

A hunting report form is attached which will be utilized to help measure the effectiveness of the white-tailed deer management program.

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<sup>1</sup> Ten Mile Run Greenway and Negri-Nepote Native Grassland Preserve.

**Hunting Guidelines for Franklin Township Open Space Property  
2004-2005 Deer Management Program  
Rules and Regulations**

1. Only hunters who have obtained a Franklin Township issued hunting permit are permitted to hunt on township-owned land.
2. All State and local regulations pertaining to parks and to hunting apply, including specific season dates and bag limits
3. All tree stands must be portable and removed two weeks after hunting season closes.
4. Two does must be taken before a buck.
5. All deer must be checked in at the Millstone Sports Shop. In the event that the Sport Shop is closed, deer can be checked in at another location however, a phone call must be made to Murray Rothblatt or a voice mail left at 732-873-2500 ext. 336 advising Murray of the deer being taken to another location.
6. Hunting shall only be on the property that is listed on the permit.
7. A licensed adult must accompany all hunters under the age of 16.
8. All hunting results will be reviewed. This will help us determine if the hunter will be invited to hunt again in following years.
9. Vehicles are restricted to public roads and designated parking areas (map will be provided)
10. Only deer may be hunted; any other hunting is strictly prohibited.
11. Hunters are only authorized to be on the property for which they have been issued a permit, and are responsible for knowing where they are at all times. Each hunter's permit must be prominently displayed whenever the hunter is on the property.
12. Target practice is prohibited.
13. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while on the property is prohibited. Littering is prohibited.
14. Violation of any special condition or any applicable State law or local regulation will result in the immediate loss of hunting privileges on the property and will also subject the hunter to any applicable penalties.
15. Hunting is restricted to the portions of the properties designated as open to deer hunting (maps will be provided).
16. Hunters are not permitted to hunt or possess a loaded firearm within 450 feet of any building or school playground.
17. Hunting may begin one half hour before sunrise and must end one half hour after sunset.
18. Hunting is not permitted on Sundays.
19. Hunting parking Permit must be displayed on the dashboard of your vehicle.
20. Hunting permit number must be clearly displayed on any tree stand.
21. No fires of any kind.

**RESOLUTION OF  
THE OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF  
FRANKLIN, SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

**WHEREAS**, the Open Public Meeting Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 of the Laws of the State of New Jersey, Section 13 thereof, requires the public body at least once a year to provide notice of a schedule of regular meetings of said public body to be held during the succeeding year, and;

**WHEREAS**, said Act further requires in Section 3 (d) thereof, that adequate notice as required by said Act be mailed, telephoned, telegraphed or hand delivered to at least two newspapers, which newspapers shall be designated by the public likelihood of informing the public of such meetings, one of which shall be the official newspaper, and;

**WHEREAS**, said Act in Section 14 thereof, further provides that any person may request that a public body mail to him copies of any regular meeting schedule or revision and any advance written notice described in Section 3 (d) of said Act of any regular, special or rescheduled meeting of such body upon payment by such person of a reasonable sum if any has been fixed by resolution of the public body to cover the cost of providing such notice;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, on this 14th day of December 2004 by the Open Space Advisory Committee of the Township of Franklin, Somerset County, New Jersey that the regular meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee of the Township of Franklin, Somerset County, New Jersey during the year 2005 will be held at the Municipal Building, 475 DeMott Lane at 7:00 p.m. on the following dates:

**January 18, 2005**

**July 19, 2005**

**February 15, 2005**

**August 16, 2005**

**March 15, 2005**

**September 20, 2005**

**April 19, 2005**

**October 18, 2005**

**May 17, 2005**

**November 15, 2005**

**June 21, 2005**

**December 20, 2005**

This 14th day of  
December, 2004

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John Loos, Secretary

VOTE ON MOTION/RESOLUTION: 12/14/04

FOR: Jones, Clyde, Orsini, Chase, Battin, Sherwood and Puskus.

AGAINST: None.