

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)  
Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2019 (DRAFT)

TAC Attendees: Jim Kuligowski (Chair), Anne-Marie Orlusky, Charles Martin (Secretary), Tom Lewis, John Herrling (Open Space Committee Liaison), Tara Kenyon – Land Management and Open Space Consultant,

Absent: Mark Fortin, Vanessa Jones, P. Kramer, Township Council Representative

Note that the committee currently has (1) vacancy, with 9 positions total.

Public Attendees – Diana W. Martin

These minutes follow the order of the March 13, 2019 TAC agenda outline as circulated by Ms. Kenyon.

1. Call to order in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:46) Meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM by Chairman James Kuligowski
2. Roll Call:
3. Approval of February 13 minutes – A motion by Mr. Lewis to approve the minutes was seconded by Ms. Orlusky and unanimously approved by the committee
4. Public Comment – The floor was opened for public comment. After no comment was offered, Mr. Lewis moved to close the floor, seconded by Ms. Orlusky and approved by unanimous vote.
5. New Business
  - a. **Report on Control of Invasive Species at Open Space Grasslands** – Ms. Kenyon stated that original establishment and maintenance plans developed by New Jersey Audubon for Negri-Nepote and Griggstown Grasslands was 14 years old. The original Audubon and NRCS (USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service) maintenance plans recommended annual – triennial mowing, in addition to selective applications of prescribed burning and herbicides to maintain the areas in an “early succession” state. Only mowing has been employed in these areas since they were seeded and established in 2004-5. Initially mowing was done by local farmers who raked and baled the hay for sale to mushroom farmers in Pennsylvania. In more recent years, mowing has been done by contractors using brush hog mowers. Mowed grasses were not harvested and were left on the ground.

Both grasslands now have large areas of invasive plants that are crowding out the established native grasses and rapidly degrading the habitats. Major invasive plant species at Negri-Nepote include Spotted (Tyrol) Knapweed and Mugwort, in the the native grass areas. In the pollinator plant (parking lot) area of Negri-Nepote there is a high density of knapweed and Eastern Red Cedar seedlings (many of which appear to be the survivors of multiple mowing cycles) that are crowding out the flowering plants. At Griggstown Grasslands the primary invasives in the parking lot and internal road areas are broad

expanses of Mugwort. In the rear acreages there are large expanses of knapweed and multiflora rose.

Ms. Kenyon noted that the Township has contracted with New Jersey Audubon to assess the condition and develop a new proposal for the maintenance of the grassland areas. John Parke, Stewardship Project Director from NJ Audubon will be developing that proposal. Mr. Brian O,Neal from Weeds, Inc. was asked to develop an interim proposal for the control of invasives through herbicide applications. The submitted proposal was approximately \$185/acre for the application of Bullzeye (glyphosate), Stinger (a synthetic auxin) and / or Picloram (an auxin (IAA) mimic that is systemic for woody plants, grasses are largely resistant) herbicides, which are non-threatening to grasses. Total estimate was about \$55,000 for spot treatment of both grasslands. The Audubon plan is expected to be completed and available around July or August.

- b. Woodcock walks led by Chris Williams at Negri-Nepote are scheduled for March 22, 29 from 7:45 -9 PM.
- c. The First John Clyde Annual Memorial stream cleanup will take place on April 13, 9:30 – 12.

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**6. Old Business**

Pathways and Trails Plan – discussions continued concerning the revised Pathways and Trails Plan. Items of concern included 1. Monitoring by the committee of open space land acquisitions for potential trail sites. 2. Evaluating new farm lease arrangements of open space to include terms for inclusion of trail sites along field borders. 3. Committee responsibilities to evaluate and recommend connections between existing trail systems. 4. Committee-based organization and participation in guided trail walks to increase public awareness of the township trail systems.

7. Adjournment Ms. Orlusky moved, and Mr. Lewis seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 PM. Meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.