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**EAST AMWELL FARMLAND/OPEN SPACE PERSERVATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES: SPETEMBER 10, 2018
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1070 ROUTE 202, RINGOES, NEW JERSEY**

CALL TO ORDER & OPEN PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

Present:

Members: Pete Fick, Chair, liaison Recreation Committee
Erica Johanson, Vice Chair, via phone
Richard Wolfe, Mayor's Designee, liaison Planning Board
Tom Rue, Liaison Environmental Commission (arrived at 7:40)
Tom Jarick
Candice Wiggum, Liaison Agricultural Advisory Committee

Absent:

Joan Sank
Barbara Sageser, Liaison Historic Preservation Committee
Fred Gardner, alternate 2

Others Present:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Fick. In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, it was stated that this was a regular meeting held pursuant to the meeting notice published in the January 11, 2018 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat. On August 28, 2018 notice of this meeting was filed in the Township Clerk's Office, sent to the Hunterdon County Democrat, and the agenda was posted on the bulletin board.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The meeting was open to the public for comments. Mr. Wolfe made a motion to open and close the meeting to the public. Mr. Fick seconded. All in favor.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

A motion to approve the June 11 minutes was made by Mr. Fick and seconded by Mrs. Johanson. The minutes were approved.

BILLS FOR APPROVAL

The bill was received from Banisch for updating the Open Space and Preserved Farmland map for the Annual Report that was sent out to residents. Terri Stahl signed off on the bill. It was only \$161.25, as opposed to the \$200 we anticipated. Mr. Wolfe made a motion to approve the Banisch bill. Mr. Fick seconded. All in favor.#

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Fick and Mrs. Johanson requested to add the County Open Space Plan to the agenda, under new business.

OLD BUSINESS

1. PTO Color Run/Greenfest Update

The PTO decided last week that it would not be feasible to do the Color Run and Green Fest on September 29. The event has been postponed until May 4, 2019. There was no indication from the PTO as to why it is not feasible, but all of the vendors who were invited for September will be invited

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to the May 4 event. It is hoped that all vendors will be able to attend since there is so much time to plan for it.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Potential Farmland Preservation

At 7:40 the Committee chose to go into executive sessions. Mr. Wolfe made a motion to go into executive sessions in order to discuss potential land acquisition. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fick and approved by the members. At 7:40pm the meeting was closed to the public.

At 8:15 there was a motion by Mr. Wolfe, which was seconded by Mr. Fick to close the executive session and return to the regular FOSPC meeting. This was approved by all members.

2. Open Space Improvement and Maintenance Plan

As per the FOSPC meeting in May where the County Open Space Administrator mentioned the Open Space Improvement and Maintenance Plan during his presentation on the Strategic Parks and Open Space Plan, Ms. Fullerton created an Open Space Improvement and Maintenance Plan for East Amwell. A portion of it was taken from the Open Space and Recreation Plan approved by the Township last year. That Plan did not list recreation goals so well, so this document needs to be reviewed by FOSPC and the Parks and Recreation Committee to make sure all of the goals for all of the Township Open Space are considered.

There is no rush to complete this document, as the funds that this document applies to are not available until January. This document is to expand the Township's use of the County Open Space Trust Fund, from just acquisition and debt payments to include improvement and maintenance of recreation space. The Township will need to be creative in funding for the tennis court replacement at the Clawson Park.

The Passive Recreation locations were reviewed. At least one of the trail connections needs to be verified.

3. County Open Space Plan

The County has a public draft of the Strategic Parks and Open Space Plan available for review. It was determined that Committee members should review this document and make comments. It was noted that the Clawson House and Clawson Park should be supported through this plan. Mr. Fick and Ms. Fullerton will be meeting with the County staff next week, so we could discuss the Open Space Plan then.

REPORTS:

Administrator's Report

The CFO has paid the annual debt payment of \$360,000 and we are waiting for the tax payments to go into the Trust Fund. This makes the Fund look very depleted, but the annual revenue of approximately \$260,000 will be added before the end of the year. Mr. Fick and Ms. Fullerton attended the monthly staff meetings at the County. There were simple discussions about farmland preservation and the Open Space Improvement and Maintenance Plan. SADC has approved funding for 60 County and Municipal applications. The Martin/Maresca property should have the per acre value certified at the September SADC meeting. The FY19 appropriations were adopted at the July meeting. It does not look like East Amwell will have any new funding, but it is available if we need it. NJCF continues to work on the Higgins agricultural subdivision.

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Environmental Commission and Recycling Committee:

The Environmental Commission had sent a letter to the Governor asking him to veto the Plastic Bag bill, which allowed for thicker plastic bags to be used, which does not help eliminate the use of plastic bags. The bill was vetoed. The Township Committee is creating a Sustainable New Jersey Green Committee for East Amwell. The ordinance is on the agenda for Thursday. Interested residents will be appointed to the Committee. The Trex Plastic bag collection has been successful, but the Recycling Committee was not aware of the project. The future of the project is being evaluated, once the initial 500 pounds is collected. The Recycling Committee may accept the bags, but there is a lot of time needed to sort the plastic bags properly. The Recycling Committee is reviewing recycling crayons and markers.

Recreation and Parks Committee:

There were two successful Friday Night in the Park events this summer. There was good turn-out for both.

Agricultural Advisory Committee:

The Agricultural Advisory Committee is compiling a list of Deer Management Hunters. They need to fill out a questionnaire. These will be hunters who take more does than bucks. They are management hunters. All interested farmers should let Ms. Wiggum know if they would like management hunters on their farm. There will be a drone flyover for another deer survey soon. It is estimated that there were 3,500 deer in East Amwell in March, before the spring births. There should be many more now.

CORRESPONDENCE

The SADC has sent out flyers announcing regional meetings to discuss the changes to the PIG program. The central region meeting is October 10. Ms. Fullerton has had the intention to attend, but has a personal commitment that day, she may not be able to attend. As she has had many conversations with SADC staff about the PIG program, she feels confident about the changes to the program.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The meeting was open to the public for comments. There was no public.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be October 8, 2018.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Jarick made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Wolfe to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Recording Secretary
_____ date _____