

# **West Amwell Open Space Advisory Committee Minutes**

**November 13, 2018**

## **Call to order:**

The regular meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Members present: John Cronce, George Fisher, Dan Malek, Rich Schaible, Hal Shute, and Cathy Urbanski.  
Absent: Steve Bergenfeld, TC liaison.

Approval of minutes from May 8, 2018: Approved.

**Open to the public:** No members of the public attended the meeting.

## **New Business**

**Alex Greenwood – possible preservation of property, NJ Barn Co., Route 31.** Alex was to attend the meeting, but had a conflict. Members discussed this possible preservation. We decided that there was no benefit to the Township with the possible preservation of this property. We have no Green Acres funding available and the parcel is not in the ADA, so farmland preservation is not an option. Recommendation that Alex apply to the County, as there is an historic tavern on the property and the parcel is contiguous with County parkland. Cathy will contact Alex and relay this information to him.

**Hunting Parcel Access** – Chairman Cronce stated that the hunters on municipally owned properties should be allowed to fetch a deer on a remote part of the parcel using an ATV just to retrieve a large deer, rather than try to carry it out. Members discussed this and agreed. John will approach the TC on this matter and the OS committee agreed that we would amend the hunting regulations and notify the hunting clubs if the TC approves.

It was also discussed at this point the problem with the Wooden No. property with horseback riding. D&R Greenway has approved this use of the property for riding, but did agree that from September-December that riding would be prohibited. Members questioned that since WAT is a major owner of this parcel, why do we have to accept what D&R dictates? It was noted that the township prohibits horseback riding on municipally owned properties and the hunting club pays \$500 per year for hunting the property. John will discuss this with the TC.

**Secretary Position** –Cathy accepted the role of secretary, but temporarily, until a replacement for Christine is found.

**Farming Municipal Property** – Discussion as to the 6 years that Fulper has been farming the property and whether it should go out to “bid” next year, allowing other residents to farm the property. Members were not sure, but decided to refer this to the AAC for their input. Members agreed that the property should be farmed by a WAT farmer.

**ADA From County** – Report by Hal – He provided maps of the new County ADA produced by their recent re-assessment. Noteworthy was the deletion of the Sourland ridge and Texas Eastern, the addition of

Gulick, Bergenfeld, and the SW corner of the Township, including Wooden and Hunter South, plus other parcels. Members agreed with these changes. No action needs to be done.

## **Old Business**

### **Farmland preservation projects:**

**Runkle Farm Update** – Parcels 13-1 and 13-1.01 were preserved on October 11, 2018. Parcel 13-1.02 (Barry Runkle) was not. According to the County in their denial: If there is a mortgage or home equity loan against the property, it must be subordinated to the easement. No reason why was given and members questioned why this information was not previously disclosed and not in the contract. WAT paid for the surveys and appraisals and members felt we should be re-imbursed.

### **Other:**

**Website** – Up to date.

**Open Space map** – Cathy will update the map, adding Runkle and the State preserved Danberry. John requested a large map for display in the main meeting room.

**Hunting Program** - Everything is in compliance and is up to date.

**Easements** - Carried to next meeting.

## **Open to members for discussion**

Hal stated that we need an update on the Municipal PIG and was not sure what our targeted farms were to be. We still have \$400,000 of the state grant funding earmarked for West Amwell, the county 1/3 of that. Members were asked to study farms for possible preservation. Several were discussed. Hal noted that Green Acres was definitely interested in preserving the wooded parcel on the south side of the GDP. Hal also stated that Stefanie Miller of the SADC had produced an inclusive checklist for preserving farmland and that he would get an electronic copy of it for the Open Space committee.

No members of the public were present for comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski, Acting Secretary.

