

**Lafayette Open Space Advisory Committee
Minutes of October 27, 2020 Meeting**

Call to Order- Chair, Lisa Carlson, called the meeting to order noting that the meeting was open to the public in compliance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, Sections 4 & 13.

Roll Call- Members Present- Lisa Carlson, Carl Luthman, Kevin O’Leary, Glenn Thomas

Members absent- Alan Henderson, Karen Mitchell

Appearing Remotely- Linda Gloshinski

Minutes- The minutes from the September 24, 2020 regular meeting were presented for approval. Mr. Luthman made a motion to approve the minutes that was seconded by Mr. Thomas. The motion passed with a roll call vote. Ayes- Lisa Carlson, Carl Luthman, Kevin O’Leary, Glenn Thomas.

Open to Public- Mrs. Carlson opened the meeting to the public for the evening, but there were no members of the public present to address the Committee. Therefore, Mrs. Carlson closed the meeting to the public.

Guests from Sussex County - Autumn Sylvester of the County Division of Planning attended the meeting along with Don Ploetner, the Chair of the Sussex County Open Space Committee. The pair were previously invited to a Township Open Space Committee meeting to explain available grant funds for stewardship and development of open spaces that was authorized by the 2017 County referendum question to County voters on amending authorized uses of the County Open Space Trust Fund. They reported there has been some delay in implementing a grant opportunity based upon staffing issues. A new hire in the County should allow the grant opportunity for trail development to move forward. Mr. Ploetner indicated that the grant opportunity has to be finalized by the Freeholders and that process is underway. It is believed that this will occur in the next few months allowing for grant applications to be submitted in early 2021 on a rolling basis. They explained there has been no discussion on a stewardship grant at this point as most of the municipalities have suggested there is real interest in moving first on having some of these funds available for trail development.

It is anticipated that the application for trail grant funding will be streamlined. They indicated that currently the County is only collecting .003 per \$100 dollar assessed value which raises about \$395,000 per year. Ms. Sylvester indicated that the applications for funding from the County with respect to trail grants will be capped at \$5,000 per municipality with an in-kind match. There may be more available if several towns developed a regional plan. The County anticipates that phasing of projects would be allowed and that evaluation criteria would include several factors including whether the project is outlined in the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Ms. Silvestri noted that Farmland Preservation Program is currently on hold and that they directed ten applications to the State to determine if a State direct funding could be pursued. Mr. O’Leary asked if there were any Lafayette farms pending on their list seeking Farmland

Preservation status and she reported there were none. Mr. Ploetner reported that once the trail grant funding is finalized and in operation, the County Open Space Committee will begin considering recommendations on establishing grant opportunities for stewardship projects, but believed that it would take a year or two for that to happen.

Mr. Thomas asked the County representatives present if they were aware of carbon offset programs and other solar opportunities. There was an extended discussion on these points.

There was also a discussion on the Lawler tract related to location of a trail on the Township owned tract leading to the State-owned trails. It is currently being delayed as the corn planted there in furtherance of the farm lease needed to be harvested.

Mr. O'Leary raised the budget for 2021 and it was agreed that the same request submitted in 2020 for the Committee would be requested in the coming budget. This included a recommendation that the Township Committee authorize the Township to enter into a contract for services with The Land Conservancy of New Jersey for \$6000.00.

Old Business – None

New Business-

Mr. O'Leary made a motion to cancel the November and December meetings that was seconded by Mr. Thomas. The motion passed with a roll call vote. Ayes- Lisa Carlson, Carl Luthman, Kevin O'Leary, Glenn Thomas.

Correspondence- None

Bills- None

With there being no more business to discuss, Mr. Thomas made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Mr. Luthman and all in attendance agreed to adjourn following a voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin O'Leary