

## MINUTES

February 13, 2006

Township of Frelinghuysen

Public Hearing

Open Space and Recreation Plan

an Element of the Township of Frelinghuysen Master Plan

A motion to approve the February 13, 2006 Public Hearing Minutes, with minor modifications, was made by Mr. DeCarolis, seconded by Mr. Boynton. All members present were in agreement.

CALL TO ORDER - The Public Hearing for the Open Space and Recreation Plan, an element of the Township of Frelinghuysen Master Plan, was called to order at 8:03 p.m. by Chairman Finn.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE

## FLAG SALUTE

## ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present

Boynton	Charles DeCarolis	Finn
Kleber - Alt.#1	Kuhn Marie	Pachnos - Alt.#2
Randolph	Smith	Young

Professionals Present

Golden Madden

## PUBLIC HEARING

Ms. Barbara Haskins-Davis, Municipal Program Director/Licensed Planner, of the Morris Land Conservancy, gave a background of the Open Space and Recreation Plan (hereinafter referred to as the 'Plan'), including how Morris Land Conservancy was hired by the Township to create the Plan, the Farmland Preservation Plan was also written by Morris Land Conservancy. Ms. Davis also told the Board and Public that Open Space grants are funded in part by Smart Growth, and are written to meet Green Acres guidelines.

Mr. Charles stated the Plan was based upon a survey conducted a few years back, and the majority of respondents indicated they would like the Township to maintain its rural character and Open Space. The presented Plan represents this idea.

Mr. Boynton stated he would like to see the Township gain control of such sites as lime kilns. Mr. Boynton further stated he has never been a fan of Route 519 being a bicycle path, especially when the

Township has lots of nice bike roads, and that he would prefer to see those roads as designated bike trails.

Mr. Boynton added the Paulinskill Trail is great, and finds the plan to use the abandoned roads, not vacated roads, being opened up just as good an idea as the Paulinskill Trail.

Ms. Randolph was asked for any comments, and addressed Ms. Davis "Thank you Barbara. You are to be commended for all the work that was done in preparing this Plan for the Township."

Mr. Kuhn stated he takes issue with the proposed trail at Wyly Road. Mr. Kuhn stated there is hunting on all sides, and he is worried there will be a conflict with hunters and bicyclists. Mr. Charles asked Mr. Kuhn what keeps the bicyclists from going on the road now? Mr. Kuhn answered they (the bicyclists) do not know it is there. Mr. Charles indicated that if it were posted, it could eliminate the possibility of someone getting shot or it could cut down the risk.

Mr. Finn stated Wiley Road should be checked to see if it is vacated, or if it is abandoned. It is a road that has not been used a lot. Mr. Charles added before the Township adopts to use Wiley Road, verification is needed if it is vacated or abandoned.

There was discussion regarding the trail system which is being used in Randolph, New Jersey. There has not been a problem regarding liability. There was one instance where someone tried to use a snowmobile, and it didn't work. Mr. Charles stated he preferred people stay off roads with the snowmobiles, and use trails.

#### THE MEETING WAS OPENED TO THE PUBLIC

Clayton Mull, Jr., Frelinghuysen Township

"Not to be rude, but it is difficult to make comments without having a copy of the plan for the public to look through." A copy was presented to the Public for them to go along with the discussion. It was indicated that a copy was in Town Hall for the Public to review the Plan during normal business hours.

Dominick Santini, Esq., present for Margaret Silversides, Frelinghuysen Township.

"Ms. Silversides is concerned she will lose whatever privacy she has. If the trails are opened to the public, a lot more garbage will be thrown about, vehicles will be encroaching on private property, and there is concern the environment will not be what it is now." Mr. Boynton asked how close Ms. Silversides is to Wiley Road; Mr. Santini answered it would border the trail.

Mr. Steven Gurba, Frelinghuysen Township

"I am running machinery on the roads all of the time, the road is narrow, and there is no passing. My question is where is the public going to park when they want to use the trail. I would like to know what time and effort will be put into cleaning up what is left from the public. It is not right for the Public to have access to come up on our property, as well as Ms. Silversides and Mr. DeCarolis's."

Mr. Charles stated this Plan is the start of a process, and the road will be checked into. Mr. Charles

said the decision needs to be made if the road is owned by the Township.

Ms. Elise Brown, Frelinghuysen Township

“I just wanted to state that I like the idea of the trails. However, upon hearing what the landowners are saying, it has opened up the idea that there could be problems.”

Mr. Jim Banta, Chairman, Environmental Committee, Frelinghuysen Township

“Farmland Preservation Plan was designed to do what the Homeowner wanted to do with preserving their lands, and this Plan would be used in conjunction with the Farmland Plan. In the process of completing this Plan to move Frelinghuysen into the next seventy-five years, and to not take into account now for the future is a mistake. This is not to say that Wiley Road will not be made into a trail in the next thirty to forty years.

Ms. Davis added the Farmland Program is excellent if you have tillable land, as it is hard to timber land. Green Acres finds that to combine funding money is better. Plans are to be submitted for both area agencies, and they would agree to work together, which would open up funding opportunities.

Mr. DeCarolis stepped down for the Plan, as he owns property at Cross Road and Wiley Road. Mr. DeCarolis stated he does not know why the Board would want to open up the property, when most of the area is preserved. There is no parking on Heller, SouthTown or Wiley. There are liability issues. Mr. Charles answered there are always liabilities, and you can't let them stop you. Mr. DeCarolis added the liabilities are not only for the Township, but also the residents. Mr. DeCarolis added he spoke with Charles Rydell, past Mayor of Frelinghuysen, and he said Wiley Road is not vacated.

Mr. Finn asked Ms. Davis if this plan can actually be a benefit to the Land Owner. Ms. Davis answered Open Space is not a “stop development” plan. It would guide the developers to enhance the Open Space Plan. The Township would have the ability to negotiate with the developers. If the property is an integral part of the Township, with Category 1 streams, etc., the Township would want to put Open Space money toward it.

Mr. Madden added he does not know the details of the roads in questions, and he does understand what Mr. DeCarolis is saying. Mr. Madden added Mr. Banta made an interesting comment, that the Township should think about planning trails, with a thirty year perspective. Mr. Madden further added that with his experience of trails, the following has occurred:

- \$ Most people using the trails are Township residents;
- \$ Trails have, in other areas, remained clean and litter free;
- \$ Trails are discovered by bikers
- \$ Volunteers repair the trails
- \$ School sites have been linked by the trails
- \$ Townships own the whole trail, not the landowner for the liability issue
- \$ Fences were put where people can wander off the trail

Mr. Madden stated West Windsor has a greenbelt, and does the same thing. The Town requires a hefty setback from streams, as they run through the Township; the Township has no other trail system;

people do walk, the trail is strictly for greenway. New Jersey Outdoor Recreation Plan lists the twenty most popular outdoor recreational activities, seven of which includes some form of hiking/nature, etc.

Mr. Gurba requested that when the Township finds out what Wily Road is, could the property owners be offered to buy it from the Township. Mr. Charles answered in the affirmative.

Ms. Davis stated the Plan is meant to be dynamic, which should be looked at every year, and be amended. Ms. Davis continued that she is proposing to add an appendix within the document itself, which would show what the Township should look at in the future for the planning of trails.

Ms. Davis added she believes the Township should propose two or three active recreation sites throughout the Town, twenty to thirty acres each; she does not want to end up like Sparta and other Townships; Recreation is different than Open Space.

Mr. Charles stated it has been the goal to make Frelinghuysen a farming community. Farmland preservation is a better way of preserving land, and the Open Space and Recreation helps with this.

Motion to close the Public Hearing was made by Mr. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Charles. All members voted yes.

Mr. Boynton stated last week, the sub-committee looked at property within the Township. Mr. Boynton spoke with Mr. Sterbenz about the Route 94 property. Mr. Sterbenz stated the property is very viable, and a survey, topo, LOI, Delineation, needs to be done by an expert. Then they can develop a plan for the property. If it is to happen, it will be completed in stages, where a long term plan can be developed, which would include Athletic fields, buildings for the road crew, proposed new Municipal Building (current Municipal Building would be vacated, and redone as a Community Center), etc. Numbers that were thrown out were in the area of \$1.25 million for preliminary site work.

Ms. Randolph made a motion to adopt the Open Space and Recreation Plan as an element to the Master Plan.

Ms. Davis asked for final comments from the Board.

A motion was made by Mr. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Charles to strike out the last statement of the Wildlife Preservation information on page 27, which read "However, it shall not be.....". After further discussion, it was decided the statement stays in the plan.

Ms. Davis reminded the Board that this Plan is a 'tool' for the Township to use.

Ms. Randolph stated the inventory is the important part of the Plan. Ms. Davis added the Green Acres approach requires:

1. Open Space Plan
2. Approved Open Space/Recreation Plan
3. Open Space/Recreation Inventory, which is still needed

The Inventory can include Route 94 and the land behind the Municipal Building. There is the ability to keep Route 94 off of the ROSI (Recreation/Open/Space/Incentive) grants. This should be put under the active portion of the application, along with the Municipal Lot.

The rules have changed regarding the grants, if the property is listed as undeveloped, the State says it is to remain undeveloped.

After further discussion, it was decided the Plan would be on the Agenda for Final Hearing Public Hearing on April 3, 2006.

Ms. Davis stated the minor changes would be prepared in time for the March 2, 2006 Work Session Meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully Submitted,

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Shannon Drylie  
Planning Board Clerk