

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 7, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC NOTICE: Adequate notice of this public meeting has been made in accordance with the 1975 Open Public Meetings Act inasmuch as a notice has been published in the New Jersey Herald, transmitted to the Star Ledger and posted at the Municipal Building, 150 Kennedy Road, Tranquility, NJ.

ROLL CALL: Louis Caruso, Erik Cerame, Richard Conklin, Daniel Conkling, Gladys Golder, Paul Nusbaum, and Jennifer Russ

Members present: Louis Caruso, Richard Conklin, Daniel Conkling, Gladys Golder, and Jennifer Russ
Also present: Patty DeClesis, Secretary, Open Space Committee

Members Absent: Erik Cerame and Paul Nusbaum

Daniel Conkling motioned to excuse the absent members, seconded by Jennifer Russ. No discussion. All Ayes. Motion carried.

MINUTES:

1. Approval of minutes of November 2, 2016
Motion to approve minutes of November 2, 2016, was made by Daniel Conkling, seconded by Gladys Golder. No discussion. All Ayes with abstentions from Richard Conklin and Jennifer Russ. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Update – County Connector Trail – Linda Glosinski of The Land Conservancy provided a summary of the work performed (attached to and made part of these minutes). Mr. Caruso mentioned that he met with the Tranquility Cemetery Board of Trustees asking if they would authorize the trail to come down the dirt road for a short distance. The Board did not see a problem, however stated they may want a fence along the trail to prevent hikers walking through the cemetery. Mr. Conkling added that the Township Committee authorized to have the DPW to clear the trail. The DPW Supervisor obtained a price for the rental of the equipment.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Daniel Conkling mentioned the 21 lot concept plan before Land Use Board. Linda Glosinski had contacted the property owner to see if there is any interest in farmland preservation. The property owner is not interested at this time.

COMMENTS FROM THE OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE:

1. Chairman Caruso updated the Committee on the property for sale near Trinca Airport that was mentioned at the last meeting. There has been several offers on the property. Mr. Caruso explained the process for open space to purchase the property. In order for open space to purchase any property three appraisals are required. It is a very slow process.

2. Richard Conklin asked how open space was created and what are the goals of the Committee. The secretary will email the Committee the Ordinance that establishes the Open Space Committee and explains the powers and function as well as the Sussex County Open Space Plan. These will be helpful particularly for the new members.

PUBLIC COMMENTS and/or QUESTIONS: None

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Daniel Conkling, seconded by Gladys Golder. No discussion. All Ayes. Motion carried.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Patty DeClesis, Secretary



Date Approved



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Township of Green: County Connector Trail

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey assisted Green Township in their efforts to develop a County Connector Trail, which will formalize a trail along the former Lehigh & Hudson Railroad, connecting neighboring Andover Township in Sussex County, to Allamuchy Township in Warren County. The northern section of the trail will link up to the Sussex Branch Trail in Andover Borough, at the southern end it will connect to Kittatinny Valley State Park. The Township has engaged the other communities in support of this project and it is highlighted as a recommendation for trail expansion in the newly released 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update for Sussex County.

Summary of Work Performed

1. A field assessment of the proposed trail route and former railroad bed was conducted. Based upon the on-site investigation, we have developed the following for the Township to review:
 - a. Potential parking and access points
 - i. Two areas of potential parking were identified and consist of Township owned land, and existing parking facilities.
 1. The Township owned Evergreen Park can be utilized for parking, providing access to the southern terminus of the trail.
 2. The Township's Trinca Airport property could be utilized as a second area for parking, providing an access point in the northerly section of the trail.
 - b. A list of landscaping /work needed to develop/clear the trail
 - i. The right of way is moderately to heavily vegetated with shrubs, saplings and trees. Clearing of the trail is needed throughout the project limits, and the work involved varies from section to section.
 - ii. It was discussed at the Open Space Committee meeting that the Township DPW may have the capability of performing the land clearing. The FECON Mulching machine would be highly recommended to complete the task. If needed, TLC-NJ could provide contractors that would be suitable to complete the task.



- iii. Some railroad artifacts noted along the right of way. A switch box was observed north of the Evergreen Park area. This artifact could be preserved, with a plaque providing educational/historic information at the location.
 - 2. A list of private owners who have property that will require a trail access easement.
 - a. The Township owns the right of way from the northern side of Kennedy Road, to the southern side of Airport Road.
 - b. Two (2) parcels are owned privately owned. A trail access easement would be required for the parcels.
 - i. At the southern terminus of the project, Block 15, Lot 1, is owned by Alder & Kard. This is a commercial facility, with the right of way currently being mowed/maintained on the property.
 - ii. At the northern terminus, the Township owns to the southern side of Airport Road. The right of way on the northern side of the road is owned by the State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). This section owned by NJDEP has not been developed as a trail. North of this section, a parcel is privately owned, known as Block 27, Lot 1. This parcel is owned by Robert Occhifinto, and consists of a commercial facility. This parcel would provide access under the elevated Lackawana Cutoff Railroad, currently owned by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The NJDEP owns the right of way north of the tunnel, connecting to Sussex Branch Trail/Allamuchy State Park. It is our understanding that there is a dispute over the ownership of the tunnel.
 - 3. Outreach to landowners whose property is identified as potential access points. Negotiations with landowners as directed by the Township Committee.
 - a. TLC-NJ sent an outreach letter to Block 15, Lot 1, owned by Alder & Kard. They responded by stating that although they agree it is a good project, they were very firm that they will not allow a trail access easement on the property.
 - b. An outreach letter was not sent to Mr. Occhifinto. It was discussed with the Open Space Committee that once the trail has been developed up to the Township/NJDEP limit, it would be a good time to work with the State in trying to resolve the issue of ownership/access through the tunnel.
 - 4. Evaluation of the tunnel area and potential trail alignment alternatives in this location.
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- a. The Lackawanna Cutoff railroad is elevated and the embankment is very steep. There was an evaluation of potential trails alignments to connect to the Sussex Branch Trail.
 - i. The tunnel at the Occhifinto property. There is currently a dispute between the owner and the NJDEP as to who owns the right to use the tunnel. The Township can work with the State to try to resolve this issue once the trails are developed in the area and the project has gained momentum and recognition.
 - ii. Utilizing Kennedy Road as a road walk. This road walk is not recommended as the roadway is very narrow and a sharp bend, making dangerous conditions for pedestrians.
5. A map of the proposed trail is provided. The map includes the two (2) proposed trail parking and access points, as well as identifying ownership of lands within the route of the trail.

County Connector Trail Project

Green Township, New Jersey

P

Potential Parking Areas

State and County Parks and Open Space

Municipal Right of Way

Non-Profit and other Open Space

Preserved Farmland

Municipal owned Property (Class 15C)

DOT Properties

Privately owned parcels

River/Streams

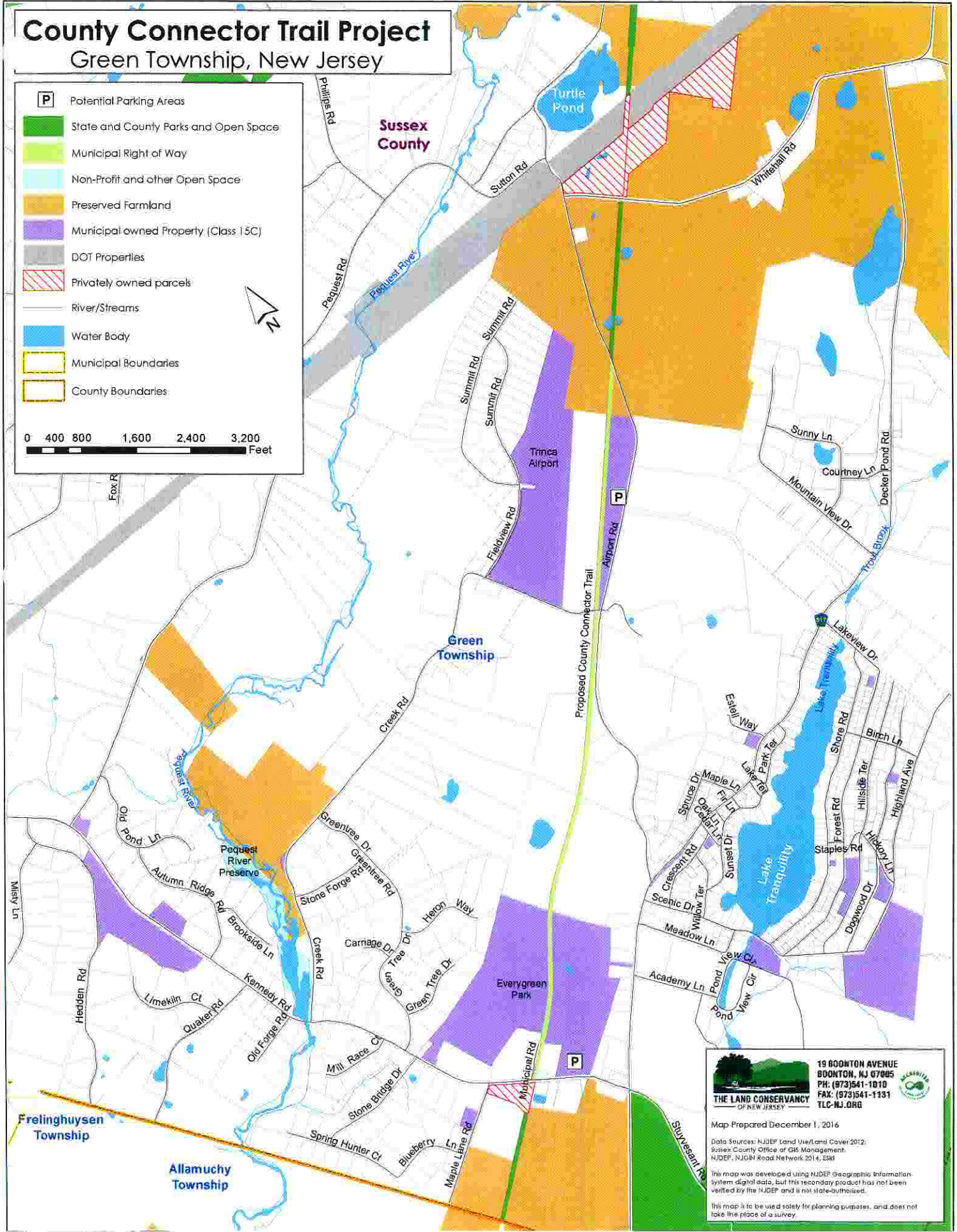
Water Body

Municipal Boundaries

County Boundaries

0 400 800 1,600 2,400 3,200

Feet



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TLC-NJ.ORG

Map Prepared December 1, 2016

Data Sources: NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover 2012;

Sussex County Office of GIS Management;

NJDEP, NJGIN Road Network 2014, ESRI

This map was developed using NJDEP Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by the NJDEP and is not state-authorized.

This map is to be used solely for planning purposes, and does not take the place of a survey.