

# **MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE**

6:00 p.m. start time  
Main Conference Room  
MINUTES FOR May 27, 2021

## **ROLL CALL**

Mr. Gary Lewis, Chairman – Present  
Mr. Adam Adrignolo - Present  
Mr. Russ Lipari - Present

Township Staff: Jane Mowles, Land Use Administrator - Present

## **PLANNING BUSINESS**

Discussion of Update to the Open Space/Recreation Element of the Master Plan

Present Barbara Davis, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey

Ms. Davis – Licensed Planner, Land Conservancy of NJ. Open space plan is out of date. Needs to be updated every 10 years. The Town is looking for funding and cannot be eligible if the plan is not updated. The application for funding is due June 30<sup>th</sup>. Can be put on the July 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Planning Board and still be eligible. Met with the Township Committee right before the Covid-19 shut down. The plan reflects their direction. The ROSI is a separate document. The ROSI is up to date and does not need to be updated. The plan follows Green Acres' guidelines as follows per Ms. Davis' handout:

**Goals of the Open Space Program** - Protect drinking water sources; Ensure riparian corridors and floodplains are set aside from encroaching development; Promote healthy living by providing and expanding opportunities for recreation; Connect public lands; Preserve steep slopes; Preserve and protect historic buildings and districts.

**History of the Open Space Program** - Montville Township Open Space Trust Fund; 989: Voters approve new tax to fund open space acquisition, development, and maintenance of open space and park land; 1990: Trust Fund levy two cents (\$0.02 per \$100 of assessed property value); 1998: Trust Fund levy increased to 5 cents; 2012: Trust Fund levy decreased to current level of 3.7 cents; Current Balance (2019): \$1.12 million; Land Preserved with Open Space Trust Fund: 923 acres

Matching Funding for the Open Space Program - Morris County Preservation Trust Fund: \$7,710,000 awarded through nine grants for open space projects; NJDEP Green Acres matching funds: \$7,316,735 awarded; first award in 1974 for Masar Park acquisition; New Jersey Water Bank (NJWB): Between 2001 - 2003 Montville Township received \$2,291,246 from NJWB (Environmental Infrastructure Financing Program).

**Preserved and Public Lands** - 3,008 acres is permanently protected: o 1,702 acres – Township (ROSI); 255 acres – State (NJDEP); 1,014 acres – County (MCPC) (Includes NJDEP jointly owned property in Pyramid Mountain); 8 acres – Town of Boonton; 29 acres - Farmland

**Action Program** - Adopt the *Montville Township Open Space and Recreation Plan Update* as part of the Montville Township Master Plan; Continue to apply for and investigate grant opportunities to protect Montville’s open space areas, including the Morris County Preservation Trust Fund and Green Acres program; Conduct an on-the-ground review of priority parcels in Montville using field visits; Evaluate farmland preservation opportunities in coordination with Morris County.

**Preservation Priority Analysis** - The purpose of this analysis is to prioritize lands for preservation, determine where preservation may be most effective, and to target resources for preservation and stewardship of these areas; Montville parcels were considered for this analysis if they were members of one of the following land use classes: Farmland or vacant land; Residential parcels greater than two acres; Residential parcels of any size if they were located within, or adjacent to, a historic district and had buildings built prior to 1950; Charitable lands that are over five acres, and land owned by Wildlife Preserves that are over two acres.

Ms. Davis – We then did a priority analysis according to the following per her handout:

Seven preservation priorities were identified using previous Montville planning documents. Parcels that matched one of the above land use classes were then assigned a score based on their proximity and applicability for:

1. Drinking water
  - a. Towaco Valley Aquifer and the Critical Water Resources District
  - b. Wellhead Protection Areas for public community water supply wells
2. Passaic and Rockaway Rivers
  - a. Riparian corridor and flood hazard areas
  - b. Great Piece Meadows
3. Historic sites and districts
  - a. Existing historic sites including the Morris Canal, Capstick Historic District
4. Areas with steep slopes
  - a. Boonton Ridgeline and Towaco Highlands
5. Highlands Preservation Area
6. Municipal trails
7. Recreation Facilities

After the completion of the GIS analysis, parcels were assigned a priority rank based on their total scores:

- Low Priority: 609 parcels totaling 476 acres (scores 0.5 to 1.0)
- Medium Priority: 531 parcels totaling 1,404 acres (scores 1.5 to 3.0)
- High Priority: 163 parcels totaling 1,278 acres (scores 3.5 to 5.0)

There is a map of the priority parcels attached to Ms. Davis’ handout for the Master plan Subcommittee meeting of May 27, 2021.

Mr. Lewis – The Planning Board will not likely move forward with endorsing this Plan without first hearing feedback from the Open Space Committee. They should have been involved in this project from the outset. He recommends that Ms. Davis plan to meet with that group, present the draft Plan and get comments from them before we advertise for a public hearing before the full Planning Board. The other Subcommittee members concurred.

The draft Plan will be posted on the town website for public review ten (10) days before the hearing.

Mr. Lewis will call Mr. Misiewicz to request that the matter be placed on the June 17, 2021 meeting of the Open Space Committee.

**ADJOURNMENT**

I certify that this is a true copy of minutes adopted at Planning Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jane Mowles, Secretary