

**Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund
Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting
March 27, 2024**

Present: Alan Avery (Chair), David McKeon (Vice-Chair), William Fox, Lisa Hodgson, John Peterson, & Greg Myhre

Also present at the meeting were: Matthew Thompson (County Counsel), Geoffrey Lohmeyer (OCPR), Robert Kuhne (OCSWM), Chris Palmieri (OCPD), Tom Thorsen (OCPD), Larisa Paxton (OCPD) & Tim Gleason (OCPD).

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes: February 28, 2024

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Peterson to approve the February 28, 2024 meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

4. Program Update: 29,883.65 acres

- Closings
 - #701 Cherry Street – Lennar Homes., 34.50 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that we acquired an additional 34 acres located directly off of Lacey Road in Manchester Township.

5. Old Business

- Res. Of Support:
 - #715 LightHouse Drive – Mickelsen., 0.13 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that Ocean Township supported an acquisition through resolution to acquire the property. The Committee advised staff to conduct a site inspection of the property.
- Site Inspections:
 - #718 Berkeley Nine Estates Ext., Berkeley Twp., 4.90 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this property is being used for the storage of HVAC material with multiple pickup trucks located on the property. There is currently a home located on the property in which the property owner would move out of if the County were to purchase the property. There were multiple environmental concerns regarding above ground storage tanks on the property. Mr. McKeon mentioned that the property is in a nice area however was concerned regarding the above ground storage tanks on the property. Mr. Avery suggested speaking to Berkeley Township’s Mayor regarding the acquisition and to revisit the nomination at a later time, to which the Committee agreed.

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- #720 Structural Management – Kuczynski., Lacey Twp., 0.70 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this property is mostly wooded and inaccessible for development due to a requirement of 1 acre in order to build on it. The Committee advised staff to move to hold and forward to the Pinelands Standard Limited Use Program.
- #727 Cedar Bridge Tavern Preserve Ext., Barnegat Township., 20.89 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that the owners of this property are seeking a life tenancy in which they would remain living in the home after they would sell the property. The property consists of a home as well as a large lake that surrounds the property. Mr. McKeon states it is a great piece but raises concerns whether or not it would be a good fit for the program. Mr. Lohmeyer states that it is separate from the Cedar Bridge Tavern Preserve property and that there was noticeable issues with the Bulkhead on the property. Mr. McKeon stated that the property may be a good acquisition for Parks program and raises the question of a possible partnership between Ocean County Parks & Recreation and The Natural Lands Trust Fund, to which Mr. Lohmeyer responded that it would come down to how interested Ocean County Parks would be in the acquisition. Mr. Fox stated that we would need more research and information to move forward. The Committee suggests staff to speak to Ocean County Parks more in depth regarding the property.
- #729 Camp Albocando Ext., Manchester Twp., 16.60 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this property has multiple structures on it and that it is adjacent to other Natural Land acquisitions, and that the owners of the property would be looking for an opportunity to remain living on the property after sale. Mr. Lohmeyer stated that Ocean County Parks is responsible for all of the repairs done on the homes for the properties in which they allow lifetime tenancies, and believes it is not a good fit for The Natural Lands Trust Fund. The Committee shared concerns with the asking price of the property as well as the desire of the owners remaining on the property with a lifetime tenancy, and advised to hold off on any further action until we receive more information from the property owners.
- New Applications:
 - #730 TR Ridgeway Branch II – Strudler., Jackson Twp., 5 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this piece is directly adjacent to our TR Ridgeway Branch II property. There are currently three structures located on the property. The asking price is \$600,000 and it is assessed at \$221,800. Mr. Avery stated that this property is located in the joint base priority area. The Committee advised staff to conduct a site visit.
 - #725 TR Ridgeway Branch II Ext., Jackson Twp., 2.70 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this piece is also directly adjacent to

our TR Ridgeway Branch II preserve. The property was previously used for a deli, however all buildings have been demolished and the land is currently vacant. The asking price is \$550,000 and it is assessed at \$260,900. The Committee advised staff to conduct a site visit.

- #731 New Country Road., Jackson Twp., 16.35 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this nomination is 13 separate lots that are placed on an undeveloped paper cul-de-sac. The zoning is Single-Family Residential and the asking price is \$3,500,000 and it is assessed at \$926,100. The Committee advised staff to forward to NJDEP and Green Acres due to the surrounding land being adjacent to it.
- #732 Keswick Grove., Manchester & Lacey Twp., 290.50 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this nomination is located in both Manchester & Lacey Township. The property is currently in the Green Acres Tax Exempt Program. Ms. Paxton stated that in the Green Acres Tax Exempt Program, the property owner relieves of paying taxes on the land as long as it is preserved in Green Acres standards. Mr. Gleason informed the Committee that OC Planning staff reached out to Green Acres to discuss the qualifications of the Green Acres Tax Exempt Program. Mr. Lohmeyer stated that he does not see a need to preserve the land if it is already in the Green Acres program. The asking price is \$15,003,517 and it is assessed at \$897,500. The Committee advised staff to move the property to hold due to the nature of the asking price and that it is already preserved land.

6. Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. McKeon to move into Closed Session at 6:12 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. McKeon to move back into Open Session at 6:24 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Avery stated that in closed session a number of nominations were discussed. There are no nominations that require any action.

Mr. Fox stated that Ocean County has now preserved 46.6 square miles through the Natural Lands Trust Fund program.

- 7. Adjournment:** A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mrs. Hodgson to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

- 8. Next Meeting: April 24 at 5:30PM**

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Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Palmieri', written in a cursive style.

Chris Palmieri, Program Aide