

**Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund
Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting
January 22, 2025**

Present: Alan Avery (Chair), David McKeon, William Fox, Lisa Hodgson, John Peterson, Greg Myhre, Jennifer Kuhn & Michael Mangum.

Also present at the meeting were: Frank Sadeghi (Commissioner, NLT Liaison), Laura Benson (County Counsel), Anthony Agliata (OCPD), Robert Kuhne (OCSWM), Mary Jane Bavais (OCP&R), Mark Jehnke (OCED), Geoffrey Lohmeyer(OCP&R), Chris Palmieri (OCPD), Tom Thorsen (OCPD), Tim Gleason (OCPD), Lea Vasilakis (OCPD), Nicole Leaf (OCPD), Jennifer Morganti (OCPD), Joyce May (Public) & Kenneth Burton (Public).

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes: October 23, 2024

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Mangum to approve the October 23, 2024 meeting minutes. Mr. Myhre & Ms. Kuhn abstain, rest in favor, motion carried.

4. Program Update: 30,054.73 acres

• Closings:

- #721 Burr Street, Barnegat Twp., 0.65 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this closing in Barnegat Township is located adjacent to the start of the Barnegat Branch Trail.
- #704 Mallard Rd – Stafford Twp. Donation, Stafford Twp., 1 acre – This closing, donated to Ocean County from Stafford Township, is located in the Mallard Road project area. Staff continues to target the parcels in this area for acquisition.
- #611 Colliers Mills Ext. II, Plumsted Twp., 15.80 acres – This closing located in Plumsted Township is adjacent to the Lewis Farm as well as State acquired land.
- #699 TR Ridgeway Branch North, Manchester Twp., 87.85 acres – This closing located in Manchester Township is located across from the future Manchester Park, and was previously approved for 404 homes before preservation through the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund. The closing officially brought Ocean County's total preserved acreage over 30,000 acres.

5. Old Business

• Old Business:

- #745 Jake's Branch Ext., Berkeley Twp., 28.62 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that staff has ordered due diligence on the

property and that once it is submitted, the testing results will be presented to the Advisory Committee for further review.

- #396 Berkeley Island Park Ext., 1.70 acres – Staff was directed to gather all permitting and approval information on the property prior to the Advisory Committee’s next step of action. A CAFRA permit was received in 2004, and expired in 2009. There is currently no CAFRA permit on the property which prevents any development on the property. The Advisory Committee retained interest in the property and authorized staff to order an appraisal on the parcel.
- #755 Cosmo’s Inholding, Berkeley Twp., 1.25 acres – Staff recently conducted a site visit on the property and noticed that there was a demolished structure, an old box truck, and multiple vehicle parts protruding from the ground. The asking price was \$125,000.00. The Advisory Committee deemed the property low interest and advised staff to move the property to hold.

6. New Business

- **New Nominations:**

- #524 Messec – Tip Seaman Ext., Little Egg Harbor Twp., 0.57 acres – This property located in Little Egg Harbor Township was resubmitted to staff after its prior review in 2020. The property owner stated that due to COVID, they never followed up on the offer letter that they received from Ocean County. The property is directly adjacent to Ocean County Tip Seaman Park as well as Ocean County Natural Lands approved land. The property owners stated that they are open to negotiations, and Little Egg Harbor Township is in support of the acquisition. The asking price is \$168,000.00 and it is assessed at \$194,400.00. The Advisory Committee authorized staff to order an appraisal on the parcel.
- #758 Mallard Rd. – Rojas, Stafford Twp., 0.58 acres – This nomination consists of 3 lots in the Mallard Road project area. The property owner is asking \$147,000.00 and is assessed at \$46,400.00. The Advisory Committee authorized an appraisal on the parcel.
- #759 Mallard Rd. – Rojas II, Stafford Twp., 0.51 acres – This nomination consisting of 2 lots is also located in the Mallard Road project area. The asking price is \$118,000.00 and it is assessed at \$41,000.00. The Advisory Committee authorized an appraisal on the parcel.
- #762 Mallard Rd. – Agustin, Stafford Twp., 0.27 acres – The next nomination is located in the Mallard Road project area, and the property owner is asking \$54,900.00 and it is assessed at \$19,300.00. The Advisory Committee authorized an appraisal on the parcel.
- #763 Westray Ave. – Island Heights, Island Heights Boro., 1.29 acres – This next nomination located in Island Heights is across from Wanamaker Field. It is one of the last large undeveloped tracts in the Borough, and currently has a conceptual plan to put up to 5 residences on the land. The property serves as a habitat for local wildlife, providing food and shelter.

The asking price is \$2,100,000.00 and it is assessed at \$362,900.00. The Advisory Committee authorized staff to order appraisals on the parcel.

7. Public Comment

Joyce May (Little Egg Harbor Township), expressed her interest in seeing a parcel in Little Egg Harbor Township preserved under the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust that is targeted for development, located on Route 539. The Advisory Committee informed Ms. May that Ocean County requires support of preservation from the Township in order to acquire land, and suggested that she express her interest in preservation to the Little Egg Harbor Township Committee.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Ms. Kuhn to move into Closed Session at 5:56 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Ms. Kuhn exited the meeting at 5:59 p.m.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Mangum to move back into Open Session at 6:08 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Avery stated that in closed session five nominations were discussed. There are five nominations that the Committee will take action on.

#739 Lighthouse Drive – Patel, Ocean Twp., 2.89 acres

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Peterson and seconded by Mr. Fox to recommend to the Board of Commissioners the fee simple acquisition of the Lighthouse Drive – Patel property under the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund, 2.89 acres in Ocean Township for an amount not to exceed \$220,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

#746 Lighthouse Drive – Buckley, Ocean Twp., 0.28 acres

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mangum and seconded by Mr. Peterson to recommend to the Board of Commissioners the fee simple acquisition of the Lighthouse Drive – Buckley property under the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund, 0.28 acres in Ocean Township for an amount not to exceed \$16,500.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

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#725 TR Ridgeway Branch II Ext., Jackson Twp., 2.70 acres

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mangum and seconded by Mr. Fox to recommend to the Board of Commissioners the fee simple acquisition of the TR Ridgeway Branch II Ext. property under the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund, 2.70 acres in Jackson Township for an amount not to exceed \$280,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

#709 GLP - Tilett, Berkeley Twp., 0.2 acres

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Mangum to recommend to the Board of Commissioners the fee simple acquisition of the GLP - Tilett property under the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund, 0.2 acres in Berkeley Township for an amount not to exceed \$810,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

Cameron Farm, Plumsted Twp., 18.92 acres

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mangum and seconded by Mr. Fox to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to acquire the development easement of the Cameron Farm under the Ocean County Farmland Preservation Program, 18.92 acres in Plumsted Township for an amount not to exceed \$375,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried

8. **Adjournment:** A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Myhre to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.
9. **Next Meeting: February 26, 2025 at 5:30PM**

Respectfully Submitted,



Chris Palmieri, Analyst Trainee