

**Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund
Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting
May 24, 2023**

Present: Alan Avery (Chair), David McKeon (Vice-Chair), John Bacchione, Martin Flemming, William Fox, Lisa Hodgson, Greg Myhre, Terry O’Leary, & John Peterson

Also Present at the meeting were: Commissioner Virginia E. Haines, Anthony M. Agliata (Planning Director), Laura Benson (County Counsel), Geoffrey Lohmeyer (OCPR), Daniel Sindoni (OCPD) Tom Thorsen (OCPD), Mark Villinger (OCPD), Jim Oris (RVE), John Paul Doyle (Esq.) and Sharon Becker (Public)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes: April 26, 2023

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Flemming to approve the April 26, 2023 meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

4. Program Update: 29,543.13 acres

Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that the County has closed on four properties since the last meeting bringing our total acreage to 29,543.13.

Mr. Fox commended the work of the program noting that the acquired acreage is over 46 square miles. Mr. Myhre noted that is the same size as Stafford Township.

- **Closings**

- #655 MCH –Jeffrey Jerman, Berkeley Twp., 4.59 acres
- #665 MCH – FA Investments, Berkeley Twp., 0.52 acres
- #671 MCH – Knapp, Berkeley Twp., 0.17 acres

Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that three of the properties we closed on were within the Mill Creek Headwaters Project Area totaling 5.28 acres.

- #610 Osborne Island North, LEHT, 31.71 acres - Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that we were able to close on this approximate 32 acre property adjacent to our Osborn Island property off Radio Road.

5. Old Business

*Mr. Peterson joined at 6:06 pm

- #668 Florence T. Allen Ext. II, Berkeley Twp., 26.67 acres – Mr. Villinger explained that this is an application that was previously reviewed by the Committee with little interest due to the layout of the property and high asking price.

The owner’s attorney Mr. John Paul Doyle explained that the issues raised during last month’s Committee Meeting are all warranted. In regards to the adjacent site, it looks like the environmental report is indicating that the property is clean therefore we shouldn’t have any issues on this piece. The property owner was also able to come to a land swap agreement with the neighbor that would increase the

Ocean County Natural Lands Trust
Advisory Committee Meeting
May 24, 2023
Page 2 of 5

acreage of the acquisition & make the property more contiguous. Additionally, this acquisition would provide key access to the NJ Pulverizing site instead of the current 20 foot wide access easement. Mr. Doyle mentioned that he thought the appraisal report that the client received was too high and after receiving consent from the client they have reduced the asking price to \$6,000,000.00.

The Committee had some additional follow up questions regarding the use of adjacent parcels, and the number/ nature of improvements on the property. All of these items would be addressed in the survey/ phase I.

Mr. Bacchione, the Township of Berkeley Councilman, expressed the Townships desire to have the land bought by the County for preservation. He informed the Committee that the Township has no money to bring to the table but can contribute by providing in house demolition services for the onsite fixtures that would have to be removed if the County acquired the piece. Mr. Bacchione explained that in addition to the demo services, the Township is willing to donate the adjacent approximate 40-acre wetlands piece that runs adjacent to the subject property and that has a portion of the Mill Creek flowing through it.

The Committee advised that they will provide direction in closed session after seeing the Township's appraisal value.

- #701 Cherry Street – Lennar Homes, Manchester Twp., 34.50 acres – Mr. Villinger informed the Committee that this property was also previously reviewed by the Committee. There were concerns regarding the development potential because Lennar Homes is subdividing three lots off for veterans housing. Staff were asked to look into the development potential of the property. Mr. Villinger advised the Committee that there is in fact development potential off of Cherry St. although minimal due to the wetlands and wetland buffers. Both of the areas that would be developed (Lacey Rd, Cherry St) meet the minimal upland requirements for development. Mr. Villinger also advised that the Township has asked us to review this application and that they would like to see the piece preserved. Mr. Avery asked where the veterans housing would be. Mr. Villinger indicated that it would be in the upland area adjacent to Cherry St. Mr. Villinger told the Committee that based on all of the information we found, two appraisal were authorized on the piece. Staff will bring report values back to the Committee.
- Site Inspections:
 - Lakehurst Avenue IV, Jackson Twp., 12.75 acres – Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that the site was mostly pine forest with very thick shrubs and thorn bushes throughout most of the property. There is an established trail that leads from Lakehurst Ave to Toms River Road on the opposite side of the property. Along the trail there were many areas of yard waste dumping that would need to be addressed. There is an asking price of \$1,800,000.00 which the Committee thinks is a little high. Staff were advised to discuss the asking price with the owner to see if that was realistic.

6. New Business

- New Nominations:

- #705 Station Road, Berkeley Twp., 14.54 acres – Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee of this new property in Berkeley Township. The piece is comprised two lots that have four structures total including two houses. There was a 7-lot subdivision approved for lot 24 and there is a 27-lot subdivision pending for lot 25. The property owner is asking \$225,000.00/lot for a total of \$7,650,000.00. The Committee had some concerns regarding the high asking price and the nature of the property being completely surrounded by residential development. Staff were advised to conduct a site investigation and reconvene with the Committee.

7. Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Flemming to move into Closed Session at 6:53 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Flemming to move back into Open Session at 7:08 p.m.: All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Avery stated that in closed session a number of nominations were discussed. Of those items, four that were discussed will have action taken.

#698 Dorathys Lane, Jackson Twp., 6.69 acres. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Bacchione to recommend to the Board of Commissioners in an amount not to exceed \$517,500.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

#696 Miller Ave, Jackson Twp., 27.50 acres. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Bacchione to recommend to the Board of Commissioners in an amount not to exceed \$715,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

#43 Route 9 Waretown, Ocean Twp., 40 acres. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Flemming to recommend to the Board of Commissioners in an amount not to exceed \$495,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

#620 Roosevelt City – Mowla, Manchester Twp., 24.83 acres. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. McKeon and seconded by Mr. Flemming to recommend to the Board of Commissioners in an amount not to exceed \$250,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

Adjournment: A **MOTION** was made by made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Bacchione to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Ocean County Natural Lands Trust
Advisory Committee Meeting
May 24, 2023
Page 4 of 5

Respectfully Submitted,



Dan Sindoni, Assistant Planner