COLTS NECK FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2023

Call to Order – the meeting was called to order at 7:38 p.m.

There was a salute to the Flag and the Sunshine Law Notice was read.

A roll call occurred. The meeting was attended by: Chair Jena Cosimo, Liaison Sue Fitzpatrick, John Clemente, Michael Stivala, Albert D. Yodakis, Scott Britton Alternate 2

Excused or Absent: Kyle Reese, Alison DeNoia, Kevin O'Connor, Tom Morin, Dina Ryan, Jonathon Fabozzi Alternate 1

No guests were present.

Jena Cosimo made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 8, 2023, meeting. Albert Yodakis seconded. There was a roll call. The minutes were adopted, unanimously, as presented.

Old Business

Farmland Preservation Updates – Funding is available to Colts Neck through the farmland preservation program. Although there are currently no active farmland projects, landowner outreach is occurring to eligible farms and inquiries are being made by interested landowners.

Green Acres Updates – The town acquired a 29-acre property as an addition to Five Points Park. NJ DEP Green Acres funds were utilized as well as funding from Monmouth County through their new acquisition grant program.

REPI/NWSE Updates – Projects targeted through this program are moving ahead. Partners are working towards the preservation of Overbrook Farm by a September 30th deadline. Significant funds are available from the Navy, some of which expire by September 30, 2023.

CADB Report – Letters were mailed to all preserved farm owners regarding the newly adopted SADC soil protection standards to define the extent to which soil on a preserved farm may be disturbed.

New Business

Open Space & Farmland Tax Increase – The Township committee has committed to a referendum on the fall ballot that will ask voters to vote on an increase to the current open space and farmland tax. Ballot language has been finalized.

Preservation Education Outreach Campaign – All were encouraged to speak to local friends, family, and members of other local groups they are part of to educate on the importance of preservation and to educate members of the community on what the ballot question means. Postcards will be sent on behalf of the town through the farmland preservation and open space committee budget by Monmouth Conservation Foundation.

There was a lengthy discussion amongst the committee brainstorming on strategies and approaches to educating the community, including but not limited to i.e., postcard strategy and content, banners, lawn signs, etc.

The first postcard was finalized and sent by Monmouth Conservation Foundation. Information will also be included in the goodie bags at the upcoming CNBA polo event.

Comments from the Public

Jena Cosimo made a motion to open the meeting up to public comment. Micheal Stivala seconded the motion. All were in favor, none were opposed. The meeting was opened to public comment. No public participants were present at the meeting. Albert Yodakis made a motion to close the meeting to public comment. Jena Cosimo seconded the motion. All were in favor, none were opposed. The meeting was closed to public comment.

Jena Cosimo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Michael Stivala seconded the motion. All were in favor, none were opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

The next Farmland and Open Space Committee Meeting will be held on November 13, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. at 3 Veterans Way, Colts Neck Township

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jena Cosimo.