

**Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund
Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting
October 23, 2024**

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

Also present at the meeting were: Virginia E. Haines (Commissioner, NLT Liaison), Frank Sadeghi (Commissioner), Mathew Thompson (County Counsel), Anthony Agliata (OCPD), Robert Kuhne (OCSWM), Mary Jane Bavais(OCP&R), Geoffrey Lohmeyer(OCP&R), Chris Palmieri (OCPD), Tom Thorsen (OCPD), Tim Gleason (OCPD), Lea Vasilakis (OCPD), & Kenneth Burton (Public).

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes: September 25, 2024

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Mangum to approve the September 25, 2024 meeting minutes. Mr. Avery & Ms. Hodgson abstain, rest in favor, motion carried.

4. Program Update: 29,949.43 acres

- Closings:
 - Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that there were no closing for the month of September.

5. Natural Lands Property Checklist

- Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that Ocean County Planning staff has developed a new property checklist for all upcoming nominations, set to be implemented in January 2025. This checklist will assist appraisers in determining the fair market value of properties and provide a more comprehensive understanding of each new nomination.

6. Old Business

- Old Business:
 - #745 Jake's Branch Ext., Berkeley Twp., 28.62 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that the owner has lowered their asking price from \$7,000,000 to \$3,000,000. The property owner is keen on Ocean County purchasing and preserving the land rather than having it developed. Ms. Bavais noted that this acquisition would be beneficial to Ocean County Parks & Recreation, due to it being adjacent to Jake's Branch County Park. The Advisory Committee suggested staff order consultant testing on the property, including but not limited to, mapping & environmental consulting. Mr. Agliata noted that staff will discuss the

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appropriate testing to conduct and will present the findings to the Advisory Committee at its next meeting.

- #396 Berkeley Island Park Ext., 1.70 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that the property owner has submitted a second possible offer of acquisition, which would include the entire beachfront property for \$2,850,000. Mr. Burton (Public), the property owner, stated that he would prefer to keep one lot in which he has approval to build a home that he would pass down to his family on. Mr. Burton noted that he had all appropriate permits and approvals to conduct the construction. The Advisory Committee suggested utilizing the new Natural Lands Checklist and gathering more information on the property before returning it to its next Advisory Committee meeting.

7. New Business

- New Applications:
 - #753 Lighthouse Drive – Mooney, Ocean Twp., 0.16 acres – Mr. Palmieri informed the Committee that this next nomination is located near the Lighthouse Drive Target Area of Acquisition. The property is 0.16 acres and the owner is seeking \$18,000.00. There is currently a drainage pipe located on the property. The Advisory Committee suggested the Engineering Department purchase the parcel for mitigation purposes.
 - #755 Cosmo's Inholding, Berkeley Twp., 1.25 acres – This property located in Berkeley Township is an inholding located between the former Blackbeard's Cave and Florence T. Allen Ext. II – Berkeley Twp. Donation. The owner is seeking \$125,000.00. The Advisory Committee authorized a site inspection on the property.

8. Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mangum and seconded by Mr. Fox to move into Closed Session at 6:00 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Peterson and seconded by Mr. Fox to move back into Open Session at 6:14 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Avery stated that in closed session two nominations were discussed. There is one nomination that the Committee will take action on.

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Cier/Denson Farm, Plumsted Twp., 64.76 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 Cier/Denson Farm under the Farmland Preservation Program, 64.76 acres in Plumsted Township for an amount not to exceed \$1,620,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

- 9. Adjournment:** A **MOTION** was made by Mr. McKeon and seconded by Mr. Bacchione to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

- 10. Next Meeting: January 22, 2025 at 5:30PM**

Respectfully Submitted,



Chris Palmieri, Analyst Trainee