

December 18, 2012

Mayor Conley and Borough Council Members
Borough of Madison
Hartley Dodge Memorial
Kings Road
Madison, New Jersey 07940

Subject: 2012 Annual Report of the Open Space, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Advisory Committee of Madison Borough

Dear Mayor Conley and Members of the Council:

This is to update you about the activities of the Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Advisory Committee in 2012 as required by Chapter 25-2 (H). Thank you for the continued support and commitment to the acquisition of open space within the Borough of Madison.

The Open Space Committee held 11 regular public meetings in 2012. Throughout the year, Morris Land Conservancy was available to the Advisory Committee for guidance.

2012 Highlights:

- Dave Carver (2011 Chair) provided an overview of the 2011 Committee work, information regarding the ordinance that established the Advisory Committee, and established the 2012 public meeting dates.
- Cathie Coultas was elected Secretary for 2012.
Melissa Honohan was elected Chair for 2012.
- Honohan attended and reported on the Land Conservancy Rally, which had representatives from all over the state of New Jersey sharing best practices regarding land acquisition and stewardship. Attendance at this meeting provided the impetus for inviting Jon Wagar, Vice President for Conservation Programs at Conservation Resources to share their experience in Chester developing a connecting trail plan. The presentation included successful practices on how to engage the public, government and other stakeholders in the conversation, marketing techniques to bolster participation, and information regarding grant opportunities for similar projects.
- Significant Committee presence and participation at the Madison Green Fair and for May Day projects.

- Visit to Livesey Park with Committee members to discuss potential solutions for park access and a possible solution to some of the congestion that happens during school drop off and pick up on Kings Road. Funding for projects and land use requirements based on the grant funds that were initially used to purchase the park are pending. Madison Rotary adopted the park, provided plantings, volunteers and a schedule of care for the space. Livesey Park was also included as a work site for the Day of Service.
- Over the course of the year there was a conscious effort to include liaisons in the discussions of the Committee so that Borough administrators, elected officials, other Borough work groups, and Madison non-profits were all involved in the projects and discussions in order to promote transparency and participation.
- All Committee members were assigned Rosenet addresses to use for Borough and Advisory Committee work.
- Mayor Conley, Borough Administrator Ray Codey and CFO Robert Kalafut met with Honohan to discuss and explain the balance of the Open Space Fund, payments made from the fund over the past several years and the commitments that have been made. (The official minutes reflect the approximate balance of the Fund as of September 2012, as follows):
 - Balance as of September = \$143,000
 - Additional tax revenues for 2012 = \$416,000
 - Balance at the end of 2012 = \$559,000 (Total of two amounts above)
 - 2013 commitment for bond interest (due in January 2013)= \$160,000
- Melissa Honohan presented to the Council on September 24, 2012. One purpose of the presentation was to share some historical information about why the Advisory Committee was established and the work it has accomplished over the past several years. The Committee recommended that there be a consistent process for requests of funds from the Open Space Fund and that there also be policies for consideration of those requests in order to continue to leverage the funds and to be good stewards of the resource. Process and policies will allow for consistent consideration of project requests, transparency regarding the use of the Fund, and a process for the Advisory Committee to objectively advise the Council on proposed uses of the Fund. The Council requested that the Open Space Advisory Committee return to them with recommendations. A draft application form for requests is being developed and will require input from other standing Committees. This form (and the process for its use) will then be presented to the Council for approval.

- The Open Space and Recreation Plan Update – 2009 was reviewed and comments were included regarding minor updates. The plan will continue to serve as the guiding document for the Advisory Committee as part of the comprehensive strategic direction for the Borough.
- Thanks to the focused work of Borough Administration, the Borough of Madison was awarded \$325,000 of Green Acres funding in 2012. It was a competitive process and we are thankful for those who were involved in making it happen for Madison.
- The Friends of the Bottle Hill Historical District presented at the December 2012 meeting. The focus was on Summerhill Park access and improvements and on Ridgedale Avenue traffic management.
- Open Space Acquisition remains the primary goal of the Advisory Committee's work. The leveraging of the Open Space Fund in conjunction with outside funding sources such as the Morris County Trust Fund, Green Acres and foundation grants will be of utmost importance.
- Remediation of Borough properties that were purchased, in part, with Open Space Fund dollars was discussed as a priority and will remain so into 2013.
- Open Space Advisory Committee leadership provided input and participated in the planning of the Green Forum Meeting that will take place on January 24, 2013.

Going forward, the Committee will focus on land acquisition opportunities, and advising the Council regarding Open Space Fund requests. The goal of the Committee for 2013 is to continue to leverage Open Space Funds with other available funding sources from the state.

It is a pleasure and honor to serve the Borough of Madison and to work with the administration, elected officials, and volunteers of such an incredibly proud community. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions (honohanm@rosenet.org, 973-936-2459).

Sincerely,

Melissa Honohan
2012 Chair, Open Space, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Advisory Committee