

CENTRAL PINE BARRENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FINAL VERSION (APPROVED 11/9/99)

Meeting Minutes for the Central Pine Barrens Advisory Committee
Brookhaven Town Hall, Building 4
Wednesday, September 2, 1998
5:30 p.m.

Opening Comments:

The meeting began without a quorum. Opening comments were made by Mr. LoGrande. He introduced Mr. Corwin, Executive Director of the Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning & Policy Commission.

Mr. Corwin distributed a handout to all Advisory Committee members which lists the current Primary and Alternate representative of the Advisory Committee. Members were asked to review this list and advise Mr. Corwin or staff members of any changes.

Status on Commission Activities:

Law Enforcement Council - Several abandoned vehicle lift operations have taken place within the Pine Barrens. A Law Enforcement Handbook is being developed and is a guide which may be utilized by Field Officers. There are now 17 members in the Law Enforcement Council.

Protected Lands Council - Ms. Plunkett, staff member for the Central Pine Barrens Commission is analyzing the twelve stewardship units within the Central Pine Barrens. A management plan is being developed by this group.

Wildfire Task Force - With the addition of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Group and the New York Army National Guard Aviation Support Facility in Islip, there are now 39 members in this group. A draft Wildfire Task Force Plan has been completed and will be going before the Central Pine Barrens Commission for approval at their September 16, 1998 meeting. The meeting will be at 2:00 p.m. at Southaven Park.

There will be a Pine Barrens Research Forum on October 8 and October 9, 1998 at Brookhaven National Laboratory. A field trip is scheduled for the October 9 session.

Credit Clearinghouse Status:

Mr. Milazzo:

Mr. Milazzo, staff member for the Central Pine Barrens Commission gave an overview of the

latest Credit Clearinghouse activities. He discussed how the credits have been utilized in Brookhaven, Riverhead, and Southampton Town.

He stated that the Clearinghouse is sensitive to the small lot owner. He discussed the protocol which was used to determine the value that a pine barrens credit would have on the private market.

The Special Solicitation Offer which was made to people in the Town of Brookhaven was discussed.

Mr. Milazzo discussed the "Reverse Auction," and the Clearinghouses involvement. The "Reverse Auction" is a mechanism where the Clearinghouse contracts with developers. The developer will let the Clearinghouse know how many credits they are interested in purchasing and how much money they are willing to pay for the credits. The Clearinghouse will then translate that offer to the landowners in the Town of Brookhaven.

The next Clearinghouse meeting will be on Thursday, September 10, 1998, 8:00 a.m., at the Commission office.

Mr. Herrick asked why landowners are paying taxes on small lots in which they cannot develop on. Mr. Proios stated that landowners may file for a hardship.

A meeting attendee stated that he just recently became aware that he may file for a hardship application. It was noted that landowners have been notified of their options. Landowners may call the Commission office and ask staff members questions at any time. (During work hours).

A question arose as to how many closings have taken place in the three towns. In the Township of Brookhaven, there have been 134 credit certificates issued, four credit certificates issued in Riverhead, and in Southampton, a figure in the 40's.

Ms. Kepert asked about acquiring property. Mr. Milazzo stated that by putting a conservation easement on a property it does not transfer ownership of a property, but affects what the landowner can do on the property.

Core Preservation Area Parcel Status Breakdown:

Ms. Plunkett:

A handout was distributed entitled "Core Preservation Area Parcel Status by Ownership and Land Use as of August 12, 1998."

The data in this document reflects the Core Preservation Area parcel status by ownership and land use within the Townships of Brookhaven, Riverhead and Southampton. Data was received from the Tax Assessors office from the three towns.

Ms. Plunkett reviewed the document (see attached) in its entirety and stated that the numbers shown may change each day.

The Core Preservation Area is now larger due to the addition of the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge.

A discussion ensued regarding land which is partially in the Core Preservation Area and in the Compatible Growth Area.

Mr. Amper stated that he would like to make sure that everyone is in agreement regarding the total acreage which needs to be acquired in the Core Preservation Area.

It was mentioned that if a person receives a hardship permit from the Commission, the permit is good forever and will not expire.

By this point of the meeting, there were enough members to constitute a quorum.

A motion was made by Mr. Amper and seconded by Mr. Herrick to approve the Central Pine Barrens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes from March 10, 1998. The motion was carried unanimously.

Acquisition Presentation:

Mr. LoGrande noted that there has not yet been a meeting with the Special Committee on Acquisitions.

Ms. Zielenski, Regional Supervisor for the New York State DEC, Bureau of Real Property, gave an overview on what the State has spent with respect to acquisitions. Approximately 31 million dollars have been spent since 1995. In 1998 \$5,512,769.54 was spent. Appraisals are currently completed on approximately 675 acres. Ms. Zielenski stated that the State's fiscal year doesn't run with the calendar year.

A map of the Central Pine Barrens was displayed. Ms. Zielenski reviewed areas that the State is targeting. The State has sent out monetary offers to small lot owners and have received approximately 40 responses within a years period.

A discussion ensued with respect to the process by which the County of Suffolk and the State of New York acquire property.

Representatives from each agency gave their views.

It was noted by Mr. Grecco, from the Suffolk County Division of Real Property that Suffolk County does not in any way discuss with the State of New York prospective land that they wish

to acquire.

Mr. Scully, Assistant Deputy County Executive of Suffolk gave an overview on Suffolk County's acquisition status. He stated that the County has taken several steps aimed toward the program. The establishment of the small lot program is important. He stated that by having a small lot program, the County can focus on the larger lots separately. The County has also brought The Nature Conservancy on board to help with the acquisition program.

In addition, the County has hired five new staff members in the Division of Real Estate.

Mr. Scully stated that in 1995 the County spent 9.2 million dollars on acquisitions, as opposed to the figure that Mr. Amper had been provided. Mr. Scully stated that the County received a chronological record from the Division of Real Estate of every closing for every parcel during that year.

Mr. Scully stated that there was a major closing which occurred on December 11, 1995, which was not reflected in the figures that Mr. Amper received. The amount which was not reflected was 6.1 million, the Omnia property.

Mr. Grecco stated that the State of New York and the County of Suffolk are not in competition. He stated that if someone is interested in statistics regarding acquisitions, to please contact him at the Suffolk County Division of Real Property.

With respect to the small lots, the County has employed two new individuals to focus on small lots. Three employees have been hired to deal with the large lots. Mr. Grecco stated that the majority of the owners are those of small lots. Mr. Grecco stated that the County obtained a list of land owners who own parcels five acres or less. Two thousand letters were mailed out to these individuals making them offers on their property. Four hundred responses were received stating that they were interested in the offers made by the County. He explained the appraisal methods used.

Mr. Grecco stated that the County is targeting the entire Core Preservation Area. He reviewed the supply and demand of TDRs within the three towns.

He stated that the County is in the process of preparing contracts. There is a new head of the acquisition's unit in the Suffolk County Division of Real Property, as of August 1998. She has 30 years experience, and is used to the fast pace often seen in this field. The Nature Conservancy will be closing its first deal for the County in September.

Special Subcommittees:

Mr. LoGrande stated that not much has transpired with the special subcommittees on Noise and

the Design Standards Subcommittee.

Mr. Darrow inquired about the status on the decision about the Manorville Sand mine. It was mentioned that there was no appeal.

The meeting was adjourned without a resolution.