

Borough of Califon Planning/Zoning Board
MINUTES
APRIL 20, 2022
7:30 PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD OF THE BOROUGH OF CALIFON, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY WILL HOLD A REGULARLY SCHEDULED PUBLIC MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2022 AT 7:30 PM. THE FOLLOWING IS AN AGENDA FOR SAID MEETING AND FORMAL ACTION MAY OR MAY NOT BE TAKEN ON A PORTION OF THIS AGENDA. THE PUBLIC IS INVITED AND MAY ATTEND SAID MEETING SUBJECT TO THOSE AREAS OF CONSIDERATION DESIGNATED, IF ANY, FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED PURSUANT TO SECTION 7B & 8 OF THE LAWS OF 1975.

I. Arthur Owens Called the meeting to order and read the Open Public Meeting Statement

This is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Borough of Califon Combined Land Use Board. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was sent to and published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Hunterdon Review, and the notice of this meeting was posted on the bulletin board in the Borough Municipal Building and filed with the Borough Clerk.

II. Arthur Owens led the Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Mayor Daniel: present	Leo Janas: present
Thomas Bedell: present	Arthur Owens: present
Jason Ruggiero: present	Jason Bittay: present
John Lynch: absent	

IV. Approval of Minutes: October 20, 2021, Arthur Owens asked if there were any corrections. Board members commented on their corrections and the Board Clerk made the corrections accordingly.

Motion to adopt the minutes with the corrections: Thomas Bedell

Second: Leo Janas

Any questions: none

Mayor Daniel: yes	Leo Janas: yes
Thomas Bedell: yes	Arthur Owens: yes
Jason Ruggiero: yes	Jason Bittay: yes
John Lynch: absent	

V. Preliminary discussion regarding items to be included in the Open Space and Recreation Plan

Jim Kyle explained the guide provided by the Green Acres Program for the OSRP so that the township is eligible for cost sharing on the planning incentive grant of the program. The document talks about the OSRP. On page three it talks about the actual plan requirements. One important requirement is the public participation requirement. The Board must engage with the public to discuss the plan. The board must then describe what they are going to do, how we did that process and then summarize this in the plan.

Many municipalities have a hearing on the draft and then adopt the plan at the next meeting. It is important that we discuss tonight how we would like this process to go.

The board may want to have a workshop meeting after the Board has the initial ideas formed. Goals and objectives are normally basic. Board may want to look at soil conservation issues in the Borough. The Borough has discussed not necessarily needing active recreation areas; however we may want to discuss passive recreation opportunities. Possible acquisition of land to tie into trail systems.

Charlie Daniel asked when public participation would generally take place. Jim Kyle responded that ideally it would occur prior to the plan being drafted. He had not yet been able to get data from the county GIS system. The other information, at one time an intern walked all of the trails with a GIS backpack so this would be helpful. Jim Kyle felt that scheduling a workshop meeting would be beneficial. Having the residents come in with ideas would be helpful. One main thing that will need to be done is identify target acquisition lands. The Board must then come up with the ROSI, Requisition and Open Space Inventory, this is an official document.

The Board will need to look at how the referendum for the Open Space Tax was worded to see what it can be used for. The Borough is bound by however the referendum is worded as to what the tax money can be used for.

Charlie Daniel stated that the Borough doesn't have a lot of open space left. Art Owens stated that at the far end of Railroad Avenue there is a landlocked piece. Board members spent time looking at the map showing existing land use. Jim Kyle stated that there may be some errors on the map. Jim Kyle stated that he was focusing on the bottom left-hand corner of Existing Land Use map, two green properties which could connect to the Columbia Trail.

The Board discussed among themselves various properties within the Borough.

The other properties that could be focused on two properties along River Road that are showing up as vacant. The properties are clearly in the flood zone. The properties have the address 56 Ridgefield Terrace in PA, this owner seems to own many properties in the Borough. The two large grey pieces next to River Road are also of interest. The owners are at 23 First Street, and 1 First Street.

Jim Kyle stated that anything along the river that is not held by a public agency or body may be a good target. Opportunities are limited.

The Board continued to discuss among themselves the properties on the map.

Charlie Daniel stated that looking at the map there could be some properties that could be acquired for possible acquisition if the owners are willing to sell. If the Board feels that it is important to purchase open space it is worth the time to inventory the properties and determine which properties would be worth acquiring.

The Board discussed that it would be a possibility that if able to acquire a lot along the river a fishing area could be set up or a walking path. Jim Kyle stated that sometimes owners will donate flood prone land and utilize it as a tax deduction.

Jim Kyle stated that public participation workshops can be helpful in identifying if there is a need for active recreation, for example, soccer fields, baseball fields, etc. Part of what the Board will do is assess the Boroughs recreation needs, go thru the inventory, and the needs analysis. There are national standards that state how many fields are needed per 1000 residents that can be referred to.

Karen Mastro stated that it will be important to have the input from the Recreation Commission and the Environmental Commission.

The large parcel behind the Municipal Building is owned by the Fire Company.

One idea for public participation is to have workshop meetings where there is a discussion similar to this meeting and Jim Kyle will pull the ideas from it. The focus is very specific, the Board must focus on Goals and objectives. The board must determine if they are going to focus on active or passive recreation.

Art Owens stated that many times when facilities were created there was destruction. Where if the Board utilizes the funds for Open space there isn't as much of a concern about degradation of the environment.

Jim Kyle stated that the areas that the Board is focusing on are not appropriate for active recreation.

If the Borough is able to meet with the county there is a rather large piece of property adjacent to the park that would be useful.

A member of the Environmental Commission was present, Becky Pickens. She presented a project list that was created by the Environmental commission

1. Restoration of the pond at Califon Island Park
2. Construction of a native Meadow at the lower end of the park
3. Construction of fire pit/warming shelter next to pond
4. Walking trail around the perimeter of the park
5. Walking trail linking the Columbia Trail to the Califon Island Park
6. Eradication of invasive species along the banks and property of Califon Island Park
7. Planting of Native plants along the banks and park
8. Implementation of Rain Gardens where needed- the parcel between Main and Academy commonly referred to as the "Winters Property"

9. Continue planting of hard wood native trees in park, Nellie Hoffman House and Cabin by the River
10. Installation of a Children's Learning Garden at the park by the playground.

Arthur Owens stated that it was important to remove the invasive species that they had been planted by Trout Unlimited. Multiflora Rose to be exact.

Arthur Owens stated that they may consider the native species American Chestnut.

- Jim Kyle stated that the next step will be to have the Recreation discussion. It was agreed that the recreation commission should be invited to come to a meeting. The recreation commission can state what they feel their needs are over the next 5-10 years.
- After that the Board will want to work on the acquisitions part, nail down the properties the would be of interest, discuss possible opportunities for trail connections etc. Jim Kyle will try to get the GIS data from the County.
- A draft of the plan will then be prepared; however this can be modified as needed. 90% of the plan follows the Green Acres document. Goals and Objectives do not have to be fancy.

The plan is to have the Recreation commission at the next meeting. The Environmental Commission will also be present. It is important to not have a quorum of any of the Boards or Commissions attending. If there, will be we must notice accordingly for May 18th meeting.

Karen Mastro, Borough Clerk, will notice that there will be a joint meeting of the Planning Board, Recreation commission, Environmental Commission and Council.

Jim Kyle will have a large map that can be marked up.

Workshop with public can be held on June 15.

Art Owens felt that letting the churches, school, etc. would be beneficial to getting the word out about the meeting. Califon Community Borough has a FB page as well as the Environmental Commission.

Karen Mastro will put the notice on the website, sandwich board, and town Facebook.

Jason Ruggiero will put on the Recreation Facebook page.

VI. Public Comment: none

VII. Comments from Board Members on non-agenda items

Tom Bedell referenced the discussion with Mr. Near as to weather or not the borough had the authority to do a change of use every time properties use changes even on commercial. Did we get feedback from the attorney? At this point there was no feedback.

Tom Bedell asked how the size of the parking space was determined on Mr. Near's property. Jim Kyle stated that 9x18 is standard.

In addition first item to be done on Mr. Near's property was to place boulders so that no one could enter driveway. When would this be done? Jim Kyle stated that engineer must sign off on resolution prior to work being done outside.

Jim Kyle stated that Reexamination report has been done. Need guidance from Borough Council on what ordinances they want to move forward on. Don't need to provide notice for rezoning to each property owner.

Jim Kyle recommended waiting on Electric Vehicle Ordinance because tweaks are still being made.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion made by Tom Bedell Second Mayor Daniel

All members present voted in favor by saying aye

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 PM

Prepared by Catherine Innella, Land Use Board Secretary

Approved September 21, 2022