

MEADOWLANDS CONSERVATION TRUST

DATE: February 24th, 2006
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE: New Jersey Meadowlands Commission
2nd Floor, Commission Meeting Room
Lyndhurst, New Jersey
RE: BIMONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

CAPTAIN WILLIAM SHEEHAN, Chair
Hackensack Riverkeeper

MR. ROBERT CEBERIO
Executive Director, NJMC

MAYOR DENNIS ELWELL
Mayor of Secaucus

MS. ABIGAIL FAIR
Association of NJ Environmental Commissions

MR. MICHAEL GONNELLI
NJMC, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:

MS. KRISTINA SCHVEJDA
Executive Director, Meadowlands Conservation Trust

MS. LINDA BAER
Deputy Executive Director for External Affairs

MS. PENNY LUDMAN, ESQ.
Deputy Attorney General

MS. KRISTEN HEINZERLING, ESQ.
Interim Deputy Attorney General

MR. JONATHAN MARTIN
Administrative Assistant, Meadowlands Conservation Trust

ABSENT:

MARK BECKER, Vice Chair
Co-Director of Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network

GREG REMAUD
NY/NJ Baykeeper

1. Chairman Sheehan presided over the Meadowlands Conservation Trust Board of Trustees meeting.
2. After leading the flag salute, Ms. Schvejda read the roll call for the February 24, 2006 meeting of the Meadowlands Conservation Trust, followed by a reading of the Sunshine Law.
3. Review and Adoption of Minutes: Minutes of the December 16, 2005 meeting were adopted and approved with a motion made by Trustee/ Commissioner Gonnelli, seconded by Trustee Ceberio and unanimously carried by acclamation.
4. Public Comment: No public comment was made.
5. Resolutions: The following resolution was moved by Chairman Sheehan and no action was made-
 - A. Resolution authorizing the Meadowlands Conservation Trust to mirror the annual salary adjustments made by the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) for 2006 and all future wage increases.
6. Closed session
7. Open session
8. Chairman's Report:
 - a. Chairman Sheehan informed the board that Carlstadt's lawsuit against the Trust had been thrown out of court. They attempted to lay claim to the Richard P. Kane Natural Area and the judge labeled them hypocrites. They were attempting to use the National Environmental Policy Act to prevent Mills/Mack-Cali from developing the Xanadu project; however when the plan was to fill in wetland acres in Carlstadt no one complained. Ms. Ludman informed the board that Carlstadt has 60 days to present a claim to the state court since the ruling was made in federal court. Trustee Elwell showed concern for the residents of Carlstadt since they loose out on \$2,000,000. He feels they should be compensated in some way, shape, or form, but emphasized that it should not be the responsibility of MCT or NJMC.
9. Directors Report:
 - a. Old Business
 - A. Ms. Schvejda introduced Jonathan Martin and Kristen Heinzerling to the board. Mr. Martin started his employment with the trust on January 3, 2006 and is the Special Assistant to the Executive Director. Ms. Heinzerling will be our interim Deputy Attorney General while Ms. Ludman is on maternity leave.

B. License plate update

- a) Mr. Martin spoke to the board about what he has been doing since his date of hire and what he has planned for the future. So far his focus has been directed towards obtaining grants for greenway funding. Next week he will be sending out letters to 44 car dealerships in the Hackensack River watershed region with the intent of scheduling meetings with their sales managers to discuss the idea of them promoting the plate. Emphasis will be placed on hybrid automobile buyers in an attempt to increase sales. Trustee Elwell mentioned that he would like to see us utilize more of the print media we have and attempt to get poster advertisements inside the showrooms. There was a charge of \$2,212.50 in our most recent financial report from the Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) that was questioned by Chairman Sheehan. Mr. Martin explained that the charge was related to the production of promotional materials the MVC created for all of the organizations participating in the plate program.

C. Land acquisition update

- a) Chairman Sheehan voiced his concerns to the board that various entities have begun to interfere with the acquisition of the Pomander Walk tract in Teaneck. They feel that the land should be given solely to the Indian/Slave Coalition and believes that MCT should have no part in its preservation. This is a fairly new situation and we hope to have more information at the next meeting.
- b) Ms. Schvejda informed the board that we are currently working with the residents of Ridgefield on preserving two plots of land in their town totaling approximately 11 acres. The land is currently owned by the town and development is being proposed for a portion of these properties. The Riedes family informed the MCT about the situation and we hope to take ownership of development rights on whatever land is not developed.

D. Hudsonia

- a) Hudsonia's Meadowlands report is close to completion and a sample was passed around among the board members. Everyone was extremely happy with the outcome. Trustee Elwell thought it might be a good idea if we pursue outside funding for printing of the project. Trustee Ceberio agreed and mentioned that it is commonplace to do so on projects such as this. He recommended we contact Hartz to see if they would be interested.

E. Norwood Conservation Easement

- a) Ms. Schvejda informed the board that the town has gone back and received a second bid on the survey. Also, the title search has been completed.

b. New Business

A. NJDOT & NJTransit

- a) Contained in the packets sent to the board members was a copy of the Quarterly Progress Report for the NJSEA Consultation Process. Section 3.d. was the center of discussion since the one year anniversary of the MCT's acceptance of the Kane tract is drawing near. Trustee Ceberio says that he will meet with NJTransit and the Department of Transportation as soon as possible; however, both groups have a lot of their table right now and sees it doubtful that they will be able to clearly identify potential wetland impacts before the deadline. They must understand that future designs will involve the development of credits. Before NJMC can do any design work on the Kane Tract, we need to know what the DOT and NJTransit's plans are. Chairman Sheehan reiterated the language regarding NJTransit's identification of these potential impacts within one year. According to Trustee Ceberio, a few other promises had not been kept and he would not be surprised if this one was added to the list.

B. Meeting with various political entities

- a) Ms. Schvejda kept the board abreast of her recent meetings with various political entities. Since our last BOT meeting she has made presentations to the Bergen County Freeholders and the Demarest council regarding our easement on the Clarke Family property. She has also spent time with Commissioner Susan Bass Levin of the NJ Department of Community Affairs and Eileen Swan, the Director of the Office of Smart Growth, to discuss the Trust. According to Ms. Baer, meetings have also been arranged with County Executive Dennis McNerney and Assemblywoman Valarie Huttle. We are currently trying to schedule a meeting with Senator Loretta Weinberg. Ms. Baer also made it known that the MCT's positive press in regards to our work on the Pomander Walk easement helped to get our foot inside these political doors.

C. Financial

- a) Ms. Schvejda made it known that Mr. Martin and herself had been working diligently the past few weeks creating grant applications for the NJDCA's Department of Smart Growth and for the Hyde and Watson Foundation. They directed both applications towards receiving funding to plan and implement a greenway connecting all of our lands with remaining open space. This would also assist us in knowing where to focus our acquisition efforts.

- b) Ms. Schvejda asked the Trustee's if they had any concerns regarding the MCT's audit. Trustee Elwell mentioned that the audits he has seen in the

past always have a page devoted to management recommendations created by the auditor. Usually, the recommendations are then reviewed by the board and voted upon. Trustee Ceberio agreed and it has been decided that the MCT should contact the auditor and ask him or her to provide us with this information so that it may be presented at our next board meeting.

- c) Ms. Schvejda proposed to the board members that the MCT create an annual report that mirrors NJMC's. Trustee Fair stated that she believes that our annual report should be much simpler and cost efficient than the Commissions. Trustee Ceberio agreed and added that the state is watching printing costs with a keen eye and may even put a halt on all major print jobs.

10. Next Meeting: originally set for April 21, 2006, but has been changed to April 28, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. due to the Hackensack River Symposium being scheduled for April 21st. The meeting will be located in the MERI Conference Room on the 3rd Floor.

11. Motion to adjourn meeting was made.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am.

Kristina R. Schvejda, Executive Director
Meadowlands Conservation Trust