

**Hillsborough Township
Open Space Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

Attendees

	Present	Absent
Greg Hawzen	X	
Kevin Sluka	X	
Louise Wilkens		X
Troy Lipani	X	
Mark Hasting	X	
Vivek Rao	X	
Fred Gladstone	X	
Robert Peason	X	
Tom Shearer	X	

Other Attendees:

Invited: David Kois, Planning Director & Deputy Zoning Officer

Public Attendees

David Brooks, Judy Hass, Brian Tarantino
And others that did not speak during the public portion.

A salute to the flag was led by Greg Hawzen

Notes of April 3, 2025, were accepted. No formal vote was required.

Minutes of March 6, 2025, were adopted as follows:

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Greg Hawzen					X	
Kevin Sluka	X		X			
Louise Wilkens						X
Troy Lipani					X	
Mark Hasting					X	
Vivek Rao		X	X			
Fred Gladstone			X			
Robert Peason					X	
Tom Shearer			X			

Minutes of February 6, 2025, were adopted as follows:

	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Greg Hawzen			X			
Kevin Sluka	X		X			
Louise Wilkens						X
Troy Lipani			X			
Mark Hasting		X	X			
Vivek Rao					X	
Fred Gladstone			X			
Robert Peason			X			
Tom Shearer			X			

The following points were discussed.

- Four properties that were identified as target properties received letters. Three of four responded.
- The Tax Assessor is conducting a preliminary fair market value for discussion purposes, prior to any formal appraisal or further evaluation.
- It was noted that property owners anticipated values are usually considerable different than assessed valuations.
- Property off of Amwell requires additional due diligence. The existing policy is that open space dollars cannot be used to procure dwellings. Purchasing dwellings can bring with it various issues from asbestos cleanup requirement, lead contamination, and other environmental impacts.
- Owners of the open space property near Auten Road School is currently sitting on property, no intended action at this time.
- The township is using a basic template letter to communicate with target properties.
- Westville Property currently has a realtor involved, it is being actively marketed.
- Identifying the properties provide a value in developing the Township's Master Plan. As well as identifying projects that may be eligible for grant opportunities. Often shovel ready acquisitions are required for funding.
- Creating a list will assist in prioritization management of acquisition.

The meeting was open to the public.

David Brooks requested that the advisory committee make a recommendation for the procurement of Block 200.10 Lot 32 if the existing development application and/or potential subsequent legal action were to fail. Mr. Brooks felt that the property is an active greenway for wildlife. He stated that Mr. Kuszner is the owner.

(Robert Peason recused himself)

Brain Tarentino advised that the Sourland Conservancy is extremely interested in having the property/ greenway in public control. It provides an escape route for wildlife. The Planning board is allegedly having a hearing on May 8th.

Judy Haas asked about the Mandle Property. Greg Hawzen advised that no decision has been made at the county level at this time.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion and vote were made to enter into Executive Session, all guests and the public were excused. A discussion was held regarding the acquisition, potential litigation, and legal definition and legal uses of exiting open space funds and referendum

Return to open session

A Master Plan Subcommittee was created to include Tom Shearer, Greg Hawzen, Louise Wilkins and Debbie from the township will be included to provide advice and information.

Discussions ended at approximately 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Sluka