

**Cape May Court House, New Jersey  
TOWNSHIP OF MIDDLE  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
WORKSESSION AGENDA  
April 17, 2017 4:00 PM (prevailing time)**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor's Announcement: I hereby declare that notice has been given to the Herald Times, the Atlantic City Press and posted on the bulletin board of the Middle Township Municipal Building, stating the time and place of the following meeting, as required in P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 of the State of New Jersey. (Sunshine Law).

Notice of this meeting was properly given in Resolution No. 16-17 entitled "Establishing Work Session Meeting Nights" which was adopted by Township Committee of the Township of Middle on January 2, 2017.

Members present are Mayor Clark, Deputy Mayor DeVico, and Committeemember Donohue

Interim Administrator Stephen O'Connor, Township Clerk Kimberly Krauss, Municipal Solicitor Frank Corrado & Municipal Engineer Marc DeBlasio.

**FLAG SALUTE:**

*Marc DeBlasio provided Engineering Report:*

- *Gave an update on the Middle Township / Lower Township Bike Path Connector project. Provided a visual overview of the plan. Bid opening was held on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Kline Construction was the lowest responsible bidder with an estimate of \$224,000.00, approximately \$140,000 less than the projected cost; same contractor that completed township's bike path phase 4 & 5. Anticipates moving forward by entering into contracts and scheduling a preconstruction meeting.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Asked Marc DeBlasio if he knew what direction Kline Construction would be working in; north to south or vice versa.*

*Marc DeBlasio:*

- *To be discussed at the preconstruction meeting.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Inquired about residents being notified.*
- *Questioned how Route 47 would be crossed.*

*Marc DeBlasio:*

- *Everything NJDOT requested be done has been completed.*
- *Explained a crosswalk would be inserted across Route 47.*
- *Residents will be notified.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Asked about the adjacent plot of wetlands.*

*Marc DeBlasio:*

- *Project never consisted of having any interference with the wetlands.*

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS OR DISCUSSIONS:**

No Net Loss Reforestation Project Update

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *Project originates from the Garden State Project development that generated a grant of over \$380,000; equates to about 1,275 trees.*
- *Prepared a proposal for the state concerning reforestation in consultation with the township, school district, the Municipal Utilities Authority, and the county; additional stakeholders were necessary in order to find sufficient sites for the number of trees acquired as a result of the grant.*
- *Explained Middle Township is laid out in a manner that doesn't accept shade tree plantings well forcing the firm to get creative in choosing locations for the trees.*
- *The state likes to see an equal distribution of shade trees and ornamental trees.*
- *24 different planting site locations were concluded that comprised of 43 landscaping plans; sites chosen dependent on chance of success for long-term viability of trees.*
- *The trees undergo a two-year maintenance period by the contractor and afterwards cannot be moved or relocated, leaving the trees to live through their natural life cycle.*
- *Project is in progress; the township selected a contractor through the bid process that had previous experience in the No Net Loss program.*
- *Plan was slow at first due to difficulties obtaining mark outs for various reasons including public and private infrastructures.*
- *Gave locations where plantings have been completed.*
- *The state has been responsive to substitution requests because of plant materials being unavailable in local nurseries.*
- *Gave schedule of upcoming planting sites.*
- *Inspections of planting materials are being performed for good quality and proper handling as supplies arrive.*
- *Revealed state representatives will be carrying out inspections periodically throughout the project; explained that the state will ultimately be reimbursing the township through the grant process.*

- *Meeting held with the stakeholders and contractor resulted in conflict with previously approved locations including school property; not sure if it was result of the school district not understanding the limitations that would be placed on them.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Briefly explained the strategy that took 18 months to develop. Questioned the additional soft costs as a result of one of the previously approved properties changing the plan.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *Does not have an immediate answer to the additional soft costs due to not being able to identify where new sites will be located; depends on the number of sites and additional plans that need to be revised and resubmitted to the state for approval.*

*Frank Corrado:*

- *Questioned the ability of the school district to dismiss previous agreement if they signed off on a plan prior.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *School district is a cooperating partner.*
- *Is not aware of plantings being mandatorily required to be accepted.*
- *Cannot speak on behalf of the internal process the county and school district went through; process was no different that the process that was taken with the township.*
- *Identified potential sites; the county has been extremely cooperative in trying to find alternative locations.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Does not believe moving trees is a big concern. Has an issue with whole sites who were previously approved having the option to refute their prior decision.*
- *Asked if every tree had to be planted due to the plan being a reforestation project.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *The grant is based on payment to the township for each tree planted; township does not necessarily have to plant every tree.*
- *Highlighted repercussions with the state and the grant of requesting to have fewer trees planted.*
- *Firm has worked very hard with the school to find locations within.*
- *Alternatives provided at High School are not feasible; the chances of success at alternative planting locations are marginal.*
- *Shares township's frustration; will quantify costs as soon as possible.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Explained original reason township consulted with the school district was due to the lack of locations available for plantings.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *Wouldn't say there are no locations for the remainder of trees.*
- *Orange flags on trees in parkway signify trees that are to be replaced.*
- *Recent developments in Rio Grande provide opportunity for some additional planting that were not evident when process was done initially.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Asked if anything on the bike path qualified.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *Explained the availability of tree planting along the bike path.*
- *Mentioned application made by Atlantic City Electric in regards to expanding the right-of-way on Railroad Avenue; proposal to plant that right-of-way.*
- *Discussion has been had on streets along the parkway in the Court House area where vegetative buffers can be planted to offset the visual impacts the Garden State project had.*

*Committeeman DeVico:*

- *Discussed with Mr. Lomax a couple days prior planting at the ends of the roads that were impacted by the Garden State project; plantings would act as walls or sound barriers. Natural way of working with residents in those areas. Would like to talk further with the solicitor about idea.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *Has revisited recreational areas where there may be some opportunity.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Questioned if Atlantic Cape Community College had been considered as a location.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *School was never engaged; a site that could be considered if it got to that point.*

*Committeeman DeVico:*

- *Asked if there was timeframe in which decisions had to be made by since the project is underway.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *Believes there is a one-year contract for the landscaper. Suspects there may be a planting next spring due to late bidding and awarding; forced fall planting.*
- *Explained why a later planting at sites such as Ockie Wisting and Cape Express would be beneficial.*
- *Would not be surprised if fall and spring plantings are scheduled; the state and the contractor are aware of possibility. Modification will have to be made to the grant timeline and maintenance period will also have to be extended.*

*Committeeman Donohue:*

- *Hates to see whole sites pull back.*

*Peter Lomax, Environmental Consultant:*

- *Frustrated but optimistic that a home will be found for the remainder of the trees; hopeful it will be done in a cost-effective manner.*
- *Spoke of Arbor Day. The township has a Community Forestry Management Program which established a five-year plan in 2010; currently in the renewal process.*
- *Gave overview of what the last plan provided.*
- *Stated the new plan will accommodate the No Net Loss Project and will establish goals related to reforestation.*
- *The celebration of Arbor Day has traditionally been a part of the community management forestry's plans; helps the town with Sustainable Jersey points.*
- *Celebration has currently been consistent for three to four years.*
- *Mentioned Kim Krauss has been very helpful with getting Elementary #1 lined up for the event; on April 28<sup>th</sup> at 10am they have arranged a short assembly for the school children and will distribute trees for planting which will contain a card that identifies the township.*
- *The firm enjoys being a part of the festivities.*

**ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:****DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS AND PROJECT UPDATES:****Administration:****Finance:****Public Works & Engineering:****Legal:****Tax Collection/Tax Assessment:****Construction/Planning/Zoning:****Recreation:****Police / Animal Control/ Code Enforcement:****Buildings and Grounds:****Sewer:****Economic Development:****Personnel:****Zoning:****Township Clerk:****PUBLIC COMMENT:***Michael Linz, Deputy EMS Chief:*

- *Six trees planted at Marilyn Cove; welcomed site for planting; had been trying to get the township to do something with it. Questioned if the residents could apply mulch or edge the property.*

*Peter Lomax:*

- *Believes the township has the discretion to mulch or edge the property but most likely after the two-year maintenance period the contractor is responsible for expires.*

Motion to Adjourn Meeting – 4:35pm

1<sup>st</sup>: Committeeman DeVico

2<sup>nd</sup>: Committeemember Donohue

Roll Call Vote: Committeeman DeVico, Committeeman Donohue, Mayor Clark

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Kimberly D. Krauss, Township Clerk