

TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM
MEETING OF THE BYRAM TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
10 Mansfield Drive, Stanhope NJ 07874
Monday, January 13, 2025, 7:00 P.M.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84749389399?pwd=YKGRb3JttRVjbQPaVVvCSaKEy8dmUe.1>

Meeting ID: 847 4938 9399 **Passcode:** 370392

Dial by your location: +1 646 518 9805 US (New York) OR +1 267 831 0333 US (Philadelphia)

The public will have an opportunity to comment at appropriate times during the meeting. The following is the agenda to the extent known:

- **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

- **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT**

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting has been electronically sent to the newspapers, posted on the bulletin board of the Municipal Building, and uploaded to Byram's website, www.byramtp.org not less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. In addition, a copy of this notice is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

- **NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICECHAIR OF OS COMMITTEE**

- **ROLL CALL**

- **OS FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT**

1. Reserve for Open Space: \$397,252.63
2. Reserve for Debt Service: -\$18,068.14

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** –December 9 2024 Minutes

- **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Forest Stand Improvements
2. Invasive species and controlled burn discussion
3. Project funding priorities (Open Space Tax)
4. 2025 Goals

- **MEMBER REPORTS** – Reports from members on actions by their committees pertinent to OS.

- **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

- **CLOSED SESSION**

- **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE COMMITTEE DEEMS NECESSARY**

- **ADJOURNMENT**

2025 Open Space Meeting Dates:

- February 10th
- March 10th
- April 14th
- May 12th
- June 9th
- July 14th
- August 11th
- September 8th
- October 13th
- November 10th
- December 8th

17-286-56-000-001 Reserve - Open Space

From 01/01/2024 to 12/31/2024

Date	Source	PO#	Contract#	Check #	Vendor #	Vendor/Description	Budget	Debit	Credit	PO Encumber	PO Payment	Balance (CR)
ACTIVITY/BALANCE (YEAR START)							-			88,299.87		360,435.56
1/ 1/2024	GJ 71					To adjust Open Space Debt Service for CY Allocation.		20,468.13				339,967.43
1/10/2024	DJ 12	27521		8086	3783	GREEN VALLEY GROUP, INC. INV#DRAWDOWN #1 DRAWDOWN #1				(43,238.78)	43,238.78	339,967.43
1/31/2024	RJ 1038					January 2024 Interest			2,040.12			342,007.55
2/21/2024	DJ 456			7687	649	HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, Check Lost in Mail		(1,267.00)				343,274.55
2/28/2024	ENC	28390				To reissue check #7687 issued 10/18/23 lost i				1,267.00		342,007.55
2/29/2024	RJ 1039					February 2024 Interest			1,862.92			343,870.47
3/ 6/2024	DJ 486	28390		8384	649	HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, INV#78182 To reissue check #7687 issued 10/18/23 lost i				(1,267.00)	1,267.00	343,870.47
3/12/2024	ENC	28441				PREPARE REPORTS/MEMOS				425.25		343,445.22
3/20/2024	DJ 626	28441		8448	649	HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, INV#79397 PREPARE REPORTS/MEMOS				(425.25)	425.25	343,445.22
3/31/2024	RJ 1040					March 2024 Interest			1,997.54			345,442.76
4/30/2024	RJ 1619					April 2024 Interest			1,937.14			347,379.90
5/22/2024	DJ 1470	27521		8729	3783	GREEN VALLEY GROUP, INC. INV#DRAWDOWN #2 DRAWDOWN #2				(40,682.07)	40,682.07	347,379.90
5/22/2024	ENC	27521				(Increased) CHANGE ORDER #2 - APPROVED 05/21/				1,293.52		346,086.38
5/31/2024	RJ 1928					May 2024 Interest			1,950.08			348,036.46
6/30/2024	RJ 2084					June 2024 Interest			1,772.77			349,809.23
7/ 3/2024	DJ 1836	27521		8948	3783	GREEN VALLEY GROUP, INC. INV#FINAL DRAWDOWN FINAL DRAWDOWN				(1,712.67)	1,712.67	349,809.23
7/31/2024	RJ 2629					July 2024 Interest			1,765.40			351,574.63
8/ 7/2024	ENC	29201				QPA SERVICES FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF REHABILIT				4,350.00		347,224.63
8/31/2024	RJ 3156					August 2024 Interest			1,772.76			348,997.39
8/31/2024	GJ 172					To record 2024 Tax Levy.			110,430.00			459,427.39
9/16/2024	ENC	27510				To Cancel Balance - Project Complete.				(9.87)		459,437.26
9/30/2024	RJ 3866					September 2024 Interest			1,723.20			461,160.46
10/ 2/2024	DJ 2678	29201		9363	2829	THE CANNING GROUP, LLC INV#2024-03 QPA SERVICES FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF REHABILIT				(4,350.00)	4,350.00	461,160.46
10/22/2024	ENC	29585				IMPROVEMENTS TO CO JOHNSON PARK FIELD #8 - AP				56,650.51		404,509.95

17-286-56-000-001 Reserve - Open Space

From 01/01/2024 to 12/31/2024

Date	Source	PO#	Contract#	Check #	Vendor #	Vendor/Description	Budget	Debit	Credit	PO Encumber	PO Payment	Balance (CR)
10/22/2024	ENC	29586				PRECONSTRUCTION MEETING				884.50		403,625.45
10/22/2024	ENC	29587				DRAFT MISCELLANEOUS				1,053.63		402,571.82
10/31/2024	RJ 3868					October 2024 Interest			1,601.05			404,172.87
10/31/2024	GJ 188					To record Added/Omitted Bills.			385.12			404,557.99
11/ 7/2024	DJ 2881	29586		9463	649	HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, INV#81229 PRECONSTRUCTION MEETING				(884.50)	884.50	404,557.99
11/ 7/2024	DJ 2883	29587		9464	649	HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, INV#81230 DRAFT MISCELLANEOUS				(1,053.63)	1,053.63	404,557.99
11/30/2024	RJ 4138					November 2024 Interest			1,549.06			406,107.05
12/ 6/2024	ENC	29802				SOIL EROSION/SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN				2,011.25		404,095.80
12/ 6/2024	ENC	29803				PROJECT ADMINISTRATE				6,086.64		398,009.16
12/ 6/2024	ENC	29812				DISPOSAL OF PLAYGROUND MULCH				770.00		397,239.16
12/ 6/2024	ENC	29813				11/19/2024 - COJ PARK DEMOLITION - DISPOSAL O				2,112.50		395,126.66
12/10/2024	ENC	28233				(Line Added) BH 6FT 13GA HD U POST				109.80		395,016.86
12/12/2024	ENC	29832				DISPOSAL OF PLAYGROUND - CLEAN CONCRETE 12" M				347.60		394,669.26
12/12/2024	ENC	29839				12/09/2024 - OPEN SPACE MEETING VIA ZOOM				140.00		394,529.26
12/18/2024	DJ 3293	29812		9667	2212	AG CHOICE, LLC INV#241122-33 DISPOSAL OF PLAYGROUND MULCH				(770.00)	770.00	394,529.26
12/18/2024	DJ 3338	29802		9700	649	HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, INV#81484 SOIL EROSION/SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN				(2,011.25)	2,011.25	394,529.26
12/18/2024	DJ 3339	29803		9701	649	HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, INV#81483 PROJECT ADMINISTRATE				(6,086.64)	6,086.64	394,529.26
12/18/2024	DJ 3368	28233		9722	934	LOWE'S BUSINESS ACCOUNT INV#220963506 CIP GRANT - CO PLAYGROUND DEMO - BH 6FT 13GA				(109.80)	109.80	394,529.26
12/18/2024	DJ 3410	29813		9753	1468	SCMUA INV#8098 11/19/2024 - COJ PARK DEMOLITION - DISPOSAL O				(2,060.00)	2,060.00	394,529.26
12/18/2024	DJ 3410	29813		9753	1468	SCMUA INV#8130 11/25/2024 - COJ PARK DEMOLITION - DISPOSAL O				(52.50)	52.50	394,529.26
12/18/2024	GJ 249					Improvement Authorization Cancelled - R #224-2024.			5,046.95			399,576.21
12/27/2024	ENC	29889				PROJECT MANAGEMENT				2,905.50		396,670.71
12/27/2024	ENC	29890				PROJECT MANAGEMENT				793.00		395,877.71
12/31/2024	RJ 4204					December 2024 Interest			1,374.92			397,252.63
							-	19,201.13	137,209.03	(23,513.26)	104,704.09	397,252.63

17-286-56-000-001 Reserve - Open Space

From 01/01/2024 to 12/31/2024

Date	Source	PO#	Contract#	Check #	Vendor #	Vendor/Description	Budget	Debit	Credit	PO Encumber	PO Payment	Balance (CR)
							-	19,201.13	137,209.03	64,786.61	104,704.09	397,252.63

17-286-56-000-002 Reserve - Open Space (Debt Service)

From 01/01/2024 to 10/01/2024

Date	Source	PO#	Contract#	Check #	Vendor #	Vendor/Description	Budget	Debit	Credit	PO Encumber	PO Payment	Balance (CR)
ACTIVITY/BALANCE (YEAR START)							-					23,863.73
1/ 1/2024	GJ 71					To adjust Open Space Debt Service for CY Allocation.		20,468.13				44,331.86
3/26/2024	ENC	28507				SEMI-ANNUAL INTEREST PAYMENT - 2005 OPEN SPAC				1,200.00		43,131.86
4/ 1/2024	DJ 733	28507		2024022	2868	THE DEPOSITORY TRUST COMPANY INV#04/01/24 SEMI-ANNUAL INTEREST PAYMENT - 2005 OPEN SPAC			(1,200.00)		1,200.00	43,131.86
9/12/2024	ENC	29357				PRINCIPAL PAYMENT - 2005 OPEN SPACE BOND				60,000.00		(16,868.14)
9/12/2024	ENC	29358				SEMI-ANNUAL INTEREST PAYMENT - 2005 OPEN SPAC				1,200.00		(18,068.14)
10/ 1/2024	DJ 2601	29357		2024081	2868	THE DEPOSITORY TRUST COMPANY INV#10/01/24 PRINCIPAL PAYMENT - 2005 OPEN SPACE BOND			(60,000.00)		60,000.00	(18,068.14)
10/ 1/2024	DJ 2602	29358		2024082	2868	THE DEPOSITORY TRUST COMPANY INV#10/01/24 SEMI-ANNUAL INTEREST PAYMENT - 2005 OPEN SPAC			(1,200.00)		1,200.00	(18,068.14)
							-	-	20,468.13	-	62,400.00	(18,068.14)
							-	-	20,468.13	-	62,400.00	(18,068.14)

OPEN SPACE MEETING – December 9 2024

Members Present: Mayor Rubenstein, Messrs. Morytko, Sabatini, Duch, Bogardus, Dlugos, Mr. Esposito
Also present: Forester Heather Gracie, Secretary Caitlin Phillips

Mayor Rubenstein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OS Financial Status Report:

Reserve for OS- \$400,848.62 / Reserve for Debt Service- \$18,068.14

Mr. Sabatini said they paid off the debt but the deficit information is being worked on. Mayor Rubenstein confirmed that number is now negative. Mr. Sabatini said the playground funds will come from the Open Space, with the work being mainly engineering costs. They have started installing the equipment, and will do the surfacing in the spring because of the temperature. Mr. Sabatini will check in with Mr. Stoner about the tennis courts.

Approval of Minutes – October 7 2024 Minutes

Mr. Dlugos motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Bogardus. All in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Forest Management

Mr. Sabatini said he asked Ms. Gracie to join this meeting to provide a status. For the timber sale, they had one bidder so she determined it was best to hold off on this. Ms. Gracie said the number was low, and other bidders are busy and their operations can't take place because of the fire risk. The bid last year was around \$15,000 and this one is less. Mr. Duch confirmed this is for Glenside Woods. Ms. Gracie confirmed this would be for about 150 trees. Mr. Duch asked how to get more bidders. Ms. Gracie said there are few people left doing this work, and they are already saturated with work. They wouldn't be making any money bringing the logs to market right now.

Mr. Dlugos asked about harvesting the wood but not selling it. Ms. Gracie said that's what the Forest Stand Improvement is, which they're proposing for Cranberry Overlook. Mr. Sabatini said they did an FSI a few years ago in Glenside Woods. Ms. Gracie said there are 5 acres marked at Cranberry Overlook. Mr. Calderone is a mushroom grower who looks for smaller trees, and there is usually no charge for the tree removal. She understands the concern about ATVs on the property though, which would be used for the tree removal. Mr. Sabatini said there are concerns about having this done for free because that makes it a concession. There is also an issue with accessing the woods, since it's steep. Ms. Gracie said she reached out to a few others, and wants to get this work done in the winter. She will speak to Mr. Kelchner in her office tomorrow about the progress on this. Mr. Duch asked why not choose the person doing the work for free. Mr. Sabatini said they can talk to CAD for access to the area, and they would need the Council's involvement and would carry over to next year for the process. Usually, they keep the wood there instead of having it carried out. They can ask Mr. Collins about what's needed for a concession. Ms. Gracie said they can look at some sites together. Mr. Dlugos said Cranberry Overlook has less invasive species so may be good for volunteers. Mr. Sabatini said he wants the group to keep themselves open for grant funding, and to keep requirements for projects to a minimum. Mr. Dlugos said they can align the Environmental Commission's goals with the Open Space projects. Ms. Gracie said any projects started now would be for 2026, and they can submit the applications in the summer. She will send the bids over to the group. Mr. Morytko will send over the application for prescribed burnings.

NEW BUSINESS

2025 Planning and Goals

Mr. Morytko noted there's a lot of discussion about invasive species removal. Mayor Rubenstein wants to focus on the money in the Open Space fund. The Council worked with Mr. Sabatini for work at CO Johnson. They're looking to rehabilitate the fieldhouse, replace the football lights, and upgrade the announcer's stand. They are aiming for some grants. In the fieldhouse's upstairs, they want to have a civic center for meetings. The basement area they want only accessible from outside, and it would have a kitchen, bathrooms, and a large meeting space for sports groups. Mr. Dlugos said it will be good to have more meeting space.

Mr. Dlugos said the Environmental Commission is discussing goals at their next meeting. Invasive species is one, and they'd like to collaborate with the forester. Mayor Rubenstein said there was a DEP information session for grants; he will send the information about this. Mr. Esposito said taking care of the land important, it's not just about owning it. Mr. Dlugos asked if the Historical Society can help with any Lenape information. Mr. Sabatini recommended speaking with Andrea Proctor. He will talk to Mike about the Forest Management Plan. Mr. Morytko noted he'd like to visit the sites with Ms. Gracie to see what's needed for invasive species removal and controlled burns. Mr. Dlugos asked if they should consult with Ms. Gracie before coordinating any Environmental Commission volunteer projects. Mr. Sabatini said any work on Township property needs Council approval. It also depends on if they're digging things out and expect the DPW to help. They would also need to have Hold Harmless applications. He noted the budget for the Environmental Commission would come from the Open Space. He asked that the Open Space members reach out well before meetings for any project work. Mr. Duch said they should focus on important times of the year. Mr. Sabatini said Ms. Gracie should provide timelines for the projects. Mr. Dlugos asked about having a goal of hiring an Open Space consultant. Mr. Sabatini noted if they have a core group of volunteers, that may help with the Trails Committee. Mr. Duch noted that group should have input on the design of the trails. Mr. Sabatini said he can meet with Mr. Dlugos and his recommended consultant and report back at the next Open Space meeting.

MEMBER REPORTS

Mr. Bogardus said the Recreation updates were covered under Mr. Sabatini's playground update. Mr. Sabatini and Mayor Rubenstein are discussing budget questions at a workshop in January. Mr. Dlugos said when the group meets every two months, it's easy to forget what you need to do between the meetings. The Committee discussed changing the meeting schedule. Mr. Sabatini noted they could advertise for every month and then cancel meetings if there's nothing on the agenda. He talked about the capital improvement grants, and Mayor Rubenstein said the group should consider the Open Space tax and what they want to recommend to the Council. They should have a memo sent to the Council for why they'd want the tax increase and what the intent of the increase is. Mr. Morytko said he will put an outline together.

Mr. Duch asked if Field 8 is now just going to be a football field. Mr. Sabatini said it doesn't have the infrastructure for that and would be closed in the spring and summer if it's just a football field, and there is no proposed lighting.

Mr. Morytko confirmed the Open Space will have a special meeting in January on 01/13/2025, after the Council's first meeting, and they will do their reorganization then. Mr. Sabatini mentioned the affordable housing information with the group.

OPEN TO PUBLIC

No public was present.

ADJOURN –Motion by Mr. Duch, second by Mr. Dlugos, to adjourn the meeting at 9:35p.m. All members in favor. Motioned carried.

Open Space Minutes –December 9, 2024

Green Jeans Forestry, Inc

TO: Byram Township

FROM: Jordan Heller, Forester for Green Jeans Forestry, Inc

Date: 11/22/2024

Subject: Byram Township, "Cranbury Overlook", FSI

Below is a quote for cutting 255 trees marked with blue paint as part of an FSI operation. This operation will be conducted on a property identified as Block 226, Lot 2502 and 26 which is located off of Old Indian Spring Rd. The area marked for FSI is indicated in green on the attached map. The marked trees will be hand felled with tops lopped.

Quote: \$1,975.00.

A general service agreement will be provided if the owner chooses to move forward with the tree cutting.

A certificate of general liability insurance will be provided to the owner prior to the start of tree cutting.

Regards,

Jordan Heller

Green Jeans Forestry, Inc
PO Box 886, Pine Bush, NY 12566
845-489-0678
greenjeansforestry@gmail.com

*Providing Forest
Management Services
For Over 40 Years.*



210 Main Street PO Box 492 Gladstone, NJ 07934
T. 908.781.6711

Heather J. Gracie-Petty, CF
Christina L. Harrigan, CF
Steven W. Kalleser, CF
Alexander Kelchner, CF

Re: Byram Township Forest Thinning Project

This note is to confirm that Josh Burk received the project bid for the thinning of marked trees on the Byram Township property known as Cranbury Overlook. Josh communicated verbally that he is not interested in submitting a bid for the project.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Kelchner", written in a cursive style.

Alex Kelchner, CF

To whom it may concern

Our names are Jose and Lina Calderon, we do have a family-owned mushroom cultivation business located in Hampton Township NJ (15 Miles away in beautiful Sussex County). We are reaching out with interest in exploring a mutually beneficial partnership with the Township of Byram.

We have noticed that during the wood thinning process of your township lands/properties, many small-diameter hardwoods might not be ideal for typical timber applications and could be considered as residues or by-products and are left in the woods. Our company has a consistent need for such woods, specifically for our mushroom cultivation processes. These hardwoods provide an excellent substrate for many mushroom varieties we cultivate and can significantly enhance the quality and yield of our produce.

Our commitment to supporting local businesses and promoting sustainable practices has led us to approach you with this proposal. By partnering with us, not only would you be supporting a local family business, but you'd also be contributing to a sustainable and environmentally friendly solution for what might otherwise be considered waste material. Furthermore, you will be saving your residents money or could allocate those funds used to pay for logging into other township projects.

Proposal for Selective Tree Cutting in Town Forest Improvement Area

Introduction

This proposal outlines the benefits and methods for selectively cutting small-diameter trees in the town's 5-acre forest improvement area known as **Cranbury Overlook**. The initiative aims to responsibly remove certain trees to foster forest health, improve recreational aesthetics, and repurpose the timber to grow gourmet mushrooms like Shiitake and Lion's Mane. This activity aligns with sustainable forest management principles and will be conducted at no cost to the town, saving resources while contributing to environmental and local food production benefits.

Purpose of Selective Cutting and Mushroom Cultivation

The trees proposed for removal are small-diameter specimens that crowd the forest floor, competing for resources with larger, more mature trees. By selectively thinning these trees, we will:

1. **Enhance Forest Health:** Thinning allows for better light penetration, nutrient availability, and root expansion for remaining trees, fostering a healthier, more resilient forest ecosystem.
2. **Improve Recreational Aesthetics:** Removing smaller, densely packed trees improves the appearance and usability of this public recreational space, making it more enjoyable for town residents and visitors.
3. **Convert Timber into Sustainable Food:** Rather than discarding the cut trees, they will be used as substrate for cultivating gourmet mushrooms, contributing to the local food supply with nutritious and sustainable products.

Assurance of Ground Protection Using 4-Wheeled vehicles for Timber Extraction

The 4-wheeled vehicle (Quads) will be used with care and will play a vital role in minimizing the environmental impact of this project:

1. **Low-Impact Equipment:** Unlike heavy logging machinery, the quad is light, maneuverable, and possesses low impact tire treads reducing the risk of soil compaction and root disturbance. This ensures that the forest floor remains healthy and capable of sustaining plant growth.
2. **Efficiency and Reduced Ground Disturbance:** The quad allows us to transport logs swiftly and directly along planned routes, minimizing ground traffic and disturbance.
3. **Narrow Pathways and Precision:** By sticking to narrow, predetermined pathways, we can limit any potential disruption, leaving the vast majority of the forest floor untouched.

Benefits to the Town

1. **Cost Savings:** This project requires no financial investment from the town, saving costs typically associated with tree removal and cleanup. In commercial logging, the town would likely incur fees; our zero-charge approach alleviates this burden.
2. **Environmental Stewardship:** Responsible forest management prevents overcrowding and promotes biodiversity, which in turn supports wildlife habitats and encourages healthy ecosystems.
3. **Contribution to Local Food Supply:** Repurposing logs for mushroom cultivation provides a sustainable, nutritious, and locally produced food source. As demand for locally sourced food rises, this project highlights the town's commitment to sustainable agriculture and food security in addition to creating food independence from foreign mushrooms imports. Cranbury Overlook is poised to yield approximately 1200 to 1500 bolts (4 feet long logs), that could turn into 3-6 tons of mushrooms in a 4 year period (after as much labor and care).
4. **Educational and Economic Potential:** This project could open pathways for educational opportunities in sustainable agriculture and forestry management. Additionally, with successful yields, there may be potential for agrotourism, benefiting local businesses and enhancing the town's reputation for innovative, eco-friendly projects.

Logistics

1. Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters Inc. will mark the trees under the proposed 2024 Forest Stand (already completed)
2. A visit to the area will be made by our company and a representative from Gracie & Harrigan to determine the scope of the job and the approximate time to be completed.
3. The job will be scheduled and coordinated with foresters and town officials (should any announcements to the community or others need to be made prior to work initiation)
4. Job will be completed and the final walk through with forester will be executed.

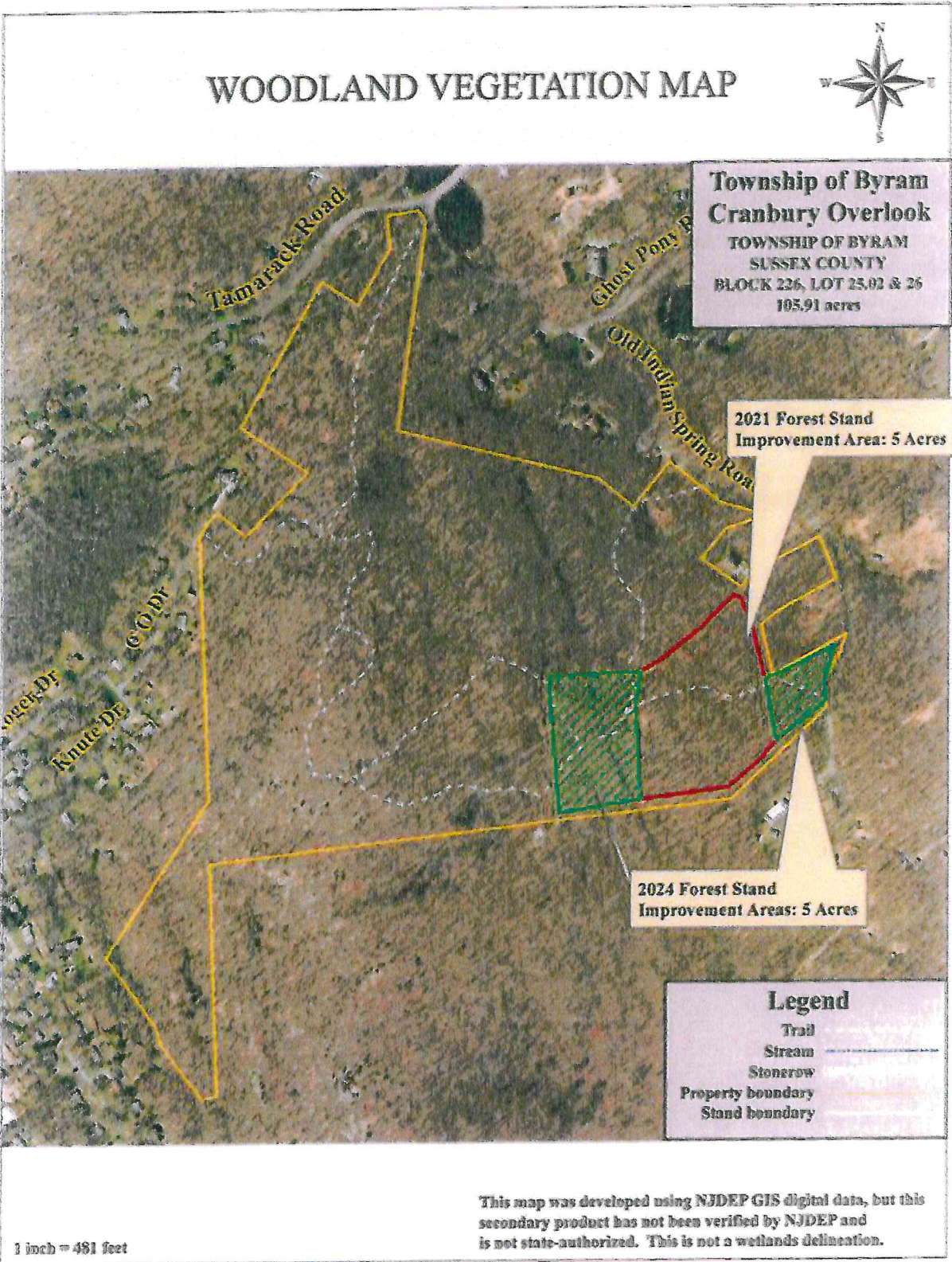
Conclusion

In summary, this proposal offers a sustainable solution to manage the town's forest improvement area, benefiting the ecosystem, enhancing the recreational experience, and adding value through mushroom cultivation—all at no expense to the town. Through careful planning and environmentally friendly practices, including the responsible use of a well identified 4 wheeled vehicles, we can ensure minimal disturbance while achieving positive outcomes for the community and environment.

Thank you for considering this proposal. We look forward to discussing its potential benefits with the town council and providing more information and examples of previous jobs performed, or the opportunity of a town official(s) to visit one of our current operations determining the viability of this proposal and foster future agreements.



Jose and Lina Calderon



TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM RESOLUTION NO. xxx-2025

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT A FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ON
THE OPEN SPACE PARCELS KNOWN AS THE CRANBERRY OVERLOOK**

WHEREAS, the Byram Township Open Space Committee requested the Township's forester, Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters Inc., to request quotes for a forest stand improvement program for Byram Township on the open space parcels known as the Cranberry Overlook (Block 226, Lot 26 and Block 226, Lot 25.02); and

WHEREAS, Chapter 212 – Tree Preservation of Township's code has an exemption for parcels of land with a forest management plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township's Forest Stewardship Plan references forest stand improvement on the referenced properties; and

WHEREAS, Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters Inc. has presented the Open Space Committee with three quotes as summarized below; and

- Green Jeans Forestry, Inc. - \$1,975
- Josh Burk - No quote.
- Jose Calderon - No Cost with the removal of the trees.

WHEREAS, all quotes received are below the Township's bid threshold of \$17,500 and the quotes threshold of \$2,625; and

WHEREAS, all work shall be done under the direction and supervision of Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters, Inc., who will be in full charge of work including the marking of trees, providing oversight of the tree cutting and working with the vendor for any required restoration as outlined in the proposal form Jose Calderon dated November 11, 2024; and

WHEREAS, special care will be taken to avoid any environmental damage to potential wetlands or other environmentally sensitive areas; and

WHEREAS, Jose Calderon agrees to carry and provide a certificate of insurance indicating they have adequate public liability insurance and property damage insurance that will remain in effect during the time of the proposed work in the amounts and types of insurance as follows; and

- General liability limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage with at least \$2,000,000 general aggregate. Contractual liability must be included.

- Automobile liability limits of \$500,000.00 per occurrence combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage with no aggregate.
- Workers Compensation at Statutory limits
- Employers Liability at minimum limits of \$500,000.
- Umbrella liability limits of \$4,000,000 are strongly recommended, sitting excess of the General Liability, Automobile Liability and Employers Liability coverages.

WHEREAS, the Open Space Committee is recommending the Mayor and Council support the recommended work as outlined; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have approved Resolution No. 022-2025 – Authorizing Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters, Inc., to Provide Various Forest Stewardship Services for the 2025 Season; and

WHEREAS, the funds are available in Open Space Trust Fund to cover the expenses of Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters, Inc.; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township of Byram, County of Sussex and State of New Jersey that it hereby authorizes Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters Inc., and Jose Calderon to complete the forest stand improvement program on the open space parcels known as the Cranberry Overlook.

Below is a draft memo from the Open Space Committee to the Township Council expressing support for maximizing the available Open Space Tax by increasing the assessment to the full \$0.02 / \$100. The memo also supports the projects at COJ that we discussed at our last meeting and also expresses a need to establish a process by which to evaluate Open Space funding requests/needs and project year to year the dollars available for funding priorities.

This is a draft for discussion purposes at our 1/13/25 meeting.

DRAFT MEMO FOR COMMENT:

The Open Space Trust Fund has seen increased expenditures in support of a broad range of projects in town. The result has been improvements for passive recreation, active recreation, and historic assets. The Open Space Trust Fund was established, by resident referendum, to raise funds dedicated and restricted to these types of projects. The most recent Open Space and Recreation Plan has highlighted a number of significant priorities across the Open Space spectrum.

The Open Space Committee's most recent Open Space and Recreation Plan highlighted significant priorities throughout the township related to land stewardship and recreation purposes (both active and passive). Residents of the town, via survey, have expressed substantial support for investment in our Open Space/Recreation assets.

As the Council considers funding for significant projects at C.O. Johnson Park, the Open Space Committee has 5 recommendations to ensure the Open Space Trust Fund is adequately funded and resident dollars are well stewarded in the years ahead.

The Committee recommends:

- 1. Proceeding with improvements at C.O. Johnson including the rehabilitation and renovation of the fieldhouse at C.O. Johnson Park, replacement of the lights at the football field, and the replacement of the announcer stand. Each of these projects is well overdue. The Fieldhouse has the potential to be a wonderful community asset for all residents.*
- 2. Clear communication and collaboration on the potential use and/or encumberment by bond of Open Space Trust Funds for these and other projects.*

3. *Maximizing the available annual Open Space Trust Fund revenue by increasing the assessment to the full \$0.02 per \$100. The town may collect up to \$0.02 per \$100 of assessed valuation of each annual tax levy. The current assessment is \$0.01. The ordinance states the Township Council shall determine the amount of the tax levy each year by resolution.*
4. *Continued commitment to a diversified use of the Open Space Trust that includes passive and active recreation, stewardship of our undeveloped lands, and support for our historical assets.*
5. *Empower the Committee to draft a process for the Council's consideration to address two major points:*
 1. *A process by which projects requesting Open Space Trust Fund dollars are reviewed by this committee with subsequent recommendation and commentary provided to the Council.*
 2. *A recommendation to the Council for the allocation of Open Space Trust funding by category (including a reserve fund). By ordinance, the Open Space Committee "shall state the amount of funds that the Committee shall make available for such acquisition, development, maintenance, and/or preservation."*

From: Peter Dolan <pdoian@nvnitc.org>
Date: Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 4:18 PM
Subject: [EXT] RE: Thank you!
To: Peter Dlugos <pdlugos@bergen.edu>, Joseph Sabatini <jsabatini@byramtwp.org>

Hello Peter and Joe,

Good conversation today! Below are my notes on one possible course of action. I think that a measured approach with a plan, map, and workshops in place *before* discussing trail adoption will lay the foundation for a much more successful long-term outcome.

- **Step 1: Trail Planning**
 - Trail Conference staff walk and assess all trails, expanding upon content in the existing Trail Plan with more actionable recommendations for physical trail improvements. This would include potential new connector trails to introduce more utility to the network, such as new loop hike opportunities, all presented in a single **Trail Recommendations document**.
- **Step 2: Updated Mapping**
 - Based on GPS information collected in Step 1, the Trail Conference can **produce a unified trail map of the full Byram area** (combining all previous maps, such as those produced by TLC-NJ) and make it **available on [the Avenza app](#)**. QR codes can be posted at trailheads to connect the public with these digital maps.
- **Step 3: Volunteer Training**
 - Run trail construction and maintenance [Trail U workshops](#) to recruit and train local volunteers, while also accomplishing project goals identified in the Trail Recommendations document.
- **Step 4: Trail Adoption**
 - Once we have a Trail Recommendations document, interactive and complete trail map, and a body of trained volunteers, we can discuss potential for **Trail Conference adoption** as a long-term volunteer management and trail maintenance solution.

Let me know what you think, and if you would like me to draft a more detailed proposal/budget for steps 1-3 above.

Look forward to continuing the conversation when I return in late January,

Peter Dolan (He/Him)

Trail Program Manager