

## Land Use, Climate Impacts & Sustainability Committee Meeting

This meeting was conducted remotely.  
All participants were present via Zoom conference.

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8LcdSEsr3c>

### Minutes March 17, 2021

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Chairman Mark Lohbauer, Edward Lloyd and Shannon Higginbotham

**STAFF PRESENT:** Executive Director Nancy Wittenberg, Susan Grogan, John Bunnell, Ernest Deman, Gina Berg, Chuck Horner, Branwen Ellis, Stacey Roth and Paul Leakan

**Governor's Authority Unit:** Rudy Rodas

1. **Call to Order at 9:33 a.m.**
2. **Adoption of the January 20, 2020 Committee meeting minutes**
  - The Committee did not have a quorum, so the minutes will be considered for adoption during a future meeting.
3. **Discussion of recommendations for a new round of land acquisition using the Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF).**

Pinelands Commission Resource Planner Gina Berg delivered a PowerPoint presentation, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/presentations/March%202021%20PCF%20UPDATE.pdf>

#### – Permanent Land Protection

Ms. Berg provided a brief background on the fund. At this time, the Commission is suggesting a revision in the priorities for the new round of funding.

Stacey Roth, Chief of Legal and Legislative Affairs, provided an overview of the 2019 Amendment to 2004 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA).

Ms. Berg continued with her presentation, noting that \$1 million would be allocated in the next round of land acquisitions. She discussed the schedule and the draft priorities for land acquisitions, while detailing a draft Project Evaluation Matrix.

Chairman Lohbauer asked why Carbon Sequestration is ranked at a low level on the Project Evaluation Matrix. Planner Director Grogan stated that this matrix is targeted to make sure projects with grassland habitat rank highest due to the Commission's obligation under the SJTA MOA. She said adjustments can be made to the matrix.

Commissioner Lloyd stated he agrees with Commissioner Lohbauer, noting that carbon sequestration should always be a priority. He asked about wildfire hazard mitigation and its relationship with Climate Change Mitigation on the matrix. Ms. Berg explained that the mitigation issues are about human loss.

Committee members and the staff then discussed the edits that should be made to the matrix.

#### **4. Forest Management -Chairman Lohbauer introduced:**

- Leslie Sauer, author, founder of Andropogon Associates and founding board member of the Northeast Region of the Society for Ecological Restoration. Ms. Sauer delivered a presentation on “Climate Change, Fire and Forestry.”

The full presentation can be viewed at:

<https://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/home/presentations/Pinelands%20317%20pdf.pdf>

- John Cecil, Vice President for Stewardship, New Jersey Audubon Society, who delivered a presentation on “Forest Conservation in the New Jersey Pinelands.

The full presentation can be viewed at:

<https://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/home/presentations/NJ%20Pinelands%20Forests%2017Mar2021.pdf>

Following the presentations, committee members and staff asked the presenters several questions.

#### **5. Consideration of LUCIS Committee name change – Chairman Lohbauer**

Chairman Lohbauer suggested that the name of the Committee should reflect the Committee’s purpose and what it does. He recommended changing the name of committee to the Climate Action Committee. Several Commissioners who were present agreed with the suggestion. Action cannot be taken at this time due to not having a quorum, so the possible name change will be considered at a future meeting.

#### **6. Public comment**

William Zipse of the New Jersey Forest Service said he appreciated the discussions. He offered forest service analysis, data and tools. Chairman Lohbauer invited Mr. Zipse to deliver a presentation to the Commission.

Bernard Isaacson of the New Jersey Forest Service spoke of meaning of the word “sequestration.” He discussed the pool of carbon and the flux of carbon. He said old forests have a larger carbon pool but a smaller carbon flux, whereas a young forest has a smaller carbon pool and a larger carbon flux. He spoke of forests versus trees and muck soils in the Pinelands.

Margo Pellegrino asked about illegal, off-road vehicle use and disrupting soils. She

expressed concern over pipeline spills and accountability. She is also interested in land preservation efforts.

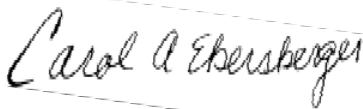
Georgina Shanley said New Jersey is in climate crisis mode and carbon sequestration should be the highest priority. She noted her concerns about Assembly Bill 4846, proposed by Assemblyman Ronald S. Dancer.

Rhyan Grech of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance expressed concerns about forests that could be cut down to create grassland habitat. She questioned why the Commission is only looking at properties near the Atlantic City Airport using the funds coming from SJTA. She said the presentations were excellent. She commented on the fire break issue that was brought up by Leslie Sauer. She said that presentations by John Cecil are on large-scale data, but do not get down to the microlevel that we need in the Pinelands. She stated there was a study done by KI Clark Journal of Sustainable Forestry, 2015, "Fire Management and Carbon Sequestration in Pine Barrens Forest." She said the study demonstrated that all the carbon released during a fire is recovered in two to three years in a pine barrens system. Chairman Lohbauer responded to the consideration of properties that are in close proximity to airport. The Commission was trying to facilitate the creation of new habitat for the displaced grassland bird population.

Commissioner Lloyd said he is interested in knowing what off-road vehicle use does to soil retention and carbon in the Pinelands. He asked if Ms. Grech could send a citation to the article she referenced.

Chairman Lohbauer moved the adjournment of the meeting. Commissioner Higginbotham seconded the motion and all agreed. The meeting adjourned at 12:46 PM.

Minutes submitted as true and correct.



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Carol A. Ebersberger  
Business Specialist

Date: April 1, 2021