



Hunterdon County Democrat

Tinicum OKs \$200,000 more to preserve open space

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By Kevin J. Guhl

Tinicum Township supervisors have given preliminary approval to spend over \$200,000 of open-space funds to purchase the development rights to two properties in Ottsville. Following public comment, supervisors will vote in November on final approval for purchase of the easements, which would prevent future development on the properties.

The township will spend \$51,450 to acquire the development rights to 21 acres of Michael Goroff and Jill Friedlander's 26-acre property on Hollow Horn Road. The price is 35 percent of the appraised value of the development rights, plus closing costs.

The property is next to several other preserved properties and will bring the preserved area along Hollow Horn and Oak Grove Roads to 100 acres, right on the edge of Ottsville where developers have been looking to develop the Route 611 corridor, said Norm MacArthur of the Open Space Commission.

"It extends open meadows and a wooded area just outside the Tohickon Creek Watershed," said MacArthur. "There's good wetlands that will be preserved and a very beautiful 19th century farmhouse."

The township is also looking to buy the development rights to 39 areas of the 60-acre Camp Onas campground on Geigel Hill Road.

The proposed township purchase price of 50 percent of the appraised value of the development rights is \$151,125, plus closing costs.

To pay for the easement, there is also a \$30,000 grant through the Tinicum Conservancy and \$90,000 in Pennsylvania DCNR funding.

MacArthur said, "Camp Onas is on the Tinicum Watershed and therefore a priority one area in terms of township and county preservation."

The supervisors had previously approved over \$75,000 to purchase the Camp Onas easement but about \$15,000 in Bucks County natural areas funds that were expected did not come as funding ran dry, said MacArthur.

MacArthur said that temporary tents will still be allowed on the protected property.

Tinicum has less than \$300,000 left of the \$5 million bond for open space preservation bond that voters approved in November 2002, said MacArthur,

Meanwhile, nearly \$1 million more would be needed for easements in the pipeline and three to four million to pay for easements for property owners interested in the open space program.

The supervisors have also been seeking land for use as a park but have not found "the right property and a willing landowner, said MacArthur.

The Open Space Commission has been asked by the supervisors to draft a new open-space bond question, for \$5 million or more, that will likely go on the May 2007 ballot.

MacArthur said there will likely be 3,000 acres of the 19,000-acre township preserved by the end of the year through the open-space program, and that doesn't include 4,500 acres of protected gamelands and parklands.

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