

Trails, Open Space and Stewardship Advisory Committee Minutes

November 5, 2025

Attendance:

- Dave Mizenko, Chair
- Dave Bosted
- Jim Hooker
- Jeff Lang
- Laura Lynch
- Michael Meriney
- Matt Potts, Secretary
- Mayor Patricia Hendricks Farmer, Committee Liaison

Absent:

- John Emmons
- Paul Larson

Also in attendance were interested members of the Community.

Meeting called to order at 7:36 pm by Dave Mizenko.

Meeting Discussion:

- All present in the meeting introduced themselves.
- The Committee approved the minutes recorded for the meeting from October 2025.
- Public Participation:
 - Attendee stated that Eric Puliti sent council an email, with copies to committee chairs and the township manager, regarding a lot near Harney's Corner, on the south side of Princeton Pike and adjacent (at the part of the lot distant from the road) to Slackwood Park. The Township proposes to vacate the rectangular area of the lot fronting Princeton Pike to Harney's Corner Auto Body, also adjacent to the lot. An ordinance approving the transfer is scheduled for a second vote, and approval, at the November 6 council meeting.
 - Mr. Puliti in his email asks if the township has undertaken what he considers due diligence in considering the transfer.
 - The Committee is in full agreement that the land should not be vacated and instead should be made part of Slackwood Park to maintain its status as open space and as a right-of-way between Princeton Pike and Brunswick Pike.
 - The Committee instructed the chair to make our position and rationale known to the council.
- Regarding a forthcoming meeting with the Mayor and Township Manager:
 - Dave M. et al are in the process of arranging that meeting to discuss this Committee's current priorities.
 - The meeting would be followed up with a formal presentation at a future Town Council meeting.
- Following up on the potential Princess Rd—D&R Canal Connector trail, township engineer James Parvesse has agreed to walk the route with the committee in early January. Dave M. will inform members of the date, and will also invite the D&R Canal State Park superintendent to the walk.

- Members of this Committee and the Mayor walked the potential trail network through the Bossio-Salt Preserve and the Armory Woods. The group agreed that the trail network would be a great asset to residents and could be done in phases, starting with trails on the township owned preserve.
- Tree lined bike path along Lawrence Station Road:
 - Dave B. revived the idea of a tree shaded bike path along the road's entire length.
 - The bikeway would connect to the D&R Canal towpath.
 - Laura supported the idea, and highlighted the safety challenges this roadway currently poses that newly established pathways would mitigate for cyclists and pedestrians.
 - Dave M. will work with Dave B on the proposal and report to the Committee.
- Committee membership:
 - Three members have terms expiring as of December 31: Dave B., John, and Jeff.
 - All have expressed interest in staying on with new terms.
 - The Committee endorsed having Dave M. and Matt continue their roles as Chair and Secretary, respectively, for 2026.
- Other Topics:
 - The Lawrence Shopping Center has applied to the Planning Board for approval of converting about half the area of the Burlington store, plus a surrounding area, to accommodate a Tractor Supply store.
 - This application will be considered by the Planning Board at their November 17 meeting.
 - The Environmental Green and Shade Tree Advisory Committees review and comment on Planning Board applications.
 - The application provides an opportunity to request a trail easement on the portion of the shopping center property that is south of Shabakunk Creek and between Shabakunk Park and US1B. This is the only privately owned property needed for a trail connecting Lawrence Rd to Colonial Lake Park along the Shabakunk.
 - The Committee's sentiment is that we should ask the shopping center to transfer or sell the area in question to the township as open space or, if not agreed to, allow the trail easement.
 - Dave M. will submit our asks to the chairs of the Environmental Green and Shade Tree Advisory Committees requesting their inclusion with their comments on the application.
 - Briefly discussed for awareness was the "From Rails to Trails" PBS special.
 - Dave B. described the special's positive content and advocacy.
 - Laura mentioned the Columbia Trail in North Jersey as an example of the rails to trails effort.
 - Per the meeting schedule for this Committee agreed to in prior meetings, we will next meet on February 4, 2026.

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm.