

NOTICE OF SCOPING HEARING FOR
PROPOSED DIVERSION OF COUNTY OPEN SPACE LAND
LOCATED AT 2501 LEADENHALL ROAD
MOUNT LAUREL, NEW JERSEY

In 2017, the Burlington County Board of County Commissioners (the "Board" or "County") acquired a 48-acre parcel of land in Mount Laurel Township located at 2501 Leadenhall Road (Block 509, Lot 1.03). The property is located in the development known as Bishop's Gate and is in the Industry zoning district.

Historically, the property has been in agricultural use. An agricultural lease was in place at the time of its acquisition, but that lease was terminated because of crop damage caused by white tailed deer. Approximately 13 acres of the property are mapped as wetlands, and 35 acres as uplands. Mapped wetlands are present on the eastern border of the site. The entire site is Rank 2 for Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat. The land is bounded by the New Jersey Turnpike on the south, and it is surrounded by commercial development on the north and east, and one residential property to the west. See the attached map.

Notwithstanding the County's plans for the recreational use of the land when it was purchased, following the date of its purchase, the land has remained vacant, with no public access, and it is not expected that these circumstances will change. Therefore, the Board wishes to dispose of the property.

Funds from the Burlington County Open Space, Recreation and Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund were used to acquire the property. In accordance with requirements of the State Green Acres Program and grant agreements between the Green Acres Program and the County, the Mount Laurel parcel was included on the County's Recreation and Open Space Inventory ("ROSI"). No Green Acres funds were used to acquire the property. A conservation easement was not placed on the deed to the parcel.

In order to use or dispose of the property for purposes other than recreation and conservation, the County must follow Green Acres Program regulations to obtain approval for what the regulations categorize as a "major diversion". N.J.A.C. 7:36-26.7.

The first step in the diversion process is to hold a "scoping hearing", to solicit public comment on the proposed diversion. Public input is requested on the following alternatives for the disposal of the land: no action, long-term lease, full disposal with sale to a private entity, partial disposal with the County retaining ownership to a portion of the property, and partial or full disposal with sale to a public entity.

The scoping hearing will be held on May 13, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m., at the Burlington County Engineer's Office, 1900 Briggs Road, in Mount Laurel.