

**Subject:** Recommendation to Fund the FoHVOS “Giardino” Application for \$149,963 (36% of AAV), with a not-to-exceed amount of \$168,030 (40% of AAV)

WHEREAS, the County has created the Mercer County Open Space Assistance Program (the “Program”) to provide funding for projects which are consistent with the goals of the Mercer County Open Space and Recreation Plan and local open space plans; and,

WHEREAS, one of the duties of the Open Space Preservation Board (the “Board”) is to provide recommendations to the County Executive regarding the Program); and,

WHEREAS, part of the Program’s policy includes providing a percentage of funds to assist municipalities and nonprofit preservation partners to aid in projects of local importance; and,

WHEREAS, Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space (FoHVOS) has requested assistance from the County in the amount of \$168,030, 40% of the Green Acres Average of Appraised Values (AAV), to aid in the acquisition of the Giardino property located at Block 40 Lot 19.03 in Hopewell Township off Cleveland Road; and,

WHEREAS, the FoHVOS application shows total public funds for the project will exceed the purchase price of the property by \$18,067, conflicting with the County’s program policy: “...In no event can total public funds, including State, County and local funding, exceed the purchase price;” now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board recommends a conditional approval, whereby Mercer County will fund the grant for \$149,963 (36% of AAV), so total public funding would match the purchase price of \$400,000, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if FoHVOS provides documentation from its other public funders that \$18,067 of their funding may be applied to ancillary costs and not purchase price, the Board recommends funding the full grant request of \$168,030, 40% of AAV.

DATE ADOPTED: Aug 14, 2024

SECRETARY:   
Cindy Taylor