

## PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Mayor's Office  
609-861-5301  
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### **BOROUGH OF WOODBINE AWARDS CONTRACT FOR OPEN SPACE ECO-PARK PHASE ONE**

**Woodbine**—Mayor William Pikolycky is pleased to announce that Borough Council, at its February 1 meeting, approved a contract in the amount of approximately \$700,000 for Phase One of its Open Space Eco-Park Project to Charlies Marandino, LLC.

A preconstruction meeting is scheduled for February 15 at 10 am to kick off this important project so that it will hopefully be ready for summer activities.

Funding for this project was received from the Cape May County Freeholders under the Open Space Program.

With the Open Space program funding, the Borough will be able to preserve a 25-acre wooded tract adjacent to the Woodbine Elementary School and develop a facility which includes active and passive recreation opportunities with a strong orientation towards environmental enrichment and enhancement of the area's ecological values as part of a campus already dedicated to education and recreation.

Major components of this project include environmental interpretative stations, fitness stations, walking trails, a general purpose field, pavilion, gazebo, bike racks, benches, picnic tables, and related amenities which will help to position Woodbine and the Cape May County Eco-Park and Recreation Area as a destination for cyclists, equestrians, and pedestrians. It will also serve as a setting for a "classroom in nature" for students and visitors who can appreciate the special qualities of this site.

It will not only enhance and expand opportunities for Borough residents but also for the many visitors who enjoy bicycling and hiking on the many State and National Trail Systems which converge in Woodbine and will eventually be part of the County-wide bikeway system. It will also link to other important resources such as Belleplain State Forest, and Cape May County's first instructional site of The Richard Stockton University of New Jersey at Anne Azeez Hall at the Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage The Eco-Park and Recreation Area is immediately adjacent to the Cape May County Library Branch and the Woodbine Community School, which includes our community indoor gymnasium.

This is the first phase of development of this 25-acre wooded track situated in the center of town and at the convergence of the Coastal Heritage Trail, High Point to Cape May Trail, the Bayshore Heritage Byway, and the Pine Barrens Byway.

“Currently we have a NJDOT bikeways project out to bid which will complement this project, bringing the total capital investment using County and State Grant funding to a total of \$1 million,” added Mayor Pikolycky. “This project would not have been possible without the support of the Cape May County Freeholders and Open Space Board who share in the Borough’s vision of creating an Eco-Park as part of the County Park System.”