



## News from the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Somerset County Closes on Purchase of Skillman Village Property

The Somerset County Board of Freeholders has acquired the Skillman Village property in Montgomery Township. The closing was held Oct. 25 with state, county and municipal officials in attendance.

The county bought the 247 acres from the township for \$64,438 per acre. The property was purchased by the Somerset County Improvement Authority with funds ultimately coming from the county's Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund, ensuring its ultimate use for recreation and conservation purposes. The Improvement Authority will hold title to the property initially and transfer ownership to the county at a later date.

"Through a collaborative effort with Montgomery Township, the county has preserved the Skillman Village property, an important addition to our open space program," said Freeholder Director Robert Zaborowski. "We look forward to continuing the collaboration with Montgomery in developing a passive-use county park that highlights the unique cultural and natural features of the property."

"This is a really great result for Montgomery," said Mayor Mark Caliguire. "Over the years we have seen proposals and plans that could have turned this site into a highly developed residential neighborhood. Instead, the dangerous and dilapidated buildings are gone, and we will see this place preserved as open space forever. I am also thrilled to hear that the county Park Commission has plans for work to preserve the trees on this site to take place on Dec. 3."

Montgomery Township Mayor Mark Caliguire signs the closing documents for Somerset County's purchase of the Skillman Village property from the township. Looking on, left to right, are Somerset County Freeholder Peter Palmer, Freeholder Deputy Director Patricia Walsh, state Sen. Christopher "Kip" Bateman and Montgomery Township Committeeman Ed Trzaska.



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**Robert Zaborowski, Freeholder Director • Patricia L. Walsh, Freeholder Deputy Director  
Peter S. Palmer, Freeholder • Jack M. Ciattarelli, Freeholder • Patrick Scaglione, Freeholder**  
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***Skillman Village – page 2 of 2***

Once known as the New Jersey Village for Epileptics, the facility evolved into a psychiatric facility in the 1950s and was called the North Princeton Developmental Center. The facility was closed by the State of New Jersey in the mid-1990s and the property was purchased by Montgomery Township from the state in 2007.

All of the buildings on the property have been demolished and substantial environmental cleanup has been completed.

Use and future development of the Skillman Village site will be limited to passive recreation, conservation, historic preservation or agricultural purposes, since funding is being provided through the trust fund dedicated to those purposes. The county and township will establish an advisory committee, with members appointed by the Freeholders and Township Committee, to develop a master plan incorporating stewardship of the land, potential recreation opportunities and facilities, and maintenance functions.

Parcels that were not part of the sale include the six-acre Maplewood House property; the one-acre Pine Knoll property; a half-acre lot to be used to reconfigure the Village Elementary School driveway; and the portion of the property that lies within the Burnt Hill Road right-of-way.

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