

## **Minutes for the Environmental Commission**

### **January 12, 2017**

The meeting commenced at 7:10 pm.

Members Present: Andreoli, Neufeld, Piel, Urbanski, Zuzov, Dale (TC liaison), Coyne, associate member.

Members excused: Beaumont, Clapp, Haug, Van der Veen

Minutes from November 10, 2016 were approved, with no changes.

No members of the public were in attendance for comment.

Oaths of Allegiance from Coyne and Piel were accepted.

**Testing of well water** for the residents was discussed. We are working in conjunction with Raritan Headwaters Association for this project, which we had last done in 2013. The flyer to the residents and its distribution was discussed, and its distribution via SHRHS list serve, handouts at the municipal depot on Saturdays, and inclusion on our website. Waiting for Dave B. and his contact with the school for the list serve approval.

Members decided that May 6-8 or May 20-22 would be good times for collection and return of water samples.

Cathy has been in touch with Raritan Headwaters and they (Mara Tippet) has volunteered to update our flyer with new costs for tests and our dates for collection.

Members requested that she also provide a phone # for residents to call with questions about the testing. We will wait to see if the dates requested were OK and then plan on our distribution of information.

Cathy had prepared an Environmental Commission Report of activities for 2016 for presentation to the Township Committee, as per our regulations. Members approved. Report follows:

#### **Environmental Commission Report of Activities for 2016**

Citizens Stormwater Advisory Committee: Art, Joan and Cathy were reappointed. The Chair provided the necessary Stormwater Education for Township Officials in 2016, with emphasis on stormwater projects for the municipal property.

319h grant for the Alexauken Creek: Multiyear project with many meetings, letters, and emails with the NJDEP and Princeton Hydro in 2016. The DEP had requested that we amend and modify the scope of work for the grant. Approval was given to the municipal property stormwater improvements (image above). We are still waiting for approval for the Kiriluk property.

Music Mountain (The Estates at West Amwell) median strip planting: The Commission worked with Sweet Valley Farms to design both ends and the middle of the strip. We requested tree/shrub/native grass plantings which were deer resistant, able to resist salt damage, tolerant of drought, able to thrive in a median strip with questionable soil, and were relatively easy to maintain.

Conservation Easement and Deed Restricted Lands Map: Updated. Map is on display in the main meeting room.

Presentation by Kevin Carroll, "The Compost Man": Kevin spoke about his business, which would involve composting and kitchen waste collection for the West Amwell Township area households and businesses for a fee of \$240 per year. After considerable discussion, Commission members agreed that we should not, as a Commission or Township, do anything to promote a specific business venture.

Stormwater educational material for residents: Designed and printed for insertion with tax bills.

Mara Tippet, our current Watershed Ambassador: Mara presented an overview of Raritan Headwaters watershed management and well water testing program. Members decided to again offer water testing to the residents in the spring of 2017.

Emerald Ash borer: The Sourland Conservancy and Sourland Alliance requested our assistance with the serious problem of the Emerald Ash borer, possibly using biological controls. Maps and recommendations were sent to the Sourland Alliance, agreeing that they pursue biological controls on the Green Acres, NJDEP owned property (the former Lambertville Water Co), as it is a large tract with many ash trees and borers have been confirmed nearby.

Soil Removal Ordinance: The Commission updated and amended the ordinance for clarification as requested by the Planning Board engineer. This was adopted by the Township Committee on November 2, 2016.

Stream Corridor Ordinance: Members discussed the possible changes to the flood hazard area rules (Proposed Flood Hazard Rule Changes: ACR 249/SCR180) and the need to keep the original intent of the West Amwell stream corridor ordinance intact. An amendment, just for clarification purposes, was proposed, with no changes to the content. This was sent to the Planning Board for their review in 2017.

**Stormwater Subcommittee appointments:** Cathy, Joan, Joel, and Rob as consultant. We will need stormwater educational information for residents to be designed, printed, and distributed.

**319h grant update:** Cathy reported that the detention basin retrofit for the municipal property had problems. There was to be a 72 hour drainage of the basin and it still is filled with ice/water. We are not sure if the problem was with the Princeton Hydro design or the fault of the contractor. In any event, the problem is in the correction stage.

Still waiting for DEP final approval for the Kiriluk property from the Route 202 runoff into the Alexauken Creek.

**Stream Corridor Ordinance amendment** for clarification, with no changes to the ordinance, will be discussed at the next Planning Board meeting on Jan. 17. Art will represent the EC at the meeting.

**Emerald Ash Borer:** The EC has received a second request from the DEP to educate our residents on the serious potential problem with the destruction of all of our ash trees. Members discussed this and the fact that we had previously responded to a Sourland Conservancy request for mapping of potential areas for protection with biological (wasp) controls (which we responded to as per protection of the preserved former Lambertville Water Co. property), as borers have been detected on Goat Hill Road, which is in close proximity to said property.

John Dale spoke about the measures that foresters have recommended: pesticides (a 5 year timeframe), cutting down viable trees before infestation.

Cathy spoke about information from the Sourland Conservancy with wasps as a natural control. Joel, a member of the Sourland Conservancy, will follow up on this, as members agreed that pesticide use would not be the best option. Joel also agreed to contact ANJEC for more information.

John Dale spoke about the possible and potential problems with dealing with many dead ash trees, especially on township property, specifically Hewitt Park. He felt that the township must avoid liability, especially if a dead tree were to fall on residents or cause other problems. EC members agreed to walk the property and mark ash trees. The importance of keeping the open space trust fund available for funding this endeavor was stressed.

Members discussed ways to inform our residents of the emerald ash borer:

Information on the website.

Flyers.

List serve.

**ANJEC dues for 2017** – Paid in full in 2016 for 2017.

**PE proposed pipeline** – Discussion.

No members of the public were present for comment.

Adjournment: 8:03 pm

Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski