

Minutes for the Environmental Commission

June 8, 2017

The meeting commenced at 7:05 pm.

Members present: Clapp, Beaumont, Coyne, Haug, Neufeld, Urbanski, Van der Veen, Zuzov, Dale (TC liaison).

Members excused: Andreoli.

Members absent: Piel.

Minutes from April 13, 2017 were approved, with no changes.

Henry Clapp was present as a member of the public and he said "Hi" to the EC members. Note that Henry is 2 years old and will definitely be a future member of the Commission.

Members discussed the success of the well water testing program (in conjunction with Raritan Headwaters Association.) This was as well attended as in 2013, though members thought that there were new tests done rather than repeats from 2013. Mara Tippet will be attending a future meeting to discuss water trends in the Township. Members questioned if we should offer the testing on a yearly basis. Decision to wait until Tippet gives her report.

The detention basin retrofit on the municipal property was discussed at length. It was redone in May. Clapp noted that he had a conversation with a now no longer employee of Princeton Hydro and the outcome was that the original design had an underdrain, but S. Souza decided to leave that out. Members felt that this omission contributed to the original failure of the basin/raingarden. Members wished to see the "as built" plans and which engineers were involved with the design. Members questioned whether the soil was suitable for infiltration and/or if it would stay waterlogged. Cathy to send the final plans that she had received from Princeton Hydro to Dave C., Joel, and Art. Cathy mentioned that in her last conversation with Steve he said that if the basin continues to fail, that they would install an underdrain. Members felt that as it stands now, the basin is really not a raingarden and does not function as a 72 hour slow drain/infiltration basin.

Cathy noted that she and Joel had worked on and submitted information to Sustainable Jersey for re-certification.

The topics discussed in detail as per their submission were: Clustering Ordinance, Community Education and Outreach (Pipeline, Hunting, EAB), Create Green Team (Resolution, members), Easement Inventory and Outreach (Map, mailings, spreadsheet), Environmental Commission (Ordinance, annual reports, by-laws), Historic Preservation (Master Plan Element, maps, photos, Inventory and Analysis), Innovative Community Project 1 (SHRHS raingarden), Innovative Community Project 2 (Well water testing), NRI, Onsite Solar System (Municipal/SHRHS), Pledge Supporting New Jersey Wildlife Action Plan, Rain Gardens (Municipal property detention basin upgrade/vegetative swales), Recycling (Map, info, tonnage reports), Sustainable Land Use Pledge, Tree Protection Ordinance, Wind Ordinance.

It was noted that a large amount of work went into this project. SJ will work with us over the summer in the event that they need more information. Cathy will send the members a link to the SJ site.

The tree cutting ordinance was discussed, but there was no clear way to protect the individual landowner from flooding caused by neighboring disturbances. Further discussion and research needs to be done.

There was nothing new to report on the PennEast pipeline.

Most members could not attend the walk through Hewitt Park on Saturday, June 10 to mark the ash trees for possible Emerald Ash Borer damage in the future. Dave Clapp volunteered to mark the trees on June 11. Joan volunteered to help. Cathy will get the tree marking ribbons to Dave. It was noted that the ash trees have been being cut at Baldpate Mountain and were chemically treated at Washington Crossing Park.

John mentioned that Texas Eastern would be installing new and more efficient turbines which would meet the EPA air quality requirements "10 years in the future." Members questioned if this would do anything to improve the poor odor control.

Art questioned the status of the development of the Lambert (Little) parcel as we had previously reviewed the application. John stated that he thought that it was going to be withdrawn from the Planning Board.

The only member of the public available for comment was tied up with Thomas the Train.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski