

Minutes for the Environmental Commission November 8, 2018

The meeting commenced at 7:00 pm.

Members present: Andreoli, Beaumont, Clapp, Hamtil, Haug, Spille, Urbanski, Dale (TC liaison).

Members excused: Coyne, Van der Veen

Approval of minutes: October 11, 2018: Approved.

Opportunity for Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

Alexuaken streambed restoration – Fairfax Hutter, Americorps NJ Watershed Ambassador asked that we discuss her plans for planting/restoring the buffer of the Alexauken which had been previously been clear cut by JCP&L. This restoration would be within the JCP&L ROW. Members discussed this project and felt that we could not give any approval unless there was something in writing from JCP&L allowing this project to proceed in their ROW. Fairfax has been trying to contact the utility, but so far has not been successful.

Mowing of wildflower swale – Half of it was mowed again, this time by the DPW. We are uncertain if the flowers will survive and won't be able to tell until next year. Members agreed that the boundaries of the swale need to be marked better. Signage was discussed, but members ultimately all agreed that post mounted birdhouses/bat houses would be fun and beneficial. It was also agreed that this project could be done by the Boy Scouts. Cathy will contact the Scouts.

Trifold for invasives – Cathy presented the final trifold and members approved it. It was noted that the County printing office would print, fold, and seal 1500 of these for \$284. It was agreed that they be printed this year. We still would need to have labels printed. Mayor Bergenfeld gave us permission to use the Township postage machine. Members agreed to have the trifolds mailed early next year.

Ash tree hazard in the ROW – Lengthy discussion as to whether the resident or the Township is responsible for hazardous trees in the ROW. Cathy had spoken to Ryan Rollero, DPW, about this and he felt that the Township would be responsible to remove a fallen tree from township roads. Ryan said that given the serious problem with dead/dying ash trees (he noted specifically Hewitt Rd. and Mill Rd.) the task for the DPW could become overwhelming. He would like to contact a tree service to remove the obvious hazards at this point. It was noted that homeowners all have liability insurance in case of injury or property damage.

Ryan noted that most residents are in denial as to the potential ash tree problem. Members thought that our educational trifold was timely.

Resident concern – Cathy had received a call from a resident on Woodsville Rd. who was concerned with millings piled close to a stream. The resident's concern also was a newly constructed driveway which was washing rainwater onto a nearby bridge. Members discussed this and our recommendation was to inform the resident to call 1-888-WARNDEP for the stream problem and the construction office for the driveway problem.

Penn East update – Mike gave a detailed report. A US district court judge will rule next week as to allowing PennEast to survey on private lands. Mike felt that he will rule against the landowners. The NJCF lost its lawsuit which claimed that NJ had jurisdiction over the Federal government. Members discussed the necessary Clean Water Act permits by the NJDEP.

Open to members for further discussion – Nella felt that the EC's habit of discussing issues via email was a liability problem and that discussions should be kept to meetings. Some members felt that we are just an advisory committee and not subject to OPRA. Cathy will follow up.

Opportunity for Public Comment - none

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski