

# SPECIAL WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

## June 2, 2010 – 6:00 p.m.

The West Amwell Township Committee met on the above date at 6:04 p.m. Present: Mayor Molnar, Committeemen Masterson and Fisher. Also in attendance were Anton von Saase and Rich Storcella.

In compliance with the Public Meetings Act, Mayor Molnar announced that this Special Meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act with notices faxed to the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Trenton Times on May 27, 2010. A copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

The meeting was recorded via digital recording system and a copy of the CD is on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT & CO FOR BLOCK 23 LOT 19.04:**

Anton von Saase overviewed the history of his tenancy in the Township and the issue surrounding the 4 ½ year attempt to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy. The original plan for the property was for there to be a dry well behind the house to satisfy stormwater rules. However, the proper slope to this feature could not be obtained and another location had to be found. A new plan was designed and submitted to the Township Engineer. However, the requirement of a perc test was deemed unreasonable by the applicant. An alternate design was submitted that utilizes a dry pond. Mr. von Saase also expressed concern about the cost incurred between the two engineers involved; that the requirements keep changing; and, why the Township Engineer needs \$500 to inspect. He's okay with installing an approved design but wants assurance that once it is in, that's it, and he wants the approval of the design in writing. Mr. von Saase stated that he has yet to receive approval on the alternate design dated 5/2009; will remit payment when it is needed as he refuses to provide a 'blank check' for the work; and, wants to bring the project to an end via a CO. If after installation, something is found to be blatantly wrong, that would not be a problem; otherwise, he wants an okay as built.

The consensus of the committee was that the Township Engineer would need to be consulted. Mr. Fisher volunteered to follow up.

### **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

Rich Storcella came forward to comment on the preceding situation. He noted that he's lived in the Township for 17 years and his theory is to be neighborly. However, this four year problem is what got him involved. An exchange between Mr. von Saase and Mr. Storcella ensued concerning the removal of the conservation easement and the installation of the dry well per the Planning Board resolution of subdivision. The former indicated that he was unaware of the requirement; that the builder took out the permit; the matter was discovered after the fact; and, he is now trying to rectify the situation. However, he refuses to install per the original design as it would rip up everything that has been done around the house and is trying to resolve the matter with the installation of a dry pond.

Mr. Storcella noted that there have been 3 or 4 previous owners of the property and things were moved around over the course of the past 15-17 years. His concern is for stormwater management in order to protect their way of life as he has a responsibility to his family that this be maintained within the guidelines; doesn't want to deal with water issues; and, his experience with construction is that only approvals are given, not suggestions or recommendations due to liability issues.

Mr. von Saase re-iterated that the history of the property was unknown to him at the time and that it wasn't until he requested a CO that the issue of the dry well appeared. A request was made to move this element as he is trying to do the right thing with a new design to resolve the matter. However, he will not install the dry pond until the plans are stamped as okay; has done what the Township has asked him to do; and, is frustrated with the process. Why Mr. Storcella is up in arms about this when he is not a fault was questioned. To this point, Mr. Storcella noted that the removal of the conservation easement brought him into the mix; he was offended that he knew nothing about it until the matter was closed; expects beauty and it was changed; no notification was given; and, he is disappointed with the Township. It is now known that DEP approval is needed in order to remove a conservation easement. He acknowledged the efforts being made but noted that Mr. von Saase could sell the property tomorrow and that the next person might not care. His concern is that the gate has been opened.

Mr. Fisher requested that he be given until the end of the week to speak with the Township Engineer.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:51 p.m. on motion by Fisher, seconded by Molnar.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lora L. Olsen, RMC  
Township Clerk