

SPECIAL WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

February 8, 2011 – 7 p.m.

The West Amwell Township Committee met on the above date at 7:03 p.m. Present: Mayor Molnar, Committeemen Fisher and Rich. Also in attendance were Art Neufeld and Dr. Stephen Souza and Paul Cooper of Princeton Hydro

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 January 19, 2011, with revised notice changing the date faxed to same and posted on February 1, 2011. 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.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY PRINCETON HYDRO:

The meeting was designed to give a brief overview of what was done, the purpose, and the benefit. Dr. Stephen Souza, President of Princeton Hydro, overviewed the objectives of the presentation, the basis for the study and the value of a watershed protection plan. He relayed that although this study has been a long process, due primarily to DEP delay in reviewing the reports, it's now near the end. The point of management options has been reached and the next phase to be determined. Dr. Souza recapped that the project, started in 2005, had a lot of stake holder involvement in the way of data collection, stream walks and problem area identification. The value of the study is that it will provide a spring board for obtaining funding for implementation and provides a blueprint to follow in that regard. This particular 319 grant was the last one paid for by DEP; however, \$1.5 million has recently been obtained from the federal government in implementation money. As an agricultural community, there is also National Resource Conservation (NRC) money that can tie in for stream restoration, etc. Mr. Cooper, technical manager for project, spoke about the watershed management area that covers approximately 15 square miles. It includes West Amwell, East Amwell, Lambertville and Delaware Township, with West Amwell the largest contributor with 60 linear stream miles. As the Alexauken Creek is a trout maintenance stream, there's a 300 ft buffer on all mapped segments.

A power point presentation, *copy attached to these minutes*, was presented highlighting the various components of the full report. (NOTE: A full copy of the Alexauken Creek Watershed Protection Plan 319 Study is available in the Clerk's office and is posted on the website.) The implementation portion of the plan is low key and focuses on homeowner participation. Dr. Souza stated that public buy-in to improve the stream will need to be promoted and that landowners be convinced of the positive benefits as a direct benefit to them and the community.

The actual completion of this study will be accomplished when it is adopted by DEP. Although they've had the report for quite some time, and the revisions for two months, and were invited to attend this session, Dr. Souza suggested that the township give DEP another month before pushing for acceptance. However, with the public presentation finishing the administrative portion of the study, identification of a project for implementation should begin. Implementation money will be available in August and Princeton Hydro can write the grant application, at no cost to the township, in exchange for getting the work. Dr. Souza stated that officials should 'think big' when deciding on a project. An emphasis on the structural aspects in the study, with elements of education, was suggested. Small projects with a low cost factor could also be incorporated as a sign of progress. The recommendation was to get the ball rolling by prioritizing projects and developing a wish list. Princeton Hydro can provide guidance and put the plan into play.

Information on funding sources was relayed and it was noted that the C1 designation on the Alexauken gives it elevated status for same. As there needs to be someone spearheading this in-house, Mr. Fisher suggested this be the Environmental Commission, together with Ag Advisory. Dr. Souza and Mr. Cooper expressed that they would be happy to meet with both groups concerning this once the report is finally DEP approved. Princeton Hydro will notify DEP of this evening's presentation.

With expressions of appreciation for the informative presentation, Dr. Souza and Mr. Cooper left the meeting.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Art Neufeld, a newly appointed member of the Environmental Commission, offered that the study was a good start.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:52 p.m. on motion by Rich, seconded by Fisher.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora L. Olsen, RMC
Township Clerk