

June 24, 2019 Environmental Commission Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Halpern, E. Duerr, McCarthy, Mounier, Russo, Stippick, Van
Ostenbridge
ALTERNATES PRESENT: Cucunato
ALTERNATES ABSENT: M. Duerr
ASSOCIATES PRESENT: R. Duerr
LIAISONS PRESENT: None
GUESTS: Diane Dutton

The June 24, 2019 meeting of the Township of Franklin Environmental Commission was called to order by Ms. Halpern at 7:35 pm in the Conference Room of the Municipal Building.

I. Minutes

The May 20, 2019 minutes were unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Mounier, seconded by Mr. Stippick.

II. Guest Issue: Ms. Dutton described several problems with the house next door to hers, at 244 Sunnyhill Ave. It has been empty for two years and has developed noxious growth, a lot of debris, and 7 unregistered vehicles. There is standing water that has allowed mosquito breeding, a cat problem, and a tree has fallen from the property onto her property. The property is so overgrown that you can't see the house. Squatters have also come in, from the Lakeview Ave. side. Over the past year Ms. Dutton has made multiple complaints to the Franklin Township Zoning Enforcement Officer.

The Environmental Commissioners made some suggestions to assist Ms. Dutton. Ms. Halpern advised that the Nuisance Code was adopted by the Township. She has given a copy of this to the Twp. Administrator and to the Planning Board Secretary. This code does need to be enforced by the Township and gives it the authority to address most of the issues. It was also suggested that Ms. Dutton call 1-877-WARNDEP regarding the cars and possible leakage from them.

There is a potential safety hazard that should be investigated due to the age of the home (1920) including the presence of a cesspool/cesspools likely to be present on the property. Condition of the structure as well as any cesspools are unknown as the heavy growth of vegetation has prevented access for officials thus far.

III. Emergency Response and Management Report

No updates provided

IV. Zoning and Planning Board Applications

There were two zoning Board applications:

- 1) ZB19-03, NJHRS, LLC, 4627 Tuckahoe Rd., block 404, lot 22. Applicant wants to build a new house in place of the old one on this undersized lot (3/4 acre) that has an existing house and garage. 90' frontage. The Environmental Commission had No Comment.
- 2) ZB19-04, Todd J. Marston, 3092 Coles Mill Rd., block 1502, lot 2. Applicant wants to build an oversized garage that will be 40' x 50' behind the house. 236' frontage. The Environmental Commission had No Comment.

The Environmental Commission suggests that gorges be made a conditional use in the zoning code, with some restrictions such as limiting the size to 40' x 60' and only 20' high, for example. Currently, every oversized garage application requires a variance and they are always granted. If there's no limitation matching the existing ordinance, there's no point in having such a limitation other than to make applicants pay sizeable fees.

V. Old Business

A. Piney Hollow Natural Area/Green Acres Grant

1. Ms. Halpern reported that no response has yet come back from the Pinelands Commission. She has continued to work on ideas regarding the Pinelands Commission requirement for storm water for the boardwalk area. Several ideas have been discussed including placing storm water under the parking area and substantially reducing the amount of boardwalk by filling in ruts or creating by-passes of the trail.
2. The Engineer is trying to coordinate with the Franklin Dept of Public Works regarding the cleanups that are still needed.
3. The missing Jersey barrier has been replaced.

B. ROSI (Recreational Open Space Inventory)

Ms. Halpern reported that she received an email from Mayor Deegan in response to the list of wetland properties that she and Ms. McCarthy put together for inclusion on the ROSI. His response wasn't quite clear. She and Ms. McCarthy attended the Township Committee Work Session on May 21 to present the list of potential properties and will do so again this month.

C. Malaga Lake Park

Two dog waste bag stations have been installed at the park. The only problem is that there is no trash receptacle next to them. It's on the other side of the parking area.

D. Kiefer Property

This property is adjacent to a preserved Township property and, like that one, it borders Still Run. It is worth purchasing and the cost the Kiefers have proposed is low. However, it seems that we should resolve the ROSI questions first.

E. Community Day:

- Mr. Von Ostenbridge emailed to Ms. McCarthy regarding the number of spaces for community day we will need. She suggested five for the four spaces we will have (including the Ag Advisory Committee booth)..
- It was decided that in addition to the recycling display, we will have an exhibit on "Reducing Your Carbon Footprint." It can include various messages and have examples of items and materials that are alternatives to non-biodegradable items. Some other messages are "Going without," "Think before you buy," and "Reduce plastic in your life." Ms. McCarthy will send out a list of potential items and messages. We will still need to decide on our exhibit approach.
- Mr. Russo will call some sites that might contribute items we could distribute.

F. Rain Barrel Workshop:

Ms Halpern stated that the workshop on June 18th was very successful and that the large conference room at the community center worked well. It was a good learning experience. 6 barrels were made, We need a tool for cutting holes. The barrels were donated by Cumberland Dairy via our watershed ambassador/member Ms. Cucunato.

VI. New Business

Soil Removal: The Paintball facility appears to have taken the topsoil and sold it. Our Township ordinance regarding development and design standards prohibits sale of topsoil. Mr. Van Ostenbridge advised that he believes the topsoil was still there and is being stockpiled in the rear of the site at present.

VII. Mail Review/Conferences/Announcements

1. Copy received of a letter from Atlantic City Electric to Gloucester County regarding an application to NJDEP for vegetation maintenance.
2. A letter was received from the Gloucester County Nature Club summarizing the Bird Quest successes and the comments made by participants at the closing event.

VIII. Adjournment

Upon motion by Ms McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Mounier, and unanimously approved the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne McCarthy