

August 28 24, 2023, Environmental Commission Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brandt, E. Duerr, M. Duerr, Link, McCarthy, Stippick
MEMBERS ABSENT: Kohute
ALTERNATES ABSENT: Cavone
LIAISONS ABSENT: Keen, Marsh
GUESTS PRESENT: Mindy Curran, Roger Duerr, Barbara Halpern, and Bill Petravich.

The August 28, 2023, meeting of the Township of Franklin Environmental Commission was both a live meeting in the municipal building conference room and a virtual meeting on Zoom. It was called to order by Mr. Stippick at 7:39 pm.

I. Minutes: Upon a motion by Ms. M. Duerr, seconded by Mr. Stippick, the minutes of the July 24, 2023, meeting were unanimously approved.

II. Guests: No issues were raised by the guests.

III. Emergency Response and Management Report: There was no Emergency Management report.

IV. Applications: There were three Planning Board applications that were reviewed:

A. PB 23-09: This application is by Christopher Previterra for a minor subdivision at 1654 Catawba Ave., block 7002/Lot 11 to create one additional lot on this 28.4-acres property. Two lots will be created, one of 21.8 acres and one of 3 acres. This property is a large farm with an existing house on 11.01 acres and has an existing nonconforming front yard setback (60 ft vs. the required 75 ft.) for which a variance is requested. This is the site where a cannabis facility was proposed.

The Environmental Commission had no comment.

B. PB 23-10: This application is by Kevin Pidliskey for a minor subdivision at 119 Catherine Drive, block 301.07/lot 19, block 301.03/lot 8, and block 404/lot 1. This is a lot line adjustment between these 3 lots. The application is proposing to take acreage from 301.03/19 to increase the frontage to 155 ft of 301.03/8, which currently is on a cul-de-sac with one small access point of 66 ft. There is an existing house on 301.03/8 but the house extends halfway onto lot 19, so acreage will be taken from lot 19 and added to lot 8.

The line between lot 19 and lot 404/1, which fronts onto Lakeview Ave., is also being adjusted. An electrical easement that is currently .56 acres will become 1.31 acres. There will be limited clearing of trees on lot 19.

The Environmental Commission had no comment.

C. PB 23-11 ? (no number provided): This application is by Michael Ramsey for a minor subdivision to create one new lot at 86 Sunnyhill Ave., block 403/lot 30. The property is only 1.7 acres in size but extends 755 ft back to Lakeview Ave. The lot would be cut in half, resulting in two lots of 0.9 acres and 0.86 acres and fronting onto both Sunnyhill and Lakeview Aves. The Sunnyhill Ave. property currently has an existing nonconforming front yard setback and an existing nonconforming frontage – both are undersized.

The Environmental Commission advised that development that does not meet the minimum required standards pose a potential threat to groundwater quality.

V. Old Business:

A. Piney Hollow: There was no new information about the Piney Hollow project. Mr. Stippick contacted both the Township engineer and administrator to request the bid packet but has not yet received a response.

B. Malaga Lake Park:

1. A grant application to the County was submitted for the park, although the EC has no details about it. Mr. Stippick emailed the Administrator asking about it but has not yet received a response.
2. Mr. Stippick reported that Moth Night at the Park was postponed one week to Saturday, August 5 due to bad weather. The attendance on that date was small. Only 12 people attended.

C. Community Day: Ms. McCarthy reported that she submitted the registration form for 3 spaces. It required that 3 members of each group be listed for a brief cleanup on the following day, so she submitted her name and that of Mr. Stippick and Mr. E. Duerr.

1. Mr. E. Duerr will help Ms. McCarthy with pickup of tables, tents, and materials on Sept. 20.
2. Staffing of the booth will be by Ms. McCarthy, Mr. Stippick, Mr. E. Duerr, and Andrew Bolan. Volunteers for setting up and breaking down include the same individuals and Ward Bolan.
3. Our theme for this year will be "The Nature of Franklin Township," which will include display material and signage about

- Farmland preservation
- Night sky protection (what is good lighting; what is poor lighting)
- Forest protection – what trees do for us.
- Native plants and animals, including information on converting lawns to wildflowers
- Rural waterways

Ms. McCarthy will develop the signage for each topic and some display materials for the farmland, forest, waterways, and plants and animals topics. Mr. Stippick has display material and handouts on night skies and the lawn conversion topics.

4. Ms. McCarthy will also put together a recruitment sign-up form that can be used to increase our email list and perhaps find some additional EC guest participants. She will send this and the signage texts to Mr. Stippick for suggestions and additions.

VI. New Business: There was no new business.

VII. Mail: A notice was received from the Pinelands Commission reporting a Certificate of Filing for the Franklin Township property at block 6401/lots 27 & 28.

VIII. Adjournment: Upon a motion by Mr. Brandt, seconded by Mr. E. Duerr and approved unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Suzanne McCarthy, Vice-Chair and Acting Secretary.

The next meeting of the Environmental Commission is on Monday, September 25, 7:30 pm. It will be both a live meeting in the Municipal Bldg. conference room and a Zoom meeting.