

**Township of West Milford  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

**January 5, 2015**

The January 5, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Township of West Milford Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:38p.m. with a reading of the Legal Notice.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Andrew Abdul (7:53), Tim Dalton, Thomas Tamayne, Gary Oppenheimer, Douglas Ott, Don Weise, Alternate #1 Jennifer Easterbrook, Alternate #2 Lucas Slott, Chairman Stephen Sangle.

**Absent:** None.

**Also Present:** Dave Ofshinsky, M.U.A.

Luke Slott was requested to sit in for Andy Abdul until he arrived. Chairman Sangle advised that a quorum was present to conduct this meeting.

**PRESENTATIONS** - None.

**APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW**

**PETER HACHEY**

**Bulk Variance #ZB-11-14-11**

Block 4014; Lot 2

41 Wanaque Road; LR Zone

**Seeking:** Bulk Variances for Lot Coverage, where 1645 sq ft is required, 2003 sq ft exists, and 2256 sq ft is proposed, and for a Rear Yard Setback, where 60 ft is required, 69 ft is existing, and 58 ft is proposed, for the construction of a 20 x 24 ft addition to an existing single-family residence including an enlarged deck. This matter is scheduled for a Board of Adjustment hearing on January 27, 2015.

The Environmental Commission members reviewed the above referenced Zoning Board of Adjustment application for a Bulk Variance for a 20 x 24 ft addition to an existing single family house and made the following comments:

The Commission inquired how the additional stormwater runoff from the increased impervious coverage would be addressed, and suggested installation of rain barrels or a seepage pit.

The Commission inquired about a drainage ditch that is indicated on the survey/site plan, and expressed concern about runoff draining from the subject property into Greenwood Lake, and suggested that upgrades to drainage be considered so there are no adverse effects to surrounding properties and the lake.

The Commission inquired whether any proposed lighting would disturb adjacent residences.

**GRANT MANAGEMENT AND STATUS REVIEW**

**NJDEP Green Comm. \$3000.00 Grant for Community Forestry Management Plan:** Ron Farr, Forestry Consultant, was not present to provide an update to the Commission.

**NJDEP NNL Reforestation Grant - \$620,197.00:** The Commission briefly discussed the items needed prior to going out to bid for tree planting. It was suggested that Mr. Farr reach out to the Township Engineering Dept. for a boilerplate for public bidding for public works projects. Tim Dalton advised that he would contact Mr. Farr to schedule a meeting with the Forestry Subcommittee, and to discuss the need for preparing RFP's and bid specifications.

**ON GOING BUSINESS**

**Open Space Committee:** Chairman Sangle reported that he recently read a newspaper article about properties that the Township was interested in purchasing for open space, but the Open Space

Committee was not advised of this directly. He further advised that he had not heard anything recently regarding the Weaver Road property, and said that he would email the Land Conservancy regarding this matter. Ann Genader, correspondent with the local Aim newspapers, was present and commented that there was action taken by the Township Council at a recent meeting with regard to approving the Land Conservancy of NJ as open space consultant, but there was no discussion by the Council. Don Weise suggested that the Commission invite Ms. Glosinsky to the next EC meeting to provide an update on potential Township properties for open space acquisition. The Secretary was requested to email the Land Conservancy and invite Ms. Glosinsky to the February 2015 meeting for an update.

**Environmental Contamination Issues:** Tom Tamyane reported that he received 6 NJDEP No Further Action Letters from the Health Dept., with 2 new leaks reported. He also noted that there was a new contamination investigation at 2048 Rt. 23 at the Getty Station. The Commission discussed several of the correspondence items, including one that reported the odor of gas at a property on St. George Street. Chairman Sangle inquired whether Commissioner Andy Abdul (who resides in the vicinity) knew of this situation, and he responded that he also wondered about the NJDEP notice, observing that the residence was near the site of prior contamination from a former gas station, and the monitoring wells are checked periodically. He advised that he does not receive monitoring and test result reports as frequently as he used to, but the carbon filters are replaced every few months for the trace amounts of contaminants that were still present.

Tom Tamayne noted that he would contact the Commission's Secretary to advise when he would be available so that a meeting can be set up with the Health Officer, Mike Fitzpatrick.

**Lakes Committee:** Andy Abdul reported that there was no Lakes Committee meeting in December, so he had no minutes to distribute to the Commission.

**Greenwood Lake Commission:** Mr. Abdul advised that at a recent GWL Commission meeting, the discussion included the lack of funds that are available to the Commissions for both states. They also voiced that the DEC and DEP do not send representatives to the monthly meetings, nor show full support for the Commission, even though this is a bi-state commission and both states have adopted legislation to support the organization. With regard to available funds, Mr. Abdul reported that the Commission has some grant funds remaining, but they are already allocated to another project. The GWL Commission has free rent at their office location, but they are required to pay certain bills. Chairman Sangle advised that the Township Council wanted to insure that any money that they commit to the GWL Commission should be spent wisely. Mr. Abdul noted that in the past year, the GWL Commission acquired a representative from the Township Environmental Commission (Mr. Abdul), and he noted that Councilman Signorino was also attending the GWL Commission meetings, so it appears that the GWL Commission was developing into a more cohesive organization. Chairman Sangle remarked that the Environmental Commission assigned a representative in an effort to assist them for best management practices, as well as to be able to provide feedback to the Township Council so that they would be more comfortable about allocating the \$10,000. weed harvesting funds each year. Mr. Abdul advised that the GWL Commission has made great strides recently, although as a representative from the Environmental Commission, he does not have a vote. Chairman Sangle inquired what was in store for the GWL Commission going forward, and whether there would be joint meetings between the officials from both states. He noted the complexity of the situation since it is one lake located in two states, and thought it would behoove both states to address the issues as a unified body. Chairman Sangle noted that the West Milford DPW supplied repairs and trucks in the past to assist with the weed harvesting. Mr. Abdul commented that the GWL Commissioners are all volunteers who are very active in working for the benefit of the entire lake.

**Green Team—Sustainable Subcommittee:** Jennifer Easterbrook, Green Team/Sustainability Subcommittee Chair reported that the Mayor's Wellness Campaign information was submitted on December 19, 2015. She noted that at the upcoming Green Team/Sustainability Subcommittee meeting on January 27, 2015, the members would review the rough outline that was presented to them in December. Ryan Brandt and Jessica Quas were introduced to the Commission; they were invited to receive their Sustainable Jersey pins in recognition of their work on behalf of the Township for the

Sustainable Jersey certification program. Also introduced to the Commission was Ken Stanton, new member of the Green Team/Sustainability Subcommittee. The Commission thanked the Green Team for their efforts for the Township. Ms. Easterbrook remarked that recertification of Bronze status was achieved this time, but with more time and preparation, the Green Team/Sustainability Subcommittee hopes to attain Silver status during the next certification period.

The Green Team's activities for the coming year and participation in Autumn Lights were outlined, including the Mayor's Wellness Campaign, and addressing Invasive Species, which may involve providing plants to members, such as milkweed for monarch butterflies. Also planned are distributions of brochures and tote bags at the Autumn Lights Festival in October. Tom Tamayne reported that he would be working on a \$20,000. grant in 2016 to include a solar project at the local schools, but he needs to meet with the school administration to explain the concept to them. He hopes they will include a line item in their budget for the solar project, as well as meter the savings each year. He acknowledged that this will be a long-term project, but remarked that it has to start somewhere. Chairman Sangle said that he would try to set up a meeting with the B.O.E. Secretary. Ms. Easterbrook advised that the Green Team will be working on acquiring more priority points, and observed that the Belchers Creek testing project should provide an opportunity for this.

**Beaver Dam at Environmental Boardwalk:** Chairman Sangle reported that he has not received an update on the beaver dams at the Environmental Boardwalk, but the water level remains at an acceptable level. Tom Tamayne commented that the piping seems to be working and the water level will eventually go down. Luke Slott reported that he spotted a beaver at Surprise Lake for the first time. Don Weise observed that Surprise Lake drains down to Warwick Turnpike, and added that the beavers seem to making a comeback all over the area, and water levels are rising in many lakes and encroaching on trails, necessitating the revision to some trail maps. Chairman Sangle noted that a remote area he visited recently had streams and water bodies contaminated by the beaver feces. The Commission briefly discussed the piping system at the Environmental Boardwalk.

## **NEW OR CURRENT BUSINESS**

**Council Request – Summary, Resolution and/or Recommendation on Fracking:** The Commission discussed fracking and pipelines through a request of the Mayor and Township Council that was forwarded by email from the Township Clerk on December 5, 2014. The Environmental Commissioners advised that they were not aware of any recent meeting on fracking that was held in Kinnelon, NJ, and no one from the Commission was in attendance at a public meeting where fracking or the Pilgrim Pipeline was discussed. The Commission advised that they were eager to assist by researching and discussing whatever environmental issue the Mayor and Council are seeking comment and/or recommendation for, but they needed clarification of the specific subject matter.

Other items discussed under new or current business:

-Luke Slott advised the Commission that he was the new Director of Sustainable West Milford, although David Watson Hallowell was still involved as an administrator with the organization.

-Tim Dalton advised that he was trying to prepare information for a show on trails for the Township's local television program.

-With regard to the "Emerald Forest" Don Weise noted that the organizations (Passaic River Coalition?) involved with the site received a grant and the project is in the planning stages.

-The Commission discussed the use of old railroad beds for trails, and Mr. Weise observed that he participated in a group run in Randolph Twp. Recently, running on a track that were established along former rail beds.

-Mr. Weise reported that the bridge to the Long Pond Ironworks Furnace is in need of repair, but there were historical issues that must be considered since the site is an historic landmark. He noted that the NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry gave their approval for the bridge reconstruction, and the project may commence in 2015.

-Mr. Tamayne inquired about the use of salt brine in the Township. The Commission was under the assumption that it was being used at a certain location as a test area in the Township. Mr. Tamayne will inquire at the Engineering Dept.

-Chairman Sangle advised the Green Team that they would need to prepare their grant proposals, especially for matching grants, so that they are ready for funding to be included in the Township budget for 2016.

## **MINUTES**

The Minutes for the August 4, 2015 Environmental Commission meeting were **approved** on a **motion** by Tim Dalton with a **second** by Tom Tamayne following a correction on page 5 noted by the Commission.

## **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

*The following correspondence was reviewed by the Environmental Commission and filed:*

### **Highlands Water Protection And Planning Act Correspondence**

1. Notification of the Highlands Regional Master Plan Monitoring Program for the Northern Region on January 12, 2015, 7 to 9 pm, Sussex County Technical School Cafeteria, 105 N. Church Street, Sparta, NJ.

### **NJ Department of Environmental Protection Correspondence**

1. Letter from Bob Martin, Commissioner of the NJDEP, dated December 17, 2014, advising that the West Milford Environmental Commission and Chairman Stephen Sangle did not receive the 2014 Governor's Environmental Excellence Award, but thanked the Commission for their efforts to improve and protect New Jersey's environment.
2. Suspected Hazardous Substance Discharge Notification from NJDEP, Case #14-12-10-1034-14, dated December 11, 2014, regarding suspected ground water contamination causing gasoline odor inside the house in response to a citizen complaint from John Lindsay, 17 St. George Street, Block 7104; Lot 10.
3. Notification from the NJDEP, dated December 17, 2014, advising of \$15 million in municipal grants being offered to bolster recycling efforts. Grants are awarded based on the 2012 recycling data, and funds are available through the State's Recycling Enhancement Act.
4. Notification from the NJDEP – Division of Fish and Wildlife Endangered and Nongame Species Program, that matching grants in the amount of \$1000 to \$3500 are available to nonprofit groups and agencies for projects directly related to wildlife diversity and education. Funds are made possible by the Conserve Wildlife License Plate program.

### **Miscellaneous Correspondence Received/Sent**

1. Certification from the Hudson Essex Passaic Soil Conservation District, dated November 6, 2014, regarding the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for the Henion Pond Dam Rehabilitation, 256 Macopin Road, Block 12501; Lot 41.01.
2. Site Plan approval, dated December 22, 2014, received from Passaic County Planning Board, regarding the proposed West Milford Library, 1470 Union Valley Road, Block 7903; Lots 13-16. Prior to reconstruction of the driveway and the curbs extended, a ROW access permit is required.
3. Notification from the Passaic County Planning Board, dated December 23, 2014, regarding the submission of a site plan for a new driveway for the Grace Fellowship Church, Union Valley Road, Block 9801; Lot 1, advising that approval has been withheld pending receipt of revised drainage calculations for a 25 year storm, with tributary area map and percolation test results; waiver from Passaic County to construct a driveway with frontage on a county road when municipal road frontage exists; revised road profile with a grade no more than 2% for the first 50 feet from the property line;

revised sight distance plan; revised plans with cross sections for every 100 feet of new driveway; revised plans showing required signage; revised plans with gutter flow indicated along Union Valley Road; NJDEP permit for driveway to be constructed within 300 foot buffer of a C-1 Trout Production stream; copy of the HEPSCD permit for the driveway; payment of \$5,200.40 as contribution for the County Corridor Enhancement program.

4. Notice from ANJEC regarding membership renewal for 2015: \$400. with additional Workshop Plan and Alternates' Membership.

5. Notification from Rutgers Cooperative Extension regarding an Environmental Stewards Training Program. Passaic County classes held at Preakness Healthcare, Wayne, NJ, \$250. Contact Jo-Ann Pituch, 973-305-5740 or pituch@njaes.rutgers.edu.

6. Notification from Rutgers Cooperative Extension regarding an Organic Land Care Certificate Course, a 5 day course for landscapers and land care providers, to be held Jan 12, 13, 14, 21, 22, 2015 from 8 – 5, Rutgers EcoComplex, Bordentown, NJ.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Dave Ofshinsky, member of the M.U.A., advised the Commission that he spoke to the other members of the Authority and they were willing to assist with testing, but they need more details regarding the cost, procedures, etc. Chairman Sangle noted that the location of prior testing on Belchers Creek needed to be determined to facilitate the proposed testing for results comparison with the 2005/2006 tests. Ms. Easterbrook commented that our two prior Watershed Ambassadors were trained in taking samples from waterways and could assist in the Belchers Creek testing project. Mr. Tamayne commented that the parameters needed to be clarified with regard to the proposed testing, and Chairman Sangle noted that the conditions that were present during the previous testing must be determined, with all the variables included, so that the tests can be more accurately compared. The Commissioners noted that additional testing near the Community Garden should be included. Mr. Ofshinsky stated that he would try to obtain more information about the tests that were performed near the M.U.A. plants in the vicinity of the Community Garden.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Environmental Commission, the meeting was **adjourned** at **8:58 p.m.** on a **motion** by Tim Dalton and a **second** by Jennifer Easterbrook.

Approved: June 1, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Tonya E. Cubby, Secretary