

**Township of West Milford  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

**April 6, 2015**

The April 6, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Township of West Milford Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:35 p.m. with a reading of the Legal Notice.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Andrew Abdul, Tim Dalton, Thomas Tamayne, Don Weise, Alternate #1 Jennifer Easterbrook, Chairman Stephen Sangle.

**Absent:** Gary Oppenheimer, Douglas Ott, Alternate #2 Lucas Slott

**Also Present:** Clint Smith, GWL Commission, Dave Ofshinsky, M.U.A.

Alternate Member Jennifer Easterbrook was requested to sit in for one of the absent Commissioners. Chairman Sangle advised that a quorum was present to conduct this meeting.

**PRESENTATIONS** - None.

**APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW**

**1554 UNION VALLEY LAND TRUST**

**Use & Bulk Variance & Minor Site Plan #ZB-03-15-01**

Block 6301; Lot 5

1554 Union Valley Road; VC Zone

**Seeking:** Use Variance for an apartment in a VC Zone where 1 acre minimum is required and 0.501 exists; Bulk Variance for 2 parking spaces where 3 spaces are required and 2 are existing; Bulk Variance for a proposed 1300 sq. ft. apartment, with 1223 sq. ft. existing, and 800 sq. ft. maximum permitted.

The Commission reviewed the plans prepared by McKittrick Engineering Associates, dated 02/25/15 for Block 6301; Lot 5 regarding a Zoning Board of Adjustment application for a Use Variance with Bulk Variances to permit an apartment in a Village Commercial Zone. The owner/applicant was not present at the meeting. Following their review for potential environmental issues, the Commission expressed no concerns with regard to this application other than to recommend that any proposed lighting should not disturb neighboring property owners.

**GRANT MANAGEMENT AND STATUS REVIEW**

**NJDEP Green Comm. \$3000.00 Grant for Community Forestry Management Plan:**

Certified Forester Ron Farr was not in attendance at the meeting, but Tim Dalton advised that the CFMP was finalized and should be submitted to the NJDEP – Division of Forestry. The Secretary would follow up on this.

**NJDEP NNL Reforestation Grant - \$620,197.00:** Chairman Sangle reported that an email from Ron Farr indicated that the schools were concerned about grass cutting with the trees proposed for planting on the schools' grounds, and Mr. Farr suggested that they could mulch in a straight line, and Chairman Sangle noted that it would help to keep moisture around the growing trees. Tim Dalton recalled that at one of the proposed schools – Upper Greenwood Lake – they could not plant the trees due to sight distance issues, adding that they will need to work with the Engineering Division on issues such as this. Chairman Sangle advised that a Forestry Subcommittee meeting should be scheduled a week before the next Environmental Commission meeting.

**2015 319(h) Grant for Greenwood Lake Watershed:** Chairman Sangle reported that a resolution was drafted by the Commission's Secretary regarding the submission of a grant application for the Township of West Milford prepared by Princeton Hydro for funds from the NJDEP for the Marshall Hill Road stormwater project and the Belchers Creek Testing. He noted that the benefit of Princeton Hydro preparing the application, aside from the technical information that is required as part of the grant documents, is that they are favored to be awarded the engineering contract if the grant is awarded to the Township, although, based on new policies, nothing is guaranteed as to who will

ultimately get awarded the engineering contract. The Marshall Hill Road project has basically been designed, and it consists of a drain under Marshall Hill Road to a detention basin and site across from the school. The project also proposed a rain garden at Marshall Hill School. Tom Tamayne observed that Princeton Hydro can justify the Belchers Creek testing since it is impacted from storm water run off by Marshall Hill stormwater. Chairman Sangle referred to the 2005-2007 Belchers Creek testing and recent discussions with the Health Officer about plans to include areas near certain homes and sites with animals. The initial testing will provide a baseline, which can be included with the larger testing program that the NJDEP grant would provide. Chairman Sangle was not sure about the grant amount that is available, and had wanted to wait until the Administrator and Council had approved Princeton Hydro to move forward on this. He suggested that Ron Farr reach out to Dr. Fred Lubnow of Princeton Hydro to determine if any of the Reforestation Grant trees can be used in the project.

### **ON GOING BUSINESS**

**Lakes Committee:** Andy Abdul advised that there was no Lakes Committee meeting the month prior and no minutes were available.

**Greenwood Lake Bi-State Commission:** Andy Abdul reported that the Greenwood Lake commission discussed new legislation that is being proposed which will combine the North Jersey Watershed, the Passaic Valley Watershed and the Newark Watershed into one watershed district commission. He thought that on the surface it appears to be a good idea, but wondered how they would divide the administrative and other responsibilities. He did not have minutes available from the prior month's meeting of the GWL Commission. He noted that the GWL Commission was planning to attend the Passaic County Fair and also the Autumn Lights Festival. Chairman Sangle requested that he work with Jennifer Easterbrook and Tim Dalton to incorporate them into their plans with the Environmental Commission and the Green Team. He reported that the GWL Comm. is planning to sponsor a boat safety course. Recently, he noted, there was some controversy regarding a bon fire that was held on Greenwood Lake and the debris that remained after the event. There are plans to hold boat races again this year, although he was not sure of the date. Mr. Abdul also advised that there were several new members installed on the Commission.

**Open Space Committee:** Chairman Sangle and Don Weise advised that they had not received an update regarding the Weaver Road property acquisition. Mr. Weise reported that he had spoken to the new Recreation Director, Tim Roetman, about an invasive species grant - part of the Recreational Trails Grant - that would document invasive species in the Township. Chairman Sangle was not aware of any grants with funds remaining, and requested that Mr. Weise reach out to Bob Jonas since he was working on this grant at one time. Mr. Weise said that the main objective is to try to keep the invasive species out of the parks and keep them from becoming pervasive throughout the Township. Tim Dalton observed that there had also been some discussion about White Road and Warwick Tpk. and improving the site for parking for the nearby trails, and the site, although privately owned, may be available for public access.

**Environmental Contamination Issues:** The Commission reviewed some of the environmental contamination issues noted in the correspondence section of the agenda.

**Green Team-Sustainable Subcommittee:** Jennifer Easterbrook reported that the Green Team was finally able to have a meeting after being cancelled and rescheduled several times due to snow. She advised that she had received the Township's (replacement) plaque from the Sustainable Jersey certification. Chairman Sangle requested that she present it to the Township Council on Volunteer Night on April 22, 2015. With regard to sustainable Jersey certification, Ms. Easterbrook noted that she had intended to achieve silver certification in 2015, and the Green Team/Sustainability Subcommittee chose attainable projects including municipal carbon footprint and a solar energy project with the school district, which will need the B.O.E. approval.

With regard to the Green Team, Ms. Easterbrook advised that much of the scheduling was addressed at the March meeting, including a Green Fest to be held in conjunction with the Autumn Lights Festival.

She noted that about \$600. remained from the prior Sustainable Jersey grant for material disseminated at the Autumn Lights Festival. Tim Dalton commented that the Sustainable West Milford ran a Green Fest several years ago and they are willing to share their information with the EC's Green Team. The Commission discussed the amount of space required for the Green Fest, and the need for an appropriate space to have it in conjunction with the Autumn Lights Festival. Mrs. Easterbrook acknowledged that there would be a lot of planning and coordination required. She advised the Commission that there were two new members on the Green Team and they were available to assist with testing on Belchers Creek and become involved in an invasive species initiative. Chairman Sangle advised that the Commission's Annual Report to the Council could be presented in July or August.

**Beaver Dam at Environmental Boardwalk:** Tom Tamayne reported that some of the Environmental Boardwalk boards have raided up, but the water level is holding steady. Chairman Sangle noted that Bob Jonas sent an email to the neighbors to alert them that he would be doing some work at the site.

### **NEW OR CURRENT BUSINESS**

**Belchers Creek Testing Equipment:** Andy Abdul reported that he adjusted the quotes for the testing equipment required for Belchers Creek testing for nitrates and phosphates, since one machine will be required for each. He also reported that he would attend sampling and testing training at the end of April in Raritan. The Commission discussed coordinating their testing with the M.U.A. and the GWLC. Ms. Easterbrook advised that the Passaic County Watershed Ambassador may be able to assist. Chairman Sangle requested that a memo be sent to the Administration and Council anticipating their assistance in getting the equipment purchased, and that the Commission, the M.U.A. and the GWLC will coordinate their efforts to getting this project accomplished. The new committee will be known as the Waterways Testing Subcommittee. The Commission noted the various aspects that need consideration, including plans and procedures, log books, testing dates, etc. Chairman Sangle voiced his determination to get this project moving forward.

### **MINUTES**

The Minutes for the October 6, 2014 Environmental Commission meeting were **unanimously approved** on a **motion** by Don Weise with a **second** by Tom Tamayne.

### **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

*The following correspondence was reviewed by the Environmental Commission at their regular meeting and filed:*

### **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

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

1. Notification dated March 26, 2015 from Maser Consulting, on behalf of the County of Passaic Engineering Department, advising the NJDEP that they are eligible for a Highlands Exemption for reconstruction of the Warwick Turnpike Culvert No. 1600-447 (Warwick Turnpike over Little Green Brook) based on the following criteria: Rehabilitation or reconstruction of transportation systems by a State entity or local government unit provided such activity i. Does not result in a cumulative increase in impervious surface by 0.5 acres or more; ii. Does not involve the ultimate disturbance of 1 or more acres of land, and iii. Does not create new travel lanes or increase the length of an existing travel lane by more than 2640 feet, not including tapers.

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

1. Notification of an application, dated March 25, 2015 from Maser Consulting on behalf of Passaic County Engineering Department, submitted to the NJDEP regarding a Freshwater Wetlands General Permit #10A and Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit for the replacement of the Warwick Turnpike Culvert no. 1600-447 at Warwick Turnpike over Little Green Brook.

2. Notice from the NJDEP Bureau of Dam Safety and Flood Control, dated March 24, 2015, regarding the Gibbs Dam, owned by The Land Conservancy of New Jersey. The letter acknowledges receipt of a report dated January 30, 2015 that states the dam had been partially breached and that the water level rises under 5 feet both during normal conditions and during storm events, with the former lake bed re-vegetated and stable. The NJDEP advises that the dam is considered removed and is not subject to the NJ Dam Safety Standards.
3. Notice from Houser Engineering, dated March 23, 2015, regarding an application to the NJDEP for a Freshwater Wetlands General Permit #25 for the repair of an existing septic system.
4. Letter to the NJDEP, dated March 18, 2015, from the Township of West Milford Environmental Commission, advising that the Commission and Township support the application by Princeton Hydro for a SFY2015 319(h) grant for the development of the in-lake and Belchers Creek monitoring programs and planting phase of the Marshall Hill Stormwater Project. Included with the correspondence was Resolution 2015-112 of the Township Council approving the grant application by Princeton Hydro on behalf of the Township of West Milford.
5. No further Action letter received from the NJDEP, dated March 24, 2015, regarding the removal of a 550 gallon #2 H.O. UGST for Zampella, 124 Union Valley Road, Block 14602; Lot 3.
6. Notification from the NJDEP, dated April 2, 2015, regarding the publication of a Centennial Update of the State Geologic Map. Copies of the poster map may be purchased for \$20. through [www.nj.gov/dep/njgs/pricelst/bedrock250.htm](http://www.nj.gov/dep/njgs/pricelst/bedrock250.htm).

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

1. Memo from the Zoning Board of Adjustment, dated March 26, 2015, advising that they have discussed the Draft Land Use Plan Element for the Township's Master Plan, as requested by the Planning Board. The Zoning Board of Adjustment intends to provide meaningful input within the next several months based on an analysis of the content of variance records from prior years.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – A representative from the GWLC (Paul Sullivan?) gave his contact information to Andy Abdul and advised that if testing indicated hot spots, they may be able to get Garden State Labs to do further testing.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Environmental Commission, the April 6, 2015 meeting was **adjourned** at **9:00p.m.** on a **motion** by Tim Dalton and a **second** by Don Weise.

Approved: August 3, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Tonya E. Cubby, Secretary