

TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MINUTES

September 10, 2007

Chairman, Stephen Sangle, called the meeting to order at 7:28 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Andrew Abdul, Gillian Hemstead, Timothy Metcalf, Douglas Ott, Irene Smith, Bernie Stapleton, Stephen Sangle, GIS Specialist Robert Sparkes, Planning Director William Drew.

Absent: Mary Ellen Gabay, David Watson-Hallowell

APPLICATIONS

EXXON ON THE RUN

Use Variance #0640-0764

Preliminary & Final Site Plan #0620-0274

Bulk Variance #0630-0275

Block 15505; Lot 1

2899 State Highway 23

Proposed convenience store and service station

William Drew, Planning Director, reviewed the application for the Environmental Commission members. He reported that the applicant would be before the Board of Adjustment for conditional use, preliminary and final site plan, and variances for setbacks. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing structure and rebuild the service station with a convenience store. The ingress and egress would be the same as currently exists, and the applicant proposes 6 gasoline dispensers with a canopy and shed for the attendants. The auto repair will not be reconstructed. The applicant will be improving the existing site, including a new septic and state of the art signals to detect gas leaks. An E.I.S. was submitted and there appeared to be no impact to the environment. Commissioner Bernie Stapleton inquired about drainage, and Mr. Drew replied that the drains would be connected to the Route 23 system.

The applicant's attorney, Gregory Meese, Esq., and engineer, Gary Shortino, P.E., were present at the meeting. Chairman Sangle inquired about the change in square footage to impervious area and the applicant's engineer replied "slightly less." Mr. Shortino advised that the lighting would be the same as existing. He reviewed the drainage system and explained that the runoff from the canopy and roof would be collected in seepage pits, thereby reducing the amount that would be directed into the State drainage system. The applicant also proposes to clean the existing storm drains. Chairman Sangle requested that sediment basin units be installed. The applicant's engineer concurred with this request. Mr. Drew noted that all the issues addressed by the Commission will be in his report to the Board.

SCOTT FLAMMER

Soil Fill Application #0760-0283

Block 5611; Lot 4

99 Center Street; LR Zone

Mr. Drew reviewed the application for the Commission members, noting that this was the second time the applicant would be before the Planning Board for a major soil fill permit. The applicant had initially brought in fill to his site, and when cited for violations, he submitted a major soil fill permit application. There were grading issues that needed to be addressed. The Planning Board Engineer and the applicant's engineer worked together to devise a plan that would be acceptable. Mr. Drew noted that to the best of his knowledge, the Board Engineer is satisfied with the revised plan that was submitted. Following review, the Chairman states that the Environmental Commission had no objections to the plan as long as the Planning Board Engineer approved it.

TELECOMMUNICATION APPLICATIONS

None.

GRANT MANAGEMENT AND STATUS REVIEW

ANJEC WEST MILFORD LAKES GRANT- Meeting held prior to this regular meeting at 6:30.

604(B) GRANT APPLICATION:

Rob Sparkes reported that he and Princeton Hydro are involved with a review of the project and are currently working on locating the pesometers. Pat Rector commented that ANJEC is comfortable with the way everything is progressing, adding that the pace is good considering that these are new grants. ANJEC would rather the Commission proceeds slowly and determines what works best.

Mr. Sparkes advised that the Health Department has submitted articles periodically to the newspapers regarding septic maintenance. Pat Rector asked to be apprised of meetings regarding septic maintenance. Mr. Sparkes advised that the Bloustein School was interested in grants for on-site wastewater treatment systems. Ms. Rector commented that Califon and Byram are beginning programs that are considering community septic systems, with holding tanks and communal fields. She has advised them that West Milford has done research on alternative systems, including community septic systems. Commissioner Stapleton asked about locating these fields. Ms. Rector advised that this is a project in the Highlands region, and may qualify for funding by Rutgers.

URBAN FORESTRY GRANTS: Rob Sparkes reported that the balance for tree planting was \$2162.00. Douglas Ott noted that \$2478.00 had been spent on board replacement and repair for the environmental boardwalk. The remaining balance was \$389.84 and it was determined that the balance should be used to replace additional boards. Mr. Sparkes advised that he and the Planning Director

had made a site visit to the boardwalk and it was almost as good as new with all the repairs that have been made. Mr. Ott noted that volunteers Estelle Anderson and Bob Jonas have put in a lot of effort to clean up the site, and they will continue, including getting the kiosk in a more presentable state. He added that they want to try to abate the invasive vegetation, including purple loosestrife. The Commission members concurred that this should be accomplished. Mr. Sparkes expressed concern about the water flooding the boardwalk and Chairman Sangle advised that this can be averted if the branches are cut through and the debris cleared.

2004 GREENWOOD LAKE 319H GRANT:

Rob Sparkes reported that new bids need to be requested as the one bid received was for \$71,371.00. He would be speaking with Pat Rector and Fred Lubnow about rebidding the grant.

2007 STORMWATER IMPLEMENTATION GRANT 319H GRANT:

Rob Sparkes reported that he and Pat Rector are planning a “kickoff meeting” for this and will advise the Commission when further details are available.

STREETSCAPE GRANT:

William Drew reported that he and the Township Engineer had met to discuss the Streetscape Plan. The specifications would be forwarded to the Township Administrator by the end of September and requests would be made for RFP’s. They would be reviewed upon receipt, and it is anticipated that a consultant would be selected by the end of October. The concepts would then be reviewed by various professional staff, Passaic County, the Planning Board, and the Township Council. The preliminary construction plans would be drawn up by the consultant and approved by the Township Council. Mr. Drew advised that it is anticipated work will commence in the Spring of 2008. He also noted that surveys need to be completed, and that easements, including shade tree easements, must be addressed. The Township Engineer has requested that the entire street be included in the survey, which includes a property survey. He added that the design that is approved will be used as a template.

ON GOING BUSINESS

COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN:

Rob Sparkes reported that he and Ronn Farr are reviewing the plan and will be contacting the subcommittee members shortly.

ENERGY COMMITTEE:

Timothy Metcalf reported that the Township Administrator was trying to arrange a presentation for the Township Council meeting by Honeywell and Siemens.

LAKES COMMITTEE:

Irene Smith advised that she had nothing new to report at this time.

WETLAND MITIGATION PROJECT:

Ramapo College-Wallisich Estates Property – Rob Sparkes reported that he has nothing new to report on this project at the present time.

SEPTIC MAINTENANCE:

Gillian Hemstead will be getting updated information and will report at the next meeting. During discussion Douglas Ott commented whether the number of Township homeowners that pump their septic tanks on a yearly basis could be determined. He noted that he had contact with one company that performs about 500 services per year, so the number estimated could be about 1250-1500 a year.

SUSTAINABLE WEST MILFORD: No report.

NEW BUSINESS

AUTUMN LIGHT FESTIVAL:

William Drew advised that funds are available for a vinyl banner for the Environmental Commission to display at Autumn Lights and other events. Andrew Abdul recused himself from discussion on the matter due to a conflict. Mr. Drew continued that the cost would be approximately \$80-\$100. The Commission members unanimously concurred with the expenditure, and further agreed that the banner should be dark green with white letters. Mr. Drew would proceed with the purchase.

Rob Sparkes advised the Commission that the bus tour of environmental sites would cost the Commission approximately \$150.00. He discussed his desire to have three tours during the day: one environmental, one geological, and one historic in nature. Andrew Abdul volunteered to lead the tour on geological features in the Township. Mr. Sparkes commented that he would inquire if Les Lynn would lead the environmental tour. The historic tour would be lead by someone on the Historic Preservation Commission or the Heritage Committee. The Environmental Commission unanimously concurred with the expenditure for the two bus tours. The Heritage Committee would be asked to cover the cost of the historic site tour. The Commission discussed charging fees, registration and waiting lists. Mr. Sparkes would proceed with the arrangements.

BIRCH HILL TREATMENT PLANT AT LINCOLN AVENUE:

Chairman Sangle reported that he and Rob Sparkes made a site visit to the Birch Hill Treatment plant and had chosen the color “Siberian Mist” for the structure.

HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING ACT

The following Highlands determinations were received from the NJ DEP and filed:

Notice of Technical Incompleteness for Bruce Patrono, Block 3705, Lot 27, regarding the construction of a single-family dwelling. The DEP is requesting

clarification of the lot that is to be used for construction, and certification that the dwelling will be used for the owner or an immediate family member, identified by name and relationship to owner.

Notice of Technical Incompleteness dated August 9, 2007 for Ernest Oberer, Block 14201, Lot 14, regarding the minor subdivision of Lots 14 and 15, and the new requirements as a result of this lot line adjustment. A certified site plan must be submitted to the DEP for review to continue.

Notice of Technical Incompleteness dated August 10, 2007 for Bik Gill, Block 16001, Lot 9, regarding documents that must be submitted prior to consideration for exemption.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The following NJ DEP correspondence was received and filed:

Warning letter from the NJ DEP Bureau of Coastal and Land Use Compliance and Enforcement to Nicholas & Michele Yodice, Block 13401, Lot 7, Complaint #239614, regarding filling and grading near a freshwater wetland.

Steven Hawlik, Block 1915, Lot 4 - Authorization for Freshwater Wetlands General Permit #25 and Waiver of Transition Area for Access for a septic alteration.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received and filed:

Copy of letter from Robert Sparkes, dated August 20, 2007, to Dennis Karakos, Cerenzio & Panaro regarding the W.M. M.U.A. Birch Hill Treatment System Upgrade, proposed Treatment Building color selection.

Letter from resident M. Schirripa, 23 Cottage Cove Road, Hewitt, NJ, dated August 2, 2007 regarding the adjoining Lakeview Pub's septic system and its adverse affects on the surrounding properties.

The Commissioners discussed this correspondence and advised that the Health Department should be contacted as soon as possible to ascertain the status of this site.

Pequannock Post, August 2007, Volume 12, Issue 4.

Global Warming: Telling the Local Story – ANJEC sponsored Seminar, 09/20/2007, 8:30-12; Trenton, NJ.

Rutgers NJ Agricultural Experiment Station – Restoration of Native Meadows – 09/10 & 11, 2007; Freshwater Wetland Construction – 09/18, 19 & 20, 2007; Wetland Construction Design – 12/4, 5, & 6, 2007

ANJEC – Transfer of Development Rights-A Market Driven Planning Tool, Resource Paper, dated June 2007

Resolution 2007-298 – Amending the Not-To-Exceed Amount in Resolution 2007-268, the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Professional Service Contract to Princeton Hydro, LLC to Perform an Analysis to Determine the Future Use of West Milford Lake, adopted on August 22, 2007 by the Township Council.

MINUTES

MOTION to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2007 regular meeting by Douglas Ott with a second by Bernie Stapleton. On voice vote all eligible members voted in the affirmative.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

William Drew and Rob Sparkes commented that the West Milford Lakes meeting went well. They advised that another meeting will be held in November and hopefully some of the residents' concerns will be addressed. The Chairman commented that State officials should be present to answer some of the questions of the residents. The Commission further discussed the meeting and the issues that were raised by the lake residents. Pat Rector said that she will attempt to get the dam safety officials to come to West Milford in order to review the technical information that is being disseminated. The members continued to discuss the various concerns of the residents. The Chairman noted that a meeting with State officials may need to be scheduled during the day, separate from the evening information meetings. Gillian Hemstead suggested that a timeline of events that led to the pending dam breach be available for review.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m. on a motion by Bernie Stapleton and a second by Andrew Abdul, followed by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Tonya E. Cubby
Secretary