

**Township of West Milford
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

MINUTES

February 7, 2022

Main Meeting Room

The February 7, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Township of West Milford Environmental Commission was called to order by Chairman Stephen Sangle beginning at 7:05 pm with a reading of the Legal Notice.

The oath of Public Office was administered to new member James Lyons.

ROLL CALL

Present: James Lyons, Thomas Tamayne, Douglas Trainor, Don Weise, Chairman Stephen Sangle.

Absent: James Rogers.

Also Present: Richard Ziembra

Chairman Sangle noted that Dave Ofshinsky was resigning from the Commission due to an impending relocation from the Township.

APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

ELENA & ERIC DYKSTRA

Use Variance #ZB-11-21-26

Block 4401; Lot 1

871 East Shore Road; LR Zone

Seeking: Change use from marina and convenience store to include package liquor and bar.

Subsequent to their review, the Commission made the following comments:

- The plans that were submitted in support of the use variance request for a packaged liquor and bar did not appear to propose an increase to impervious surface.
- The Commission recommended that the applicant consider making one of the parking stalls available for an electric vehicle charging station.
- The Commission did not identify any other environmental concerns based on the information provided.

ON GOING BUSINESS

Belchers Creek Testing: Doug Trainor advised that he did not get out to any of the sites for testing at Belchers Creek. Chairman Sangle explained the testing protocols to new member Jim Lyons regarding Belchers Creek. He noted that Dave Ofshinsky was moving, but he offered to continue compiling information on the spread sheets, although someone may need to assume the responsibility at some point. The data on the spread sheets represents 3 – 4 years of information collected from the samples taken at various locations on Belchers Creek. The data has been shared with the Greenwood Lake Commission since there had been an assumption that the creek was the source of contamination on Greenwood Lake. He noted that with Suez taking over the treatment plants, the water quality has improved substantially. Doug Trainor commented that only nitrate and phosphate tests are conducted since fecal coliform tests are costly.

Tom Tamayne reported that he had been in contact with Lynn De Carlo from Suez and she noted that there had been an issue with the treatment plant in Bald Eagle Village that required a new tank and repairs to the clarifier due to infiltration during rain events, as well as other sources, getting into the system. Doug Trainor remarked that it was a large expense for the repairs that were made. Mr. Tamayne also reported that Veolia (a renewable energy company) had made a bid for Suez, and they were somewhat successful. He also had a meeting recently with Chris Garcia and Lynn DeCarlo and they discussed proposals for considering biodigester plants since Suez has a renewable energy company in addition to their water and sewer companies. They will assess the process to determine if it can be adapted to the smaller plants that Suez operates in the Township. Don Weise commented that the clarity of the water on Pinecliff Lake has improved. Mr. Tamayne inquired if Secchi discs are being used, and the Commission suggested purchasing them from Amazon for use during the Belchers Creek testing.

Community Forestry Mgt. Plan: AAR-Annual Accomplish Report–CEU’s required for 2020 & 21 – Chairman Sangle reviewed some of the history of the Township’s CFMP and Mr. Lyons advised that he has a forestry degree. The Secretary was asked to send the CFMP document to Mr. Lyons for review. Chairman Sangle noted that if the Township needs to obtain the services of a forester, Mr. Lyons may be able to assist in the process.

NNL Reforestation Grant: Chairman Sangle advised that the Administrator had been sent the final close out report on the NNL Reforestation Grant and the recommendation by the Commission to enlist the services of a certified forester for the Township.

Greenwood Lake Bi-State Commission: With the resignation of Janet Little in December, Chairman Sangle noted that Doug Trainor had been requested to attend the meetings of the GWL Bi-State Commission and report back to the Environmental Commission. No report was available for this meeting.

Lakes Committee: Chairman Sangle advised that there were no meetings for the Lakes Committee until March 2022. He noted that the Lakes Committee are comprised of a number of lakes in the Township, with representatives meeting throughout the year to discuss matters that concern the lakes and their associations. Jim Rogers is the Environmental Commission’s liaison to the Lakes Committee.

Open Space Committee: Don Weise and Chairman Sangle reported that The Land Conservancy would be unable to assist the Commission/Township with their plans for open space matters related to the Greenway Plan. Mr. Weise noted that there were several other options including the Highlands Coalition and the NJ Conservation Commission. With regard to the proposal for professional services, Chairman Sangle stated that the residents need to have an opportunity for direct input on the projects, and the proposal from TLC included meetings on Zoom, which he felt may have limited participation from the public. He explained to Mr. Lyons the possibility of using the original open space funds (1.2 million) for a project that would incorporate open space and recreation. Mr. Weise noted that referendum approved by the public is necessary for the funds to be used in this manner, since there will be a fundamental change to the use of the fund that was established for open space acquisitions. He remarked that knowledge of the Highlands and NJDEP regulations is essential for development of the plan, which will be presented to the public. Chairman Sangle suggested a subcommittee meeting to decide what direction the project should take: to establish a trail along Belchers Creek, is infrastructure included? If so, then the referendum would come into play. He stated that the recent open space plan covers the majority of what should be accomplished, but a document is needed to indicate where the money is going to be spent. The Commission wants the public to have input on this and not feel that it is something that is being advanced without their consideration and involvement.

Environmental Contamination Issues: Tom Tamayne reviewed the environmental contamination notices received by the Commission. He made note of the notice for 26 Wooley Road which indicated storage of junk cars and suspected dredging on the site.

Environmental Boardwalk: Tom Tamayne reported that he reached out to several sources in the Meadowlands but did not have any updated information regarding the control of the phragmites at the Environmental Boardwalk. Chairman Sangle remarked that there is equipment that can clear out the phragmites, and Mr. Tamayne noted that something would have to be used to deter the regrowth.

NEW OR CURRENT BUSINESS

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations: The Commission discussed the feasibility of installation of electric vehicle charging stations at trailheads and various locations throughout the Township, and concurred that a concept should be developed for consideration. With regard to powering the stations, Tom Tamayne commented that utility lines would be utilized, but they would be metered. With regard to other vehicles using the space designated for electric vehicle charging, the Commission suggested a placard similar to the handicapped tag to indicate eligibility. The Commission suggested that the local schools be encouraged to install charging stations at the school parking lots. Don Weise commented that if the Township intends to have a recreational community, then parking has to be provided, and Jim Lyons remarked that the recent pandemic was an “eye-opener” with regard to the need for parking at trails and parks. He suggested that state funding should be available for electric vehicle charging stations. Mr. Tamayne recommended one space for charging stations at various locations. Mr. Lyons advised that he will research federal and/or state funding, noting that the cost to the Township may be about \$10,000, but that may be offset by funding available from other sources. Chairman Sangle suggested the possibility of the 1.2 million for open space be used to purchase parcels of land adjacent to parks and trails for EV charging stations. He was advised by the Mayor that if it is for the good of the community, and if it would have an environmental impact, the Township would consider use of the funds for a purpose/project other than open space acquisitions. Mr. Lyons suggested that there may be funds in the new infrastructure bill that he will look into. Chairman Sangle advised that once a concept is firmed up, a meeting with the Mayor will be arranged.

MINUTES

The minutes from the December 13, 2021 Environmental Commission meeting were approved on a **motion** by Don Weise with a **second** by Tom Tamayne.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Correspondence

1. Highlands Applicability Determination application received from Mott MacDonald on behalf of Suez Water New Jersey Inc, dated January 24, 2022, regarding upgrades to existing well sites including the design of PFAS removal treatment systems as well as improvements to ancillary equipment such as well pumps that may be impacted by the treatment improvements.

NJ Department of Environmental Protection Correspondence

1. NJDEP notice, dated January 31, 2022, advising that the Skytop Recycling Center General Approval Modification for Block 6002; Lot 34, Facility ID No 132603, Permit #CBG210002 has been authorized to include changes to the operation as depicted on the revised Site Plan:

Delete all references to roof-based asphalt material and sheet rock, as these materials will no longer be received/stored at the Skytop recycling center.

Increase authorized maximum amount (tons/day) of brush, tree parts, tree stumps, and wood material received at the recycling center, and decrease same for concrete, asphalt, brick, and block material. The maximum amount of combined Class B materials received at the recycling center remains unchanged at 770 tons per day.

Increase authorized stockpile storage capacities for unprocessed and processed brush/tree parts/tree stumps/wood material and decrease same for concrete/asphalt/brick/block material.

Change locations of Class B material stockpiles.

Update the list of authorized equipment used for recycling operations.

2. NJDEP Suspected Hazardous Discharge notification dated January 7, 2022, for 26 Wooley Road, Block 10001; Lot 9, JB Enterprises and Diversification, regarding storage of 100 junk cars and dredging operation in progress with suspected wetlands on the site.
3. NJDEP Community Right to Know Survey for 2021 received from Verizon Business, dated 01-12-22, regarding Oak Ridge Road and Susquehanna RR, Facility ID 35066900032.
4. NJDEP notification, dated January 14, 2022, advising that the Township of West Milford is required to submit a dam safety inspection report by April 15, 2022.

Miscellaneous

1. HEPSCD notice of certification of a soil erosion and sediment control plan, dated, December 22, 2021 received for JAN LLC Grading and Wall, 7 Cottage Cove, Block 3611; Lot 6.
2. HEPSCD notice of certification of a soil erosion and sediment control plan, dated December 14, 2021 received for Thompson Terra Cotte SFD, Terra Cotta Road, Block 3002; Lot 5.
3. HEPSCD notice of certification of a soil erosion and sediment control plan, dated, December 3, 2021 received for Rigg Lake Park Improvements, 3 Lake Park Terrace, Block 4201; Lot 35.
4. Resolution No. 21-1, dated January 18, 2022, of the Passaic County Agriculture Development Board Approving the Applicant's Request for a Site Specific Determination in the Matter of Harper Turner Farms Right to Farm Application.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Richard Ziemba, Pinecliff Lake, remarked that he had lived in several other counties in New Jersey and commented on the work of the Commission, noting that they have a lot of influence on what occurs in the Township.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Sangle noted that the next Environmental Commission meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2022. With no further business to come before the Environmental Commission, the February 7, 2022 regular meeting was **adjourned** at 8:30 p.m. on a **motion** by Doug Trainor and a **second** by Jim Lyons.

Approved: March 7, 2022

Respectfully submitted by

Tonya E. Cubby, Secretary