

**Township of West Milford
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

MINUTES

May 2, 2022

Main Meeting Room

The May 2, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Township of West Milford Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:00 pm with a reading of the Legal Notice.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None.

Also Present: Chris Garcia

PRESENTATIONS – None.

APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

HOLY INSTITUTION PANGAGIA SOUMELA

Use & Bulk Variance #ZB-06-19-0-10

Block 6303; Lot 7

71 Marshall Hill Rd.; CC Zone

Seeking: Use and Bulk Variance approvals from the Board of Adjustment for a contractor storage yard and 1st and 2nd floor residential use in an existing commercial building.

The Environmental Commission reviewed the above referenced Board of Adjustment application requesting use and bulk variances with preliminary and final site plan approvals for an expansion of an existing house of worship. Subsequent to their review, the Commission made the following comments:

- The Commission noted that the proposed additions, a second story on an existing building, new bathhouse and 11 storage sheds, in addition to a number of entryways and overhangs, will increase the impervious coverage to 18.4% of the site where 60% is permitted.
- The Commission noted that the bathhouse is requiring a new advanced sewage treatment system to accommodate the design requirements of 4500+ gal per day with proposed new septic beds.
- Details on the plans indicate roof leaders to underground conductors to a stormwater recharge area, which appears to be an existing seepage pit which has been relocated per the plans submitted.
- The Commission did not have any other environmental concerns based on the information provided.

IRE LLC, MOOVE IN STORAGE

Use Variance #ZB-10-20-10

Block 4601; Lot 16

900 Burnt Meadow Road; R-4 Zone

Seeking: Bulk Variance approval from the Board of Adjustment to construct a 4800 s.f. garage (accessory building) where 1500 s.f maximum is permitted in the R-4 Zone.

The Environmental Commission reviewed the above referenced Board of Adjustment application requesting use and bulk variance approval. Subsequent to their review, the Commission made the following comments:

- The Commission noted that the lighting calculations indicate that there should be no real impact on the surrounding properties with the additional site lighting.
- The Commission noted that 3 inlets have been added to accommodate the increased runoff created by the additional impervious coverage.
- The Commission recommended that the applicant consider implementation of a technology to slow the flow of the runoff from the additional impervious coverage (71% to proposed 75%). Technologies such as rain gardens or rain barrels may minimize the impact of the additional impervious surface.

KEN TRUMPER

Bulk Variance ZB-03-22-04

Block 9302; Lot 11

80 Starlight Road; R-3 Zone

Seeking: Bulk variance approval to install a 6ft fence along property line.

The Environmental Commission reviewed the above referenced Board of Adjustment application requesting a bulk variance approval for installation of a fence along the property line. The Commission did not identify any environmental concerns based on the information provided.

ON GOING BUSINESS

Belchers Creek Testing: Commissioner Jim Rogers reported on recent testing of Belchers Creek. He reported that he and Commissioner Doug Trainor obtained several samples during the past several weeks. April 28, John Street: 1.9 for phosphorous and 0.0 for nitrates. April 29, three samples were taken - Pinecliff Lake: 0.0 for phosphorous and 0.0 for nitrates; Pinecliff Lake Dam: 0.3 for phosphorous and 0.0 for nitrates; Stowaway: 0.1 phosphorous and 0.5 for nitrates. Chairman Sangle advised that Doug Trainor will take the course for a boat license so that he can operate the Jon boat on Belchers Creek.

Shade Tree Committee: No update at this time.

NJDEP NNL Forestry Grant Project Closeout: Chairman Sangle advised that there may be issues with the tree planting due to the time that has lapsed between the last inspection from the NJDEP until now. He informed the Administrator that the Commission was not directly involved with the inspections by the DEP forestry staff, and recommended that the Township should contract with a certified forester and act as intermediary between the DEP and the Township with regard to corrective measures to achieve grant compliance. Chairman Sangle requested Commissioner Jim Lyons to contact the Administrator to determine if there was anything that can he can do to assist with closeout of the grant. Jim Lyons noted that he is not a certified forester, but he will contact the State Forestry office.

Community Forestry Management Plan: No update was available at this time.

Greenwood Lake Bi-State Commission: Doug Trainor advised that he was unable to attend the recent GWL Bi-State Commission meeting, but he spoke to Paul Zarrillo and was able to get updates from the minutes posted on the GWLC website. He reported that at the last meeting, the GWLC discussed dock numbering, which will require approval from the dock owners. GWLC is seeking grant money for water quality projects, and they would like to use

the Belchers Creek testing results from the Environmental Commission. Chairman Sangle noted that there is a reciprocal agreement to share the Belchers Creek test results.

Lakes Committee: Jim Rogers advised that Kathy Coyman from the Township Health Dept. was at the recent Lakes Committee meeting to review the beach management regulations, which have not changed from last year. It was reported at the meeting that many of the private lakes will have difficulty with finding lifeguards for their lakes. Lakes are required to have one lifeguard with 100 feet or less of shoreline.

Mr. Rogers also reported that a representative from Princeton Hydro was present at the meeting to report that the Highland's Lake Study was partially completed and a draft should be ready by the Fall 2022. With regard to obtaining testing samples, Princeton Hydro will conduct the tests, analyze their data to include in the report. It is anticipated that by 2023 a report will be available to the Township. Mr. Rogers noted that a consortium will be created through the grant project. He further noted that the private lakes could not obtain or qualify for state or federal grants without the corroboration and assistance of the Township.

Open Space Committee: Don Weise reported that there are no large parcels available for open space acquisition. A plan for trail parking has been discussed and he noted that the parcels that can be used for trail parking should be pursued. Jim Rogers commented that on Airport Road, the old entrance to the former Jungle Habitat was paved recently and there is parking for 25 cars, adding that there are a lot of mountain bikers in the area. Mr. Weise remarked that the site has a network of biking trails that connect to hiking, adding that JORBA (Jersey Off Road Biking Association) and NY/NJ Trail Conference established a joint effort with regard to trails.

Environmental Contamination Issues: Tom Tamayne reported on several contamination issues that he received, as well as those listed on the agenda.

Green Team–Sustainability Committee: No update at this time.

Environmental Boardwalk – Mr. Tamayne reported that he was successful in having the beavers trapped by the trapper in December, and the trapper advised that he would break the dam. If the beavers returned, he would trap them again. Mr. Tamayne noted that the process was fairly simple, in-season, and the NJDEP was helpful in getting this accomplished. He suggested that the last time the beavers were trapped was approximately five years ago, so the trapping was successful to deter the beavers for several years. He also advised the Commission that the Boardwalk was under water again the week prior to this meeting, and if it is still under water, he will contact the Public Works department for assistance. Chairman Sangle suggested that the Commissioners identify some of the vegetation that can be removed in the spring, and Mr. Tamayne observed that the weed overgrowth blocks any view from the boardwalk. He noted that the phragmites have taken over, and they may have to be removed from the roots. Chairman Sangle commented that herbicides may be needed to remove them since pulling them from the roots would not be feasible. He suggested that maybe they can be cleared with a 5 foot wide path along the boardwalk. Mr. Weise offered to contact a specialist who has worked in the lower Hudson Valley for an opinion on phragmite removal.

NEW OR CURRENT BUSINESS

Greenway Project: Chris Garcia reported that the Township was closer to obtaining a grant from the Highlands Council, approximately \$40,000 for a planning grant, that the Township Planner has been coordinating between the Township and the Highlands Council. He advised that the planner's office will complete a drone flyover of the Belchers Creek corridor, and once the data is available, he will share it with the Commission. Mr. Garcia noted that he is involved in reviewing potential parcels that can be utilized to enhance access and use of trails, which will

encourage tourism. Parking at trailheads, EV charging stations are among the items being considered. Don Weise commented that accommodations will be planned for hikers, bikers, trail runners and equestrian use. Mr. Garcia referenced overlay maps and may reach out for assistance with this. Chairman Sangle remarked that the Township used to employ a GIS Specialist, Rob Sparkes, and he could create all the overlay maps.

Tree Removal – Camelot Estates – Chairman Sangle advised the Commission that he had just been made aware of this matter today and a memo has been sent to the Administrator. He was advised the the reason for the tree removal was to eliminate ATV and dirt bike usage, and since the tree removal was done on Township property, there is no direct violation. Chairman Sangle advised that the Environmental Commission cannot provide any further information other than the fact that the trees were removed, and the Commission is at the forefront to protect trees, whenever possible. This matter will be investigated further.

Bubbling Springs – 2022 ANJEC OSS Grant - Bubbling Springs Nature Walk – Chairman Sangle advised that the grant had been submitted on Friday, April 29, 2022 and has been received by ANJEC. The Commission/Township will receive notification by May 10 regarding the award of the grant.

ANJEC – Plastic Pollution Reduction Act – The Commission reviewed the plastic reduction act, scheduled to go into effect on May 4, 2022. Cloth or reusable bags will be required to be brought to retail facilities since bags will not be distributed. There were exceptions to the law, including plastic bags for dry cleaners, and straws will be available upon request. Jim Rogers noted that people may not be aware, but those that do should be prepared.

MINUTES

The minutes from the April 2022 meeting will be available at the next meeting for review and approval.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

The following correspondence was reviewed by the Commission:

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Correspondence

1. Notification dated April 15, 2022 of an application being filed with the NJDEP for Verizon-West Milford Central Office – 121 Lincoln Ave, B 6606; L 1 for a malfunctioning ISSDS (septic) with a Highlands Exemption #4 being requested.
2. Highlands Council Interactive Environmental Resource Inventory Training – May 18 and May 24, registration required, deadline May 13.

NJ Department of Environmental Protection Correspondence

1. NJDEP-Bureau of Solid Waste - Initial Permit-#TRP210001, Facility ID #942750, for the Solid Waste Facility for Skytop Recycling Inc, 80 Airport Road, B 6002; L 34, regarding a proposal to accept and process up to 99 tons per day of solid waste ID 13 and 13C. Facility will be open Mon–Fri, 6am–3:30pm, and up to 6pm for additional processing, loading and maintenance, and also on Sat 6am–12pm, closed on Sun. Comments on this application must be submitted to the Bureau by April 28, 2022.
2. NJDEP No Further Action notice, dated April 8, 2022, received for 1542 Greenwood Lake Tpk, B 3904; L 2, PI #980251 regarding removal of two 1000 gal #2 HO UST.
3. NJDEP Suspected Hazardous Discharge notice, dated April 7, 2022, Case # 22-04-06-1148-56, regarding 8 Walnut St, B 16003; L 2 for the removal of a 1000 gal UST; clean-up pending.

4. NJDEP Suspected Hazardous Discharge notice, dated April 5, 2022, Case # 22-04-04-2017-38, regarding multiple trucks on the property at the corner of Wallisch Ave and Madelyn Ave that appear to be sinking into the ground and suspected leaking of various motor vehicle fluids.
5. Treatment Works Approval and On Site Wastewater Treatment and Disposal System application, dated April 1, 2022, submitted to the NJDEP by Houser Engineering regarding 1943 Union Valley Road, B 3504; L 1.
6. NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands GP #17 = 1615-09-0033.1 LUP 210001 and Flood Hazard Area Indiv Permit = 1615-09-0033.1 LUP 210003 regarding B 9302; L 16, Nosenzo Pond Road, for the construction of a walkway and boardwalk around an existing structure within the riparian zone of Nosenzo Pond and the transition area of the on-site adjacent freshwater wetlands on the site.
7. NJDEP application notification, dated April 27, 2022, regarding Freshwater Wetlands and Flood Hazard Area Indiv Permit, regarding the NJDOT Rt 23 Bridge over Pequannock River/Hamburg Tpk. The new replacement bridge will be 417 ft long between abutments, and 84 ft wide with approximately 22 ft of the widening occurring on the west side of the existing bridge. During construction of the four-lane bridge, traffic is proposed to travel on a diversionary road with a temporary bridge constructed to the west side of the existing bridge.

Miscellaneous

1. ANJEC newsletter
2. USFS EAB Reforestation Matching Grants – Emerald Ash Borer Urban Forestry Reforestation Projects, 100,000 to 500,000 grants available.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following members of the public were present to provide comments to the Environmental Commission regarding tree removal near Camelot Estates:

David Mussina, 9 King Arthur Court

Mike Kelly, 57 Camelot

Donna Huber, 56 Camelot

Following comments from the residents, and discussion with the Commission, Chairman Sangle advised that he and the Commissioners will look into the matter and request information, but noted that the Commission does not have any authority, other than as an advisory body to the Township Council. The residents were encouraged to bring this matter to the Governing Body and Administration for a resolution to the situation.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Environmental Commission, the May 2, 2022 regular meeting was **adjourned** at 9:00 p.m. on a **motion** by Chairman Sangle and a **second** by Jim Rogers.

Approved: July 11, 2022

Respectfully submitted by

Tonya E. Cubby, Secretary