

Harrison Township Environmental Commission  
114 Bridgeton Pike  
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062  
Phone: 856-478-411

Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2008

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Present: Phil Grous, Bob Manson, Luke Oman, Jeff Summerton

The monthly meeting of the Harrison Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on February 6, 2008, at the Harrison Township Municipal Building, the Commissioner, Phil Grous, being in the chair.

Public Attendance: Vincent Gangemi was in attendance. Vince advised Phil Grous to contact Sharon Chew at the Recreation office for an application for the Environmental Commission's Booth at Harrison Township Day. Vince is also interested in the Harris landfill closure.

One site plan was reviewed – Lot 40, Block 2.01, Colonial Bank Building. The environmental impact statement submitted with the plan was also reviewed. There are no objections from EC regarding this plan. The EC will submit a memo to the Planning Board.

The 322 by-pass project was discussed. Once final plans are submitted the Commission will be able to address the environmental impact to the Township. Three public meetings will be conducted by Gloucester County once the plans are in. No meetings are scheduled yet. The EC will send a letter to the Gloucester County Freeholders endorsing the concerns expressed by the Historic Preservation Committee in their letter of 10/11/07.

An update from the Pond Committee will be provided at March 5 EC meeting. The Pond Committee meeting is on February 6.

The Henry Harris landfill closure was discussed. Bob Manson reported on behalf of the Planning Board. The landfill sub-committee conducted interviews with five environmental consultants who responded to the Township's request for proposals for an independent company to review the closure documents and testing results of the landfill. There are mixed opinions on the Planning Board as to how soon, or if, the consulting engineer should be hired. The Planning Board's next meeting is February 7.

Phil Grous drafted a memo to the Planning Board and Township Committee outlining the Commission's need for more information concerning the fill material acceptability levels at the landfill. Phil has invited representatives of Pennoni Engineers and the DEP to attend an EC meeting to help the EC better understand the fill acceptability levels but no representatives have attended. Therefore, the EC endorses the hiring of an independent environmental consultant who can shed light on these issues. A motion was made by Bob Manson to forward the memo to the Planning Board and Township Committee; the motion was seconded by Jeff Summerton and unanimously passed.

Vince mentioned that the neighbors around the landfill are very concerned about damage to their wells

Regarding the septic ordinance, the Environmental Commission recommends that the Planning Board rely on the established DEP requirements.

No mail was received by the EC Commission. It was noted that no material fill acceptability reports have been received recently.

The EC received a packet of information regarding alternative fuel powered vehicles. The Commission will continue to research alternative fuel power. When the need arises for replacement of municipal vehicles, the Commission hopes to having enough information to consider the purchase of an alternative fuel vehicle.

One of the Commission's goals is to inform the public on environmental issues. Jeff Summerton prepared an article on honeybee colony collapse disorder (CCD) which has caused a significant loss in the bee populations across the United States. His article will be submitted for publication in the Township newsletter's Spring edition.

Other articles are planned – Luke Oman will be preparing a short, brief series of articles on the climate change. These articles will touch on subjects that the community can relate to, for example, compact fluorescent light bulbs.

Phil Grous will write on the topic of Rachel Carson, author of "Silent Spring". Rachel wrote about damage to nature caused by the use of pesticides. Her writings began the modern environmental movement.

Another issue the Environmental Commission wishes to address is plastic shopping bags. The solution is not to just switch to paper bags. The public should be encouraged to use reusable bags which can be purchased right in our local grocery stores and local businesses should be encouraged to use recyclable plastic and paper bags. It was noted that San Francisco has outlawed the use of plastic bags; there are efforts being made in California to ban their use statewide.

The Township is currently acquiring open space lands. The Commission feels that a viable usage for those lands would be for the planting of trees. Trees are important absorbers of CO<sub>2</sub> and then replenish the oxygen in the air. Phil Grous will communicate with the Township Committee regarding this potential usage.

There are still three vacancies on the Environmental Commission. Everyone on the Commission will continue to try and find interested parties. A mailing list of members of

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South Jersey Land and Water Trust (SJLWT) has been obtained which will be used to contact potential new members from this group of similarly concerned individuals.

A motion was made by Bob Manson for approval of the January, 2008 minutes. The motion was seconded by Luke Oman and unanimously approved.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Bob Manson to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Luke Oman. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.