

Present: Phil Grous, Stan Hershey, Bob Manson, Doris Brady, Luke Oman, Jeff Summerton, Adrienne Roberto, David DiPietro

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

Public Attendance: Donna Grasso, Mullica Hill, NJ, was present.

The Commission voted on a person to fill the spot of alternate member #2. It was a unanimous vote, with one abstention, and the Chair will make a recommendation to the Township for appointment.

A motion was made by Bob Manson to approve the April 2, 2008 minutes. The motion was seconded by Doris Brady and the vote was unanimous, with one abstention.

Two site plans were reviewed. Both plans were submitted by Cricket Communications seeking approval to place a new antenna on a tower which already supports existing antennas. The two locations are: (1) Site # PHL 293-A – 413 Swedesboro Road; and (2) Site # PHL 534-A – 4H Fairgrounds. The Commission considered the radio frequency energy generation. The Commission agrees with the plans but defers to the Township Engineer for their recommendations.

The Committee Chairman, Phil Grous, will be appearing in a question-and-answer news short with some students from Clearview High School as part of their media class. According to Doris Brady, this short will be shown at the high school during homeroom. The questions prepared by the students center around the Henry Harris Landfill.

Doris Brady reported on Harrison Township Day. Doris took the first shift and had many people come by first thing in the morning. The other members reported that it was busy throughout the day with people taking a genuine interest in environmental issues. The investment for the sign and shirts paid off well. The sign brought people over and the shirts provided us with a professional appearance. Our giveaways included, among other things, fly swatters, combs, literature, seeds, red oak trees and reusable shopping bags. The entire day was deemed a success by the Commission.

Next year's subcommittee for Harrison Township Day planning will be Adrienne Roberto, Dave DiPietro and Bob Manson. We thank them for volunteering.

We welcomed Mayor Manzo to the meeting. He swore in our newest member, Adrienne Roberto. We are glad to have Adrienne on the Commission.

The Commission then discussed the Harris Landfill closure. Doris and Phil presented a draft of a second informational pamphlet that we hope to be able to distribute. This pamphlet was begun last year following the March, 2007 special public meeting regarding the landfill closure. Doris expressed concern that this draft does not give enough current information. Phil and Doris will work up a final format for submission to the Township Committee for their approval. We can either work some additional new information into the current pamphlet or follow-up the 2nd pamphlet with an update in a few months. We are still trying to find a cost-effective method for public distribution of these pamphlets as well as the other information articles our members are working on at present. We do need to get information out to the public to alleviate any fears they have on the landfill issue and to try to convey the Commission's position that the closure is being done in line with the guidelines outlined by NJDEP. The Commission will approach the owner of the landfill for permission to use his taped copy of the March 2007 meeting for possible online viewing.

Donna Grasso, a Mullica Hill resident, inquired as to what would be put on the landfill area once it was closed. Bob Manson informed us that the Harrison Township Planning Board is the official redevelopment agent for the landfill. No decisions have been made. Some of the ideas that have been suggested were for light industrial building such as a truck terminal, soccer fields, an equestrian center. Any recommendations will be presented at public hearings. The closure will take 8-10 years to complete.

Jim Woods did not attend the meeting so we will await the June meeting for Jim's Township Committee report.

Phil Grous did attend the May 5 Township Committee meeting. The 322 bypass was the main discussion. The environmental concern is the crossing of wetlands in two areas. The bypass will be outside of the bog turtle area. The County has issued some reports of an environmental nature. Stan Hershey will contact the County about being copied on those reports.

Stan Hershey brought up an important point – whenever wetlands are encroached, compensation must be made to the State for the encroachment. Compensation can be in the form of monetary payment, services or other methods. The Commission needs to make a strong push to assure that the compensation is made to Harrison Township as opposed to another area in the state. This compensation could be of great assistance in the Mullica Hill Pond reclamation project. It appears that the County may have to issue an environmental impact study on the project so we will watch for this.

Bob Manson reported that the County submitted a preliminary application to the DEP showing what is planned for the bypass. If the DEP approves the preliminary application, the project moves to the design phase. The design phase should be completed by 2009 –

2010, with construction beginning in 2011. The first area scheduled is the Walters Road / Clems Run Road area, which is the end of the bypass.

The Planning Board report was made by Bob Manson. A site plan waiver was granted for two practice football fields to be built on the 4H grounds. Bob also mentioned that the age 55 and over community planned across from Harrison House is still pending before the Zoning Board. The final plan is awaiting the new COAH regulations.

The Pond Committee report was given by Luke Oman. The first focus will be to make sure the pond is healthy. The Committee will review the recommendations in the final Princeton Hydro report which is due around September. Balancing the fish population is another short term goal. The NJDOT 322 dam and bridge project is scheduled to start in 2010. Since the bridge will be moved, it affords more space for pond accessibility. A long term goal would be to connect the pond to the Main Street area by either a walking ramp or steps.

Adrienne Roberto has completed an article on the rainwater and will circulate it around for the members to read. The article will then be submitted to the Township Committee for approval and we will try to get it published in the local newspaper.

At the next EC meeting we hope to schedule an ANJEC representative to come for a short instructional presentation on reading site plans. We are considering beginning the June meeting at 7:00 p.m.

No one at the meeting could confirm whether or not any gypsy moth spraying was done. It was scheduled to begin on May 1.

There being no further business, Doris Brady made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Stan Hershey; all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.