

Metuchen Environmental Commission
Minutes
May 20, 2009

Present: Kathy Busch, Planning Board Liason
Pat Donahue
Mark Herzberg, Chairman
Tom Rudel
Ann Sardone
Will Waldron, Councilmember
Brian Weeks
Arline Zatz

Absent: Steve Toth
Mike Vissichelli

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by the Chairman, Mark Herzberg. The minutes of the April 15, 2009 meeting were approved and accepted.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Copy of notice from the Metuchen Chamber of Commerce stating that the Environmental Commission is registered to participate in the Country Fair scheduled for October 3, 2009.
- Flyer announcing the start of the Junebug Artfest (scheduled for every Friday in June, 2009) and requesting participation in the Pet Parade scheduled for the last Friday of the Junebug; June 26. Pet registration begins at 7:00 pm and the parade is at 7:30 pm.
- NJDEP Bulletin for April 22, 2009.
- NJDEP Bulletin for May 13, 2009 regarding permits for the Shell Service station for storm water runoff.
- Letter to Heather Barrett's boss praising service to this Commission and her work on the River Friendly Workshops.

OLD BUSINESS

Thomas Pond Park

Money for the barley straw is available and Mike Vissichelli will be reimbursed.

An oil sheen on the pond was reported by a resident. Mark Herzberg investigated and could not confirm.

The idea of building a pedestrian bridge at one end of the pond in order to allow for water plants to be added was discussed.

Edgar School and Pool Parking Lot

A second large tree has come down.

There was a discussion about moving the trees around on the island at the pool's parking lot.

Dog Park

Signs have been posted to invite dogs, and their owners, to walk in the Memorial Day Parade. Interested dogs should meet at the Pearl Street Parking Lot by 9:00 am on May 25, 2009.

Open Space

The Greenway Extension Initiative was supposed to go through but, to date, has not.

Tom Rudel drafted a letter to Freeholder Rios regarding the Greenway Extension.

Senator Lautenberg's office was contacted to inquire about the lack of response regarding the Greenway Extension.

Brian Weeks reported that there is still water flooding in the Greenway and expressed concern about the still water bringing mosquitoes. It was decided that Brian Weeks would contact the Mosquito Control Commission.

Tree Pruning

Borough Attorney, David Frizell, is investigating to whom at BPU one might send a complaint.

Members discussed drafting a letter to DEP about permits granted to PSEG to enter wetlands in order to prune trees.

Brian Weeks suggested a letter be drafted from the Borough to BPU about the violation of BPU regulations by PSEG. He also suggested that the Borough simultaneously contact DEP, with regard to PSEG's request for permits to enter the wetlands in order to "cut and clean", and clearly state that the Borough does not want those permits granted unless tree pruners are accompanied by a certified arborist.

Will Waldron reported that Mayor Vahalla showed representatives of PSEG some of the destruction of trees around town.

Will Waldron reported that the Borough would use WebEm to notify residents of mosquito spraying.

Dismal Swamp

The Dismal Swamp is "looking good", according to Pat Donahue.

Recycling

Mark Herzberg will check with Evelyn Grant about getting a copy of the application for the Recycling Tonnage Grant.

The Environmental Commission would like to reach out to the DPW, particularly Fred Hall, so that communication between this commission, the DPW and the public continues to improve.

There was a discussion about the perceived lack of recycling in restaurants, businesses, schools and parks around town. It was decided that the commission should contact Fred Hall, of the DPW, to discuss.

It was decided that the Board of Education should be contacted to discuss recycling rates.

Global Warming

Grants for energy audits were submitted for the following buildings: Borough Hall, the senior center, the library and the DPW.

Planning Board

There was no report from the Planning Board.

NEW BUSINESS

Earth Day

The area surrounding the pool and the pool parking lot were cleaned.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission is scheduled for June 17, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Busch