

**BOROUGH of METUCHEN**  
**Environmental Commission**  
**Minutes of the July 15, 2009 Regular Meeting**

A meeting of the Metuchen Environmental Commission was held on Wednesday, July 15, 2009 at 7:00 PM at Borough Hall. Present were: Will Waldron, Council Liaison, Mark Herzberg, Chair, Tom Rudel, Steve Toth, Ann Sardone, Kathy Busch, Planning Board Liaison, and Pat Donahue.

Absent were: Arline Zatz, Mike Vissichelli and Brian Weeks.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

The minutes of the June 17, 2009 meeting were approved and accepted with only minor revisions.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- NJDEP Bulletin of July 8 contained a request for freshwater wetlands delineation for the building on the SW corner of Main Street and Amboy Avenue. K&W Realty LLC of Bayhead would like to expand the parking lot. Since a house owned by the same group is adjacent, we suspect a change of use will have to go before the Zoning Board. Our concern is that this property abuts the Greenway. Runoff would be an issue.
- NJDEP Bulletin of June 24 contained a notice to settle and enforcement action regarding Menlo Park Plaza LLC regarding disturbance of wetlands.
- Members received an invitation to the October 8 Middlesex County Green Expo.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Thomas Pond Park**

The water quality looks great! Mike Vissichelli was reimbursed for the purchases he made for the barley straw project. Kathy Busch reported fish being caught in the pond. Shakespeare's, "The Taming of the Shrew," will be performed there on Friday evening.

**Planning Board**

- The Mona Lisa Café plans to open this fall in the building on Route 27 that once housed the photocopy business. The owners are negotiating to also obtain the adjacent space now used by Better Homes, which is owned by Dr. Rossi.
- A third massage parlor in town has opened where the cell phone store once was behind the bagel store and across from See More Appliances.
- Jim Constantine will make a formal presentation regarding the traffic circulation plan. There was discussion that this plan should also include bike and pedestrian access. While pedestrian safety is a prime concern, the plan does not address biking.
- Kathy reported that minor language changes to the change of use ordinance were adopted by the board.

- Mr. Frizell owns three homes behind the liquor store on Main Street. All three will be demolished and a condo development built. There will be retail stores on the first floor with parking in the back. The 10 – 16 units will be three stories high.
- The 2011 revisions to the Master Plan were discussed. We would like to see the revision include green building codes.

### **Dismal Swamp**

Steve Toth reported that he visited the area and will contact DPW for some maintenance, mainly to remove vegetation from the path to allow for better access. The Green Acres sign is gone and he will request that a new one be installed to replace it.

### **Greenway/Open Space**

- Pat Donahue attended the Audubon Society walk from the Triple C Ranch. Despite the poor weather just prior to the event, there were 70 people in attendance. The size of the group made touring the area difficult but indicated a high level of interest in this outdoor activity. Audubon provided some information about wildlife in the area, played bird calls, and discussed their research objectives. There was discussion regarding the extension of the Greenway, preservation of the swamp, and current legislation.
- A small group will be meeting at 10:00 at the Senior Citizen Center to move forward with the planning grant for the extension. A walk to Woodbrook Pond is planned.
- Senator Lautenberg was asked to intervene to establish communication with Conrail.

### **Dog Park**

The June Bug event was rained out and all outdoor activities were cancelled or moved indoors. As such, the planned pet parade did not occur.

### **Recycling**

The group discussed the need to collect data to prepare for this year's Country Fair. There was agreement that the signs at the waste receptacles at the pool should be changed to read "recyclables only" to encourage recycling and avoid confusion about what should be placed in the containers.

### **Edgar School and Pool Parking Lot**

The slate path installed at the pool is a lovely addition to this open space. There are plans to thin the trees at one end and move a planting into the school circle to replace one that died there.

### **Global Warming**

- Will, Mark and Brian met earlier in the week to discuss NJDEP grant opportunities regarding greenhouse gases. They came up with two ideas. Monies could be used to study the feasibility of using geothermal energy for borough hall and the library. Monies could be used to switch borough vehicles over to alternative fuels. The science in this area does not support the hypothesis that greenhouse gases will be reduced. The group discussed other ideas, such as expanding the shuttle service. There was discussion regarding the fate of the shuttle with all members agreeing that

keeping it is important. The grant application must be submitted by the borough by July 31.

- The first meeting regarding the municipal energy audit is scheduled for tomorrow.
- Ann Sardone submitted a list of potential membership in the Green Team. Everyone will peruse the list, deleting or adding names and organizations as we work toward the establishment of this group.

### **Tree Pruning**

Nelson Tree Service left several trunks along Grove Street. No one knows if any complaints regarding their work have been submitted.

There is now also work clearing areas above the Buckeye pipeline that should be monitored.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM. There is no meeting in the month of August. Therefore, the next meeting of the Metuchen Environmental Commission will take place on September 16, 2009 at 7:00 PM at Borough Hall. Plans for the Country Fair will be finalized at that time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patricia Donahue  
Acting Secretary

# **AGENDA**

## **Metuchen Environmental Commission**

**July 2007**

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**Correspondence**

**Old Business**

**Thomas Park Pond**

**Metuchen High School**

**Edgar School and Pool Parking Lot**

**Tree Farm**

**Dog Park**

**Open Space**

**Greenway**

**Dismal Swamp**

**Dry Cleaners**

**Recycling**

**Global Warming**

**New Business**