

BOROUGH of METUCHEN
Environmental Commission
Minutes of the July 20th, 2011 Regular Meeting

A meeting of the Metuchen Environmental Commission was held on Wednesday, July 20th 2011 at 7:00 PM at Borough Hall. Present were: Ann Sardone, Mark Herzberg, Chair, Tom Rudel, Brian Weeks, Joe Schaffer, and Dorothy Rasmussen.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. The minutes of the June 2011 meeting were approved. Ann will send the minutes to Katherine Harris, the town clerk.

CORRESPONDENCE

Pat Donahue tendered her resignation as a member of the Metuchen Environmental Commission after 20 years of continuous service. The commission members will put a resolution of appreciation before the Borough Council that will recognize Pat for all of her service to the community over the past twenty years. The commissioners then discussed possible replacements for Pat.

OLD BUSINESS

Centennial Park: The Girl Scouts presented their completed renovation of Centennial Park to the town at a ceremony at the park entrance on Grove Avenue. Mark, Brian, and Tom attended the event. All of those present expressed admiration for the tremendous work done by the Girl Scouts.

Greenway Extension: On 6/28/11 Mark and Brian attended the meeting of the Middlesex Transportation Coordinating Committee to promote the idea of getting the county to assume a more active role in getting Conrail to relinquish their claim to the overgrown rail line between the current greenway and the Dismal Swamp. The discussions at the meeting also centered on extending the greenway into Perth Amboy. This effort would broaden the participation to include Perth Amboy in the Greenway effort. It remains unclear what kind of agreement Conrail is willing to conclude with the town or the county. The discussion kept coming back to the different ways to keep the Greenway extension issue 'alive' and, in so doing, getting Conrail to act.

Dismal Swamp: If the Greenway is extended, the Army Corps of Engineers (through their Green Brook Project) might be a possible source of funds for wetlands restoration in the swamp's headwaters in Metuchen (the Gulton property).

Edgar School: Brian and Mark went over to the pool parking lot and trimmed some of the trees. Discussion ensued about planting additional trees in the parking lot this coming fall.

Recycling: A vigorous discussion about the proposed changes in town-wide recycling occurred. At some point shortly into 2012 the town will reorganize recycling with trucks picking up all recycling at one time, all collected in a single container, on the same day as the garbage, in another container, will be picked up. This system should produce some labor savings for the town, which are sorely needed giving the impending retirements of workers at the Department of

Public Works. Woodbridge has recently adopted this system of recycling, and they report an increase in the recycling rates and in the volume of recycled materials. Their experience has encouraged Metuchen officials to adopt a similar system. The town will need to purchase a new recycling truck, which is currently on order and being built.

NEW BUSINESS

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM. The next meeting of the Metuchen Environmental Commission will take place on September 21, 2011 at 7:00 PM at Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Rudel