

BOROUGH of METUCHEN
Environmental Commission
Minutes of the April 17th, 2013 Regular Meeting

A meeting of the Metuchen Environmental Commission was held on Wednesday, April 17th 2013 at 7:00 PM at Borough Hall. Present were: Mark Herzberg, Chair, Dan Hirsch, Tom Rudel, Beth Strom, Brian Weeks, Joe Schaffer, and Dorothy Rasmussen. Absent: Angela Dohl Visitors: Nicolai Krebs and Allan Krebs.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Scout Nicolai Krebs from Troop 17 explained a proposed Eagle Scout project that would refurbish and construct a trail in the southern portions of the Dismal Swamp. He described the project with slides. The commissioners made encouraging comments. Troop 17 would provide the labor for the project. The total length of the trail will be about 1000 meters. Jim Constantine will review the project and advise the town.

The minutes of the March 2013 meeting were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Power plant construction issues in New Jersey, including the current court case were discussed. The politics and practices of the power plants came in for extensive discussion. The new plants would be built to code, which would upgrade the power plants in the state, The old coal power plants will continue to operate.

The commission received an advisory notice about construction near Mill Brook. The sewer plan map is sent around. Joe Schaffer will examine the planned construction.

OLD BUSINESS

An earth day retrospective – doing the work when others are using the greenway – is good because it publicizes the work of the commission. Bike – Walk would like to continue the clean-up on the greenway. The county would be advised. Trash management along the greenway came up for discussion.

Edgar Woods

This initiative will be tabled until Ms. Graziano has a better sense about how to proceed. The possibility of a fall clean-up in the Edgar woods was broached. Elise, the Ameri-corps intern, will continue to work with the Edgar student group. Dan Hirsch has secured another tree for planting in the High School alcove. He will coordinate with Dorothy Rasmussen.

Open Space

The county is going to give the town a considerable sum of the money for the development of a town green (3/4 acre) in the current parking area. The design of the green is being done through Woodmont, the developer who did the Morristown Green. The next step in this process would be the signing of a contract with Woodmont. The county has also budgeted money for the design of the trailhead park. Merrill Park in Colonia is undergoing extensive development, a very large amount of concrete. Presumably, the trailhead would be done differently.

Dismal Swamp Commission & Grant

The grant from Edison Wetlands has been send around for review by the town officials. It is still circulating. The Dismal Swamp Commission met on 4-16-13. Different people from the commission will take on particular tasks and report back on the information about lots and land uses in each of the three towns with sections of the swamp. The town will receive the monies. Further specification will be necessary before we begin the work. We have to be sure that we are in agreement with Mr. Spiegel about the work to be done.

Brian Weeks mentioned the fund for wetlands restoration. The issue of the undeveloped properties adjacent to the Dismal Swamp that are in arrears on their taxes came up for discussion. We will gather additional information. Additional members from Edison are needed for the Dismal Swamp Commission.

Planning

No planning commission meetings are currently scheduled. More apartments have been proposed for Main Street; parking issues were discussed. There is an issue with trash removal in a dumpster on a parcel on Middlesex Avenue with apartments.

Recycling

Questions were raised about the movement to single stream recycling. Has it been effective?

NEW BUSINESS

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM. The next meeting of the Metuchen Environmental Commission will take place on May 15, 2013 at 7:00 PM at Borough Hall.

Scribe

Tom Rudel