

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

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(Approved at June 2, 2016 Meeting)

Minutes of May 5, 2016 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leon Lakritz. Also in attendance were Vicky Binetti, Harry Larzelere, Sean Longfellow, Ann Culkin, Russ Price, Jodi Smith, Mark Phillips, and Lola Pellegrino. The minutes from the April 7, 2016 meeting were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Harry Larzelere reported that the current balance in our temporary budget is \$648.01.

Guests

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

There was no workshop meeting in April.

Recycling Campaign/America Recycles Day

Vicky Binetti had no new report.

Planning Calendar

There are no new events to add.

2016 Earth Day/Arbor Day

The Commission discussed the events that were held throughout Washington Township on Earth Day and during the month of April. Leon Lakritz noted that the talk about the importance of trees to the environment to third graders at Thomas Jefferson and Hurffville schools was a great success as were our joint efforts with the Margaret Heggan Library (exhibit, lectures, visit with preschool children). In addition, the replacement of 16 trees at the Twin Ponds East retention basin/naturalization site and the planting of perennials under the guidance of the Master Gardeners with the assistance of Boy Scout Troop 81 went exceedingly well. The rain barrel workshop was not held but will be rescheduled in the near future.

Sustainable Jersey

Vicky Binetti reported that the Green Team Advisory Committee met for the third time this year on May 2nd. Currently the members are discussing tasks already completed or underway that may be potentially eligible towards a bronze certification in the Sustainable Jersey program. Vicky announced that she will forward minutes from the Green Team meetings to the Environmental Commission. A Sustainable Jersey seminar (Sustainability Summit) will take place on June 15th at the College of New Jersey. Vicky Binetti requested that the Commission authorize two members to attend at a cost of \$35.00 each. A motion was made by Leon Lakritz, seconded by Ann Culkin, to provide \$70 for this purpose. The motion was passed.

Stream Sampling

Fifth grade students from all five elementary schools in the Township, who are enrolled in the Talented and Gifted program, were given the opportunity to participate in stream sampling on April 16th. Approximately 50 students went to six different streams and ponds to collect water samples which they later analyzed under the guidance of Environmental Commission members and other professional volunteers. Photos of the event will be posted on the website. Teachers requested that prior to the next event we provide additional educational material related to streams and our watersheds.

Washington Square Town Center

The Environmental Commission again reviewed this project and the Commission's concerns which we enumerated in our letter of April 17th to the Planning Board. These concerns included: removal of trees/compensation, storm water management, consideration of mandated open space, wellhead protection and the proximity of Well #19. The applicant is expected to appear before the Planning Board on Tuesday, May 17th.

New Business

Planning & Zoning Board

Rich Fini was not present at tonight's meeting, but he submitted the following report on current applications:

- **Planning Board**
 - April 19, 2016 – Meeting was cancelled. There were no applications.
 - May 3, 2016 – Presbyterian Homes was the only application, and they were granted a one-year extension of approvals conditioned upon new site plan submittal and perfection of plans.
- **Zoning Board**
 - April 12, 2016 – Rich Fini did not attend.

Turnersville Equities

Leon Lakritz discussed an application from Turnersville Equities LLC. The applicant proposes four separate retail businesses including a grocery store operated by Lidl, a German concern new to the U.S. food market. The applicant is initially requesting a zoning variance before proceeding with this project. Vicky Binetti noted that a previous potential developer of this site was requested by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a survey for the threatened plant species, swamp pink.

Committee Reports

Open Space

Leon Lakritz mentioned that the community garden in Washington Lake Park is expected to be up and running in about three weeks. Three Rowan and Rider University students and one high school student from St. Augustine Prep will be charged to design the garden, establish the beds, construct perimeter fencing, and maintain the gardens during the growing season. Leon will oversee and coordinate the project. Leon mentioned that 14 to 16 plots will be available to residents wishing to participate.

Council Report

Council Liaison Sean Longfellow reported that he is working on the Sustainable Jersey Green Team Advisory Committee. He noted that Council has proposed an ordinance banning puppy mill bred and raised animals from being sold in Township pet stores. The first reading will be held on Wednesday, May 11th. An ordinance prohibiting the planting of bamboo in the Township due to its invasive and destructive properties will be worked on over the summer.

Council is holding a public hearing to discuss the budget on May 11th. They hope to finalize it by May 25th, but no later than June 8th.

Correspondence

No report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9: 15 p.m.

Submitted by:

Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary

Washington Township Environmental Commission