

BYRAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES, OCTOBER 22, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. Present were Chair Sheila Hall, Daven Baez , Michelle Rehse, Adam Rosenberg, Sue Wise, and Secretary Margaret McGarrity. Also present was Brenda Holzinger, consultant working with the NY-NJ Trail Conference on two trail grants.

September minutes: Motion by Sue; second by Daven; unanimous.

Recreational Trails grant for Arnell/Beckmann/Owners Maintenance: Brenda reported on progress on Beckman: Eagle Scout candidate Alex Livesey and his Scout volunteers have removed most blow-downs from the trail route and now need to rake the entire trail and move some rocks to improve footing on the first part of the trail off Tamarack Road. Forester Ron Farr still should chain-saw fallen trees to get them to lie on the ground and minimize the fire hazard. The Scouts have done no trimming yet; the trail is not ready for blazing; a stable route needs to be found through some boulder fields. Brenda will schedule some dates to meet with Alex and the Scouts to plan the remaining work; ECers should attend also. The Scout work has not included a spur down to C.O. Drive and through the rock slide area. The route without that spur will probably be OK with the Recreational Trail grant funders, Brenda says.

Nothing has been done on Owners Maintenance.

Status of Arnell trail route: ECers and Brenda are working to accommodate the concerns of the Stag Lake owners. Adam will send Brenda a map of the routes proposed by the EC/NYNJTC and by Doug Hiscano of Stag Lake. ECers should go out and hike, take photos, discuss at the November EC meeting to make a formal EC recommendation, including ways to block the woods roads that lead off Arnell onto Stag Lake properties.

Membership in NYNJTC for ECers: Brenda will email to Margaret, who will forward to Joe Sabatini, information about membership for individuals or for the EC as a trail maintainer group. This would provide the EC with insurance coverage from the TC. Individual membership is \$30; maintainer group is \$50. Other volunteers would sign up as 'work trip' members, also covered under insurance.

Correspondence: Sue will look into whether the EC should join the NJ Environmental Lobby (www.njenvironment.org).

Business:

Membership and chair: Sheila will write again to the mayor, reiterating our recommendation for moving Alternates up to Regular seats, for new members in the Alternate seats, and recommending Dawn Boyer and Sue Wise as joint chairs. No news yet about the mayor appointing new members.

ANJEC 3-town trail grant: Brenda's insurance coverage from NYNJTC has been approved. Trail scouting day on 10/25 at 8:30 a.m.; regular meeting on 11/3 at 8:30 p.m.

No Net Loss trees and Community Forestry Plan: Margaret still gathering information about the impact on Township budgets/personnel of the CFP and NNL. Joe Sabatini and Adolf still very doubtful about adopting the CFP or doing the NNL. Margaret will continue to seek CFPs and information from towns similar to Byram, e.g. Sparta, Kinnelon, Jefferson. Invite NJDEP officials from the Community Forestry office and the Sussex County Shade Tree Commission to talk to EC November meeting and later to make presentation with EC at a Township Council meeting.

Joe and Adolf's questions:

- Is CFP useful without NNL?
- EC to rework the CFP to better suit Byram (remove town-wide tree inventory). Joe to meet with Sheila and Lisa (no longer EC) about CFP and Lisa's C.O. Johnson planting plan as Phase I NNL (or EC to present to Council as part of CFP/NNL discussion in future).
- Legal liability for hazard trees—Township risks greater with or without the CFP?
- CSIP grants offered under CFP—local match required?
- Can we apply for NNL money now, since we have a draft CFP and still keep the money if we do not adopt CFP?
- Could we seek small tree planting amounts elsewhere?
- Questions about EC list of possible planting sites.

Trails/streams:

- Advocacy letters to our State representatives seeking funding to repair Sussex Branch Trail 'Whitehall washout' being signed by all five mayors (Byram, Stanhope, Green, Andover Borough and Township).
- Bell-McConnell subdivision—Chris looking into status of the subdivision.
- Mansfield Bike Trail partially on Cutoff r.o.w.: Margaret again seeking proof of easement agreement with NJDOT or of historic Mansfield r.o.w.
- Sussex Branch repairs between Whitehall and North Shore: Kittatinny Park Superintendent wants another cleanup, which EC will schedule in the spring.
- Request from resident for Highlands Trail bridge over Dragon Brook to make easier link with Sussex Branch: Margaret will call Hopatcong Park Superintendent Helen Maurella and ask Earl Riley to call her too.
- Map of Highlands Trail in Byram—the trail route is in flux but Adam will send most recent map to Margaret for website.

Joint recreation and EC projects:

- Brookwood Park/Vetter application for Recreational Trails grant: Needs a rewrite; Margaret will call Jennifer Maund to ask her to help.
- Andover EC grant for rain gardens in detention basins: Margaret will resend information to Sheila.

Update of Trail Brochure: Margaret will get some prices for reprinting/folding the current brochure for use until new trails are in place and we can update the brochure.

Lake management issues: Margaret will report to Adolf Steyh on the storm drain problems described to the EC by Johnson Lake residents.

PSE&G update: BPU hearings to start mid-November.

Planning Board items: ECers who can should attend upcoming Planning Board/Council meetings on Highlands conformance and COAH.

Pizzolo application for two-family house in West Brookwoods: County Division of Health provided a letter to the Planning Board saying the 100-gallon one-tank system originally approved for one dwelling unit with 4 bedrooms is acceptable for a two-family, 6-bedroom home.

Tri-County Regional Forum: October 18 Foodshed Alliance presentation at SALT had very small attendance but was very informative. This is an effort the EC should support. ECers agreed unanimously to have the EC become a member of the Foodshed Alliance. Motion by Daven; second by Michelle. Margaret will get invoices from Dawn Boyer for the food purchased by FA for the 10/18 event.

The EC will work on Michelle's idea of organizing tours of the local farms that work with FA, perhaps associated with hikes nearby.

Quarry: Tilcon has submitted its 2010 relicensing application, which Sheila will review. To be heard at a Council meeting in Jan.-Feb. Margaret will provide draft statement on wetlands issue.

Sustainable New Jersey: EC to recommend creation of a Green Team, the first mandatory step toward municipal certification under this program. Michelle will review and report to the EC, which will report to the Council on appointing a Green Team.

Musconetcong Management Council: Michelle is attending these meetings.

Adjourn: 10:45 p.m. Motion by Daven; second by Michelle; unanimous.

