

BYRAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES, NOVEMBER 24, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. Present were Michelle Rehse, Adam Rosenberg, Sue Wise, Dawn Boyer, Council Liaison Scott Olson, and Secretary Margaret McGarrity. Also present were Brenda Holzinger, consultant working with the NY-NJ Trail Conference on two trail grants, Boy Scout Alex Livesey and his father Michael who are working on the Beckmann trail, Tony Cerbo of Cerbo Nurseries/Landscaping who came to speak on the No Net Loss grant money, and Jennifer Maund Kreutsch, who has applied for an EC seat.

Alex and Michael Livesey re: the Beckmann trail: Alex will finalize the trail route on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, and Brenda will go out to review the work. Alex will take photos of the work; they plan to replace a worn American flag that was in place at the top of the parcel.. Will blaze with the trail markers provided by the EC and white paint. Scouts could help forester Ron Farr blaze the parcel boundaries.

Tony Cerbo, Cerbo's Garden Center, Parsipanny: Cerbo's does tree-planting work for about 30 municipalities, some under the State CSIP grants available once towns have a Community Forestry Plan.

Also does organic management of ballfields—for instance, the Fredon field on Route 94, which is accomplished with volunteer labor. Also 10% of homeowners' purchases of organic lawn products to to ballfield fund. Portland, Oregon, manages all of its parks and fields organically. The EC will pass this information on to the Recreation Committee and Margaret will inform Recreation Director Janet Meisner; Tony would be happy to speak to them. Rockaway Township is going to organic management too. And literature available for homeowners on organic lawns from North Country Organics.

No Net Loss ideas: Hanover holds a tree lottery for resident and businesses, who can elect to have the Township plant a tree on their parcel (in Branchville, most of the trees are on private parcels). Some of Hanover's money is from No Net Loss and some is from a tree replacement ordinance. Their on-staff forester is Lorraine Knopke. Using No Net Loss for this is OK with a planting easement??? Margaret to check on this.

Use different grades of trees for parks versus forested roadsides (less expensive grades). Species selection must be site specific to maximize survival—Cerbo's would recommend. They have a list of the best 10-20 varieties for this area; their trees are grown in Sussex County soils and so less prone to shock in re-planting. Fall planting best for survivability—less watering required; only as necessary.

No Net Loss provides \$300 per tree, for planting plan, tree purchase, planting, 2-year maintenance. Cerbo's could do everything for this price, with c.\$250 going to purchase the 2.5" caliper tree or 7-8' tall conifer. Installing 300-400 trees per year would be a good goal; 600 would be a lot. (Under Byram's No Net Loss, c. 1,200 trees could be purchased, but we only have two or three years once we start. Margaret will check.) Cerbo's would also provide a warranty, except for damage from deer or cars. Plant them in groves to minimize mowing problems (a concern of our

DPW). Planting 400/year will probably replace about that many trees that have died during the same period in Byram and so help sustain the canopy and community character. Hackettstown planted 100/year and also did a tree inventory.

Should hold meetings over the winter to discuss planting sites; during the summer, select and confirm sites; plant in fall in 8-week period, although some species need spring/early April planting. Very important to convene a Shade Tree Commission to get all parties together; maybe under an ARC/Village Center umbrella.

Possible planting sites: Township parks, barren subdivisions like Ascot Manor; riparian areas. Could even go off-road, for instance on the Arnell parcel to block off woods roads into Stag Lake parcels or on Vetter/Brookwood Park to separate homes from the park.

October minutes: Motion by Adam; second by Michelle; unanimous.

Correspondence:

Highlands Applicability Determination for Cutoff: Jennifer and Margaret will review; issues include the wetlands on the r.o.w. north of the Roseville Tunnel, slopes into Lake Lackawanna, and impacts on the two points at which Cowboy Creek goes under Cutoff, etc.

Residents raking leaves into lakes: Margaret to ask CLCC to publish in newsletter and in other neighborhood publications also.

Piles of dirt on Ash Street: Michelle reports; Margaret to check.

Business:

Membership and chairs: Margaret will make sure the mayor received all the EC recommendations.

ANJEC grant for 3-town trail link: Meeting again December 8; on-schedule.

No Net Loss tree and Community Forestry Plan: Margaret will email the CFP to Jennifer; they will review and discuss with Scott concerning revisions to better suit Byram's needs and to remove excessive tasks, such as the full tree inventory. The EC will discuss.

Trails/streams:

- Grant for three open space parcels. Brenda will visit Beckmann to see if trail is ready to blaze or make list of what remains to be done. Margaret will continue to work with Township engineer re: parking for this trail. Trail route should avoid possible rattle-snake habitat. Trail on Owners Maintenance—Margaret will double-check grant closure date with Larry Miller; Brenda will contact Eddie Walsh for date to start trail development and will inform EC.

- Sussex Branch 5-town advocacy effort for repairing ‘Whitehall Washout’ on Sussex Branch—Margaret to keep track of this campaign.
- Sussex Branch repairs between Whitehall and North Shore Road—Margaret to get SLAP for spring cleanup.
- Runoff from Bell-McConnell subdivision into Lubbers Run—Margaret to contact Cliff Lundin at SC Soil Conservation and to ask Chris about status of subdivision.
- Mansfield Trail on Cutoff r.o.w.—Margaret to finish research and write letter ASAP if necessary to get copy of agreement.
- Request from resident for bridge over Dragon Brook above waterfall on Sussex Branch—a bridge has just been installed.
- Up-to-date map of Highlands Trail—in flux; wait until c.March.

Joint Recreation and EC projects:

- Brookwood Park grant application—Margaret and Brenda to revise for 2010 resubmission.
- Andover EC’s grant to plant detention basins—Sheila to follow up.

Update of trail brochure: Sue will check on laser printing; in-house printing at town hall will smear.

Lake management issues: Margaret will follow up with Adolf Steyh on drainage problems reported by Johnson Lake residents.

PSE&G powerline: BPU 5-day hearings ended 11/23; intervenors’ arguments were well made. BPU decision due January 15.

Planning Board applications and issues:

- Board and Council meetings on Highlands Conformance: The Township Council voted to Conform in the Preservation Area (mandatory) and to Opt-in in the Planning Area with several conditions, a detailed list of which is to be prepared by Heyer, Gruel & Assoc. and in-house planning staff. The PB had recommended submitting the list of conditions and then deciding whether to Opt-in later.
- Osgood addition on Lake Drive: Sue and Sheila will review and do memo; this application is on the 12/3 PB agenda.

Quarry: 2010 relicensing hearing in January or February. Sheila and Margaret to prepare EC comments, for review next time. Margaret will get a copy of last year’s Council resolution.

Sustainable Jersey: Michelle looking into Green Team, for EC to make recommendations to Council. Michelle reports that 33 towns are involved, none from Sussex County. E.g. Chatham and Mt. Olive—we could check on their programs. To get points, for instance, could do community education on sustainability, a school partnership, Natural Resources Inventory, tree/woodland management, an anti-idling campaign, energy audits, farmers market (Sharon Tarzinski interested). Benefits of the Sustainable Jersey program include training and education, WalMart grant program,

advocacy, information on and links to grants. Get *new* volunteers involved. Margaret will send the name of the Cranford Green Team president to Michelle.

NJ Environmental Lobby: The EC voted to join @ \$30/year: motion by Sue; second by Dawn; unanimous. This group advocates on State environmental legislation, for instance controlling ATVs, does watershed education, works on environmental justice and site remediation. They are pushing for the Precautionary Principle. Brenda: potential for Byram to apply for a Green Town award?

Movie, Food, Inc.: Sue and Scott will organize a screening at the Sparta Theatre. Get Genesis Farm and Foodshed Alliance to co-sponsor?

Board of Health issues: Daven reported that the Board again decided not to adopt a non-phosphorus ordinance—major complaint is it's not enforceable. Daven had brought information from Jefferson and Rockaway, which have non-phosphorus ordinances and report no enforcement problems and no tattling by neighbors. Same reports from Lake Mohawk on their non-phosphorus ordinance. Instead the Board suggested a declaration that 'Byram is a phosphorus-free town' and letters to stores to promote retailing of non-phosphorus products. Who will actually do this?

Adjourn: 10:20 p.m. Motion by Michelle; second by Sheila; unanimous.

