

BYRAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MINUTES, JULY 25, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. Present were Chairman Dave Gray, Co-chair Michelle Rehse, Cathy Varian, Donna Koenig, John Boyer, and secretary Margaret McGarrity.

The June minutes were approved: motion by Dave; second by Michelle; unanimous.

Correspondence and updates:

Soil importation ordinance: Dave is looking at simplifying the draft ordinance, looking for model ordinances from other towns, and making our draft apply to intra-town soil movements as well as importations from out-of-town, before seeking another meeting of the Planning Board subcommittee to review the draft. He read the Bernardsville ordinance, which is quite complex and so not the direction the EC wants to go. Cathy obtained information on ordinances from ANJEC, which Margaret will email to all; Michelle will ask Sustainable Jersey for sample ordinances; Donna will review materials from the ANJEC workshop she attended as another possible source. Dave will begin to establish a file of ordinances, so that the EC is prepared to act as a resource for the Planning Board and Council and a voice for the people of Byram; the EC should take the initiative on other issues/ordinances as well and work to prevent environmental crises, such as the East Brookwood superfund site. Scott noted that ordinances can also be proposed directly to the Township Council, who then give the Planning Board 30 days to review the draft.

The discussion resumed later in the meeting, with ECers very positive about residents bringing issues to the EC meetings, such as Planning Board applications, and a concern that EC comments on PB applications should be reported in detail at the meetings and in the PB minutes, and about possibly sending an EC representative to PB meetings for important applications.

Business:

2013 EC goals:

- Recycling and composting: The EC discussed the Byram Day EC booth and the postcard to be sent out beforehand. The EC reviewed Cathy's draft postcard, made a few corrections, and she will finalize and send to Dave for the final OK. Margaret will obtain printing quotes, from BBC Printers in Branchville and the on-line printer Scott recommends—if the difference is less than \$150, the EC agreed to go with the more local firm: motion by Dave; second by Cathy; unanimous. Margaret contacted Jeff Brown of BrandBuilders to ask him to sign up as a Byram Day vendor and to buy one composter @ \$55 from him for the EC drawing. Donna took about 20 photos around Byram for the

‘where is this’ quiz; the EC will select the final photos from Donna’s and Scott’s submissions at the July meeting and John will print them out. Margaret has prepared the map of Byram for residents to pin-point their homes; and the EC will also have copies of the well-testing flyer (with a few in color for display) at its booth (this flyer was also mailed out with recent tax bills).

- Easement monitoring pilot project: Margaret, Scott, and Eileen Swan are preparing a grant application for \$10,000 to Sustainable Jersey.

Planning Board:

- Quick Chek’s concept proposals discussed at the July 18 Planning Board meeting: Quick Chek asked for a straw vote and the response from Planning Board members was not positive.
- Nufrio, 138 Lackawanna Drive, Bl. 273 L. 300. Nufrio is to return to the Planning Board in September with a plan to buy a neighboring parcel so that his house is no longer legally oversized or to file for a variance again; the Board can refuse to extend his temporary Certificate of Occupancy. The EC should work to secure guarantees that Nufrio will comply with the requirements in the original approval for a lakeside buffer and limits to impervious cover.
- New application from Scully, Block 187 Lot 3, 5 Weasaug Trail, Cranberry Lake, to winterize and enlarge a summer house (new septic plan under review by the Sussex County Division of Health): the parcel is just over 1/10 acre (4,819.72 sf, according to the applicant’s surveyor) and is located in the R-5 zone, which requires a minimum of 10,000 sf. Bernadette Scully, who said she is the daughter of the owner, attended the EC meeting and explained her application. The EC discussed several issues, including the sub-standard lot, the slopes, the enlargement of the house by filling out upper floors so that each floor fills the entire footprint (from 800 sf of living space to 2,000 sf), the plan to excavate the ground floor (dirt and ledge-rock) to make usable space, to have a bathroom on all three floors, to locate the septic field at the lakeshore and the nearness of other wells and septic, the 11.6 foot variance sought for distance from lakeshore, and how these proposals may contravene the Township’s Lakefront Development Plan, the Master Plan, and the ordinances. Cathy and Dave will review the plans in detail and draft comments for EC review and approval at the August 22 meeting, for submission to the applicant and Planning Board.

Trails:

- *Update of Trail Guide and display map by The Land Conservancy of NJ:* Margaret still discussing final corrections with The Land Conservancy, who have a new graphic designer with good ideas.
- *EC advocacy for Cutoff trail:* The Knowlton and Hopatcong Environmental Commissions have sent enthusiastic letters of support. Margaret is to call Knowlton’s

chair, who attended the June EC meeting, and to re-contact other ECs along the route and trail groups.

- *Brookwood Park project*: At its August meeting, the EC will schedule a new clean-up and trail clearing day.
- *Trails from Route 206 bridge west into Allamuchy Mountain State Park*: The EC will approach the Open Space Committee to help locate good trail routes.
- *Sussex Branch Trail ongoing grant work*: The Township and the Northern Region Parks Office are working together to repair the next section, between the two arms of Whitehall Hill Road (but not the largest washout), funded by the remaining grant money.

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Musconetcong River: Michelle reported that the Musconetcong River Management Council has won a Coastal America Aware and is seeking grant funding from the William Pen Cluster Project on ways to improve the recreational use of the river. Scott noted that this Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon at Riverside Park will be the Musconetcong Watershed Association's 6th annual Meet the River.

Arbor Day planting: Three trees planted on April 30, with a memorial plaque for Peg Swentzel to be placed at the Thunderbird plum. Margaret contacted Peg's family but has not heard anything definitive; will try again. At its August meeting, the EC will set some dates and make one more attempt to contact the family.

Draft ordinance about keeping chickens: Scott reported that the draft has been reviewed by the zoning officer and Township attorney; Scott and Marie Raffay will make some changes. This draft is similar to the ordinances passed in Union Township and West Milford.

Township proposal to resurface Lake Lackawanna roads with oil and stone: The EC agreed to send a letter, to be drafted by Dave, to the Lake Lackawanna Investment Company and Ginny Lepore, both of whom wrote directly to the EC with their concerns about the oil and stone project. The letter will include information about the Township's actions to help prevent the paving materials from entering Lake Lackawanna and will express the EC's general interest in protecting the health of the Lake. The letter will explain the EC's long-standing concerns about upgrading detention basins around the lake and address other ways to protect the Lake, including best management practices by LLIC and Lake residents. Motion to send the letter as drafted by Dave: motion by Dave; second by Cathy; unanimous.

Adjourn: 10:00 p.m.

