

Environmental Commission  
March 22, 2018 - Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm. Members present included: James Myers, Katie Baron, Eric Duch, Helene Jaros, Jim Reinhold, Lisa Shimamoto, Scott Olson and Secretary Donna Fett. Also present was Mayor Alex Rubenstein. The new EC member, Helen Jaros, was introduced and welcomed.

A motion was made by Jim, seconded by James to accept the February 22, 2018 meeting minutes.

New Business:

- Delaware Basin/Watershed Fracking Regulations Resolution Request – An email from Wendie Goetz (a concerned citizen of NJ5/24 Warren County) seeking Byram Township’s support to protect our Watershed and Delaware River Basin was distributed. Wendie’s email was sent to other townships and governors of NJ, NY, DE and PA and the Army Core of Engineers. They are requesting EC support to create a resolution to protect well water and stream water quality which could be compromised by gas drilling operations and related activities. Contained within the e-mail was a draft resolution. A motion was made by Lisa and seconded by Jim to accept the proposed resolution. EC Secretary will modify the proposed resolution and request this be added to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Council meeting. Scott agreed to discuss it at the meeting.
- Free Milkweed Plant Opportunity – Unfortunately EC Secretary was not able to obtain the free milkweed plugs as the allotment was already met. EC discussed where milkweed might be planted within the Township. EC Secretary advised that Ron Farr, Township Forester, suggested plantings in CO Johnson Park as well as by the power lines. A few other areas brought up by the group included Sussex Branch Trail, Tamarack Park and the retention basin by Fieldstone. Katie explained the best spots for planting would require an open area, along with a lot of sun. In addition, it would be great to also plant native wildflowers (examples include asters and goldenrods) which would attract monarch butterflies.

Ongoing Business:

- Arbor Day Event Planning – EC Secretary spoke with DPW about EC’s request to plant a tree for Arbor Day. DPW suggested planting a tree that had colorful foliage and ideally located at intersection of Route 206 and Lackawanna or by Acorn Street in the mulched areas. DPW recommended a tree that does not have berries, does not grow too tall and something that is easy to maintain if possible.

DPW suggested contacting Cerbo to get ideas on types of trees and cost. EC Secretary got the following information and distributed it to EC members to review prior to the meeting. Cerbo recommended a native or hybrid tree. The trees they recommended included choke cherry, purple leaf plum, flowering cherry, dogwood or Japanese maple. Pricing is as follows: \$225 for a 1 ¾-2” diameter tree (about 10’), \$295 for 2-2.5” diameter tree (about 12’), and \$350 for 2 ½-3” diameter tree (about 14’) Cerbo recommended the 2-2.5” diameter tree for the proposed

areas, which would cost \$295 including the planting. He needs at least two weeks' notice to provide the tree. Trees are locally grown and harvested. He commended EC for celebrating Arbor Day!

Helene researched these types of trees and provided her comments on suitability (choke cherry has toxic leaves and stems along with sucker roots; purple leaf plum has fruit; dogwood is a native tree with white flowers and small berries and Japanese maple has small berries). Her preference would be a dogwood tree.

A group discussion followed and EC prefers to obtain an evergreen (blue spruce?). Jim volunteered to contact Cerbo to obtain blue spruce pricing.

The group would like to plant the evergreen at the intersection of Route 206 and Lackawanna. Alex will contact the county to seek permission as it is believed that this property is county owned.

EC Secretary checked with Township Manager if there were any grant monies available that EC could use for this purpose and unfortunately there are none available. Monies for this would need to be taken from EC budget. Scott suggested trying to use No Net Loss Grant funds which may be available.

- Trail Clean Up Resolution Update – Resolution for the EC to hold and participate in trail clean-ups was adopted by Council on March 20<sup>th</sup>. EC briefly discussed holding the spring trail clean-up day in May this year and this topic will be added to next month's meeting agenda. A brief discussion regarding volunteers for trail clean-up days occurred.
- 2018 Goals / Partnerships Update:
  - Waterloo Village – EC Secretary contacted Andrea Proctor, who is in favor of partnering with Township EC on events. Their Full Moon Hike was rescheduled to Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup> and was posted on the EC website. Scott suggested going to Waterloo to visit their locations and buildings; perhaps we would like to use it for future EC events. He also mentioned that they hold a lot of great programs, including hikes to the vernal ponds to view the amphibians and suggested EC advertises them to encourage participation.
  - Hudson Farms – EC Secretary contacted Sharon, who agreed to allow EC to have a table/booth at the October 13<sup>th</sup> Charity Hike and would like to brainstorm additional partnership ideas.
  - Barks Garage Sale – EC discussed the possibility of having a table set up at the garage sale.

#### Planning Board Applications:

- Anty Trucking – applicant proposes a 20' x 40' addition to an already existing building, new loading dock, construct two 80' x 90' hoop buildings, designated storage areas, landscaping and signing. This development is proposed at 9 Lackawanna Drive, the lower tract to the quarry.

EC discussed numerous general concerns, in particular those related to the hoop buildings. Lisa advised that the intent was to store high-end equipment in these buildings. These potential safety concerns included lack of lighting on both exterior and interior of the structures, their ability to withstand inclement weather (snow, heavy rain, wind) and questioned air flow inside the structure. It was noted that it appears these will not be placed on the ground, not a foundation.

EC reviewed this application and had the following comments which will be forwarded to the Secretary, Planning Board:

- How are you planning to handle trash and recycling? Are there any hazardous materials stored on-site and what are the special precautions that will be undertaken to ensure safe handling and disposal of these materials?
  - How do you plan to manage the stormwater run-off, especially by the hoop buildings?
  - Please ensure the site restoration is completed as per the previous quarry permit. We request a full restoration plan for review.
  - What will be stored in the outside storage areas?
  - Did the NJ DOT purchase the easement by the riparian buffer?
- David Ruppert – 55 Lynn Drive – applicant proposes a 26'x12' addition to the front of home for living space.

EC reviewed this application and had the following comment which will be forwarded to Secretary, Planning Board.

- Where is the septic and leach field located?

#### Expenditures and Budget:

Temporary budget balance is \$180. The full budget is expected to be released after the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Council meeting.

#### Training:

- Update - ANJEC Workshop Fundamentals For Effective Environmental Commissions. Katie and Eric participated in this workshop and thought it was worthwhile. Slides which were presented will be posted on ANJEC's website. Katie asked if Township had an electronic version of the NRI/ERI. Scott looked it up and determined it is posted under the Planning Board Section. The ERI was published in 2011.

During this workshop, Katie and Eric learned that Hopatcong has a student liaison to their EC and questioned if we had a student liaison. Lisa indicated that EC used to have Katie as an Alternate but she has since returned to college. It was brought up that Lenape Valley High School has an environmental club and perhaps we should reach out to them. EC Secretary advised that she has the name of a representative from the club on the trail clean-up distribution list, but to her knowledge they have not participated in any events. Alex will forward a Lenape Valley High School Environmental Club contact to EC Secretary to include in

future email distributions regarding upcoming trail clean-up events. EC Secretary that there is a contact from Lenape Valley on her list but will add this new contact if appropriate.

- Opportunity – NJ Wetlands Law & Compliance workshop on Wed. March 28<sup>th</sup> from 8-4 in Bridgewater (<https://www.halfmoonseminars.org/seminars/131190/new-jersey-freshwater-and-coastal-wetland-laws-and-compliance/bridgewater-nj>). Unfortunately, EC members are not able to participate in this workshop.

Membership: Mayor Rubenstein appointed Helene Jaros to fill the member vacancy which leaves two alternate positions open. Katie indicated Casey McGuffy might be interested and Casey will send her resume to the EC Secretary.

Committee Reports:

Open Space – Eric reported that the Jorba President would be willing to do an inventory at Tamarack Park for a potential bike path. Alex indicated he should proceed.

Alex mentioned that there is an upcoming meeting about how to utilize open space funds. He and Scott explained the current open space purchase issues.

Other:

Clean Communities Projects Completed/Scheduled:

- Lenape Valley High School – Roseville Rd. (postponed again due to weather) - Resident in Lackawanna coordinated this clean-up for her son who is a student at Lenape Valley High School. She feels that Byram should do these on a regular basis and may be interested in coordinating these in the future.
- Salt Shakers on 4/14 – Suggested North Shore Rd. but they prefer to clean an area off Waterloo Rd. which is not in Byram Twp.
- Forest Lakes on 4/28 – Within Forest Lakes area

Other Upcoming Events/Key Dates:

- CO Johnson/Park Openings – targeted for April 1<sup>st</sup>, weather permitting
- Leaf/Brush Area Opening in Twp. Recycling Center – targeted for April 1<sup>st</sup>, weather permitting
- Fee Free Electronics Recycling @ SCMUA – March 31<sup>st</sup>
- Waterloo Full Moon Hike – March 31<sup>st</sup> at 7pm
- Byram Day – September 8<sup>th</sup> at Neill Gylling Park.
- Hudson Farms Charity Hike – October 13<sup>th</sup>

EC Secretary was asked to send a reminder on the April 14<sup>th</sup> Musconetcong River clean-up. She confirmed that MWA flyers were posted on the Municipal Building doors.

A new ANJEC Grant was offered. Township management would like to modify last year's unsuccessful grant application and resubmit the application. This year's grant would entail Ben Spinelli updating the Township Open Space Map (which is in the meeting room and is out-of-date). In addition, Mr. Spinelli would also update the Trails Map (which is also in the meeting room). EC members would be required

to walk trails and confirm they are properly marked, perform light maintenance if needed and prepare a maintenance report when DPW assistance is needed to remove larger trees. A motion was made by James and seconded by Jim to provide EC support to this grant. EC Secretary will submit the application.

The new Township Recreation Director, Jennifer Kerr, has begun work.

ANJEC Scholarship is available for college juniors and seniors. Lisa will forward this information to Katie.

EC Secretary alerted members that the Byram Township Conservation Easement Project document has been posted on ANJEC's website.

The Tilcon Quarry inspection occurred and the results were shared with EC members. The inspection occurred without members of EC present due to time constraints. EC members will be invited to future inspections. This inspection was cut short due to heavy snow drifts.

Next Meeting – scheduled for April 26, 2018.

Adjourn – a motion was made by Jim and seconded by Katie to adjourn at 10:30pm.