

Environmental Commission Minutes
March 26, 2026 @ 7:00 p.m.

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

Roll Call

Members	Attended March Meeting
Peter Dlugos – Chair	X
Eric Duch – Co-Chair	X
Dana Flynn	X
Christine Aboulhosn	X
James Myers	X
Randy Gutwein	X
Greg Smith – Planning Board Liaison	—
Rick Proctor – Council Liaison	—
Elaine Evers – Secretary	X

Open Public Meeting Statement

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting has been electronically sent to the newspapers, posted on the bulletin board of the Municipal Building, and uploaded to Byram’s website, www.byramtwp.org not less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. In addition, a copy of this notice is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk. A resolution indicating the time, date, and location of the Open Space meetings for the year 2026 was forwarded to the designated newspaper for online publication, posted on the bulletin boards and main doors of the Municipal Building and on the Township’s Website and forwarded to the Secretary of State of the State of New Jersey.

Public Participation and Open Forum

Members of the public in attendance: Aimee Dlugos, Joshua Spahl, Abbie Adams, Laura Sliker, Patti Poff, and Sally Orgen

Committee Reports:

- **MRMC** – Last meeting held February 17; next meeting April 21–no updates
- **Open Space** – Last meeting held March 9; next meeting April 13–Sussex County Trails Grant application is proceeding. Application due date is May 15th. If the grant is awarded, the loop trail will be constructed in the fall.
- **Town Council** – Last meeting held March 17; next meeting April 7–no updates
- **Byram Trail Keepers** – Last meeting held March 5–Peter briefed the group on this initial, online meeting. BTK are now a Member Club of the NYNJTC. Meetings will likely be held quarterly.

Member Reports—none

Review of February 2026 Meeting Minutes—approved unanimously

New Business

- Prescribed burn in Tamarack Park: the burn appears to be scheduled for the upcoming weeks. Once a date is established, the EC will do some educational messaging.
- Mechanical Removal of Barberry at Glenside Woods: Peter would like to coordinate several days of barberry removal prior to July.
- Annual Musconetcong River Cleanup at Port Morris Park scheduled for April 4, 9:00 am This will be a 2-hr. Spring Cleanup Event in the park adjacent to the parcel on the north side of Lake Musconetcong that is owned by Byram Township (coincidentally). All materials will be provided.
- Collaborations with the Environmental Club at Byram Lakes Elementary School—Patti Poff of the BES was in attendance, and the focus of discussion was a trail cleanup of the interpretative trail by the Byram schools, as well as the hanging of owl, bat, and kestrel houses.
- Collaborations with Lenape Valley Regional High School—Outreach was well received, and Rachel Beck, advisor of the Go Green Club will be sharing our materials and coordinating some upcoming programming.
- Greg Smith: Thoughts on Deer and Light Pollution—deferred to next month
- Byram Resident Sally Orgren presented on a possible collaborative “STEAM” program with the EC involving the weaving of plants, including perhaps invasives. Residents would gather and dry the plants, and bring to the workshop to learn about weaving and collaboratively create art. There was also discussion of creating temporary forest looms in Tamarack Park for the drying of picked invasive plants, but the impending prescribed burn means this will need to be delayed.
- Hemlock Restoration Project(s) in the fall—Peter mentioned that the Forestry Service is propagating wholly adelgid-resistant hemlocks at the Jackson, NJ state nursery. They should be available in the fall for sale for \$3 a tree, and he would like the EC to consider a restoration project on Cranberry Overlook. Discussion to be continued.
- Native Plant Program—Dana shared a written proposal from Wild Ridge Plants to do a native plant presentation and sale, to be scheduled in September. A motion was unanimously approved to devote at least \$700 to fund the program and some native plant giveaways.
- Request for Byram Seniors Group Talk—Peter was contacted by this group with a request for someone from the EC to give a talk. He asked members to reach out to him if they are interested.
- Planning for Earth Day (4/22) and Arbor Day (Friday 4/24)--there was intensive discussion of finalizing a plan. The decision was made to coordinate a trail improvement project with Patti Poff on Sunday, 4/19, and include 30 white oak sapling giveaways as a token of appreciation.

Old Business

- Mansfield Trail Superfund Site—no discussion
- “Dirty Dirt” In Forest Lakes—Abbie Adams, resident of Forest Lakes Drive, shared the details of a recent conversation she had with the Attorney General’s office regarding the illegal dumping of contaminated soil on two properties on Hemlock Dr. She was encouraged to continue to pursue all feasible routes to remediation of the situation, including getting support from the county. Peter will meet with her to discuss further and craft an action plan.
- MWA Drain Way Project (on hold) and West Brookwood River Cleanup—deferred until Nov. 2026 at the earliest

Planning Board Applications:

[Block 383 Lot 3.05, 30 South Shore Road, Pedersen](#): application for home reconstruction, already built. Currently incomplete until they receive DEP approval letter.

The EC recommends a plan to contain all stormwater on site. Because the front of the property is a rocky cliff face above the lake, we request that stormwater get diverted by leaders to the rear of the residence, and empty into rainbarrels, dry wells, or native plantings that can absorb the runoff.

[Block 58 Lot 76, 71 Brookwood Drive, Maria Lacatena](#): application for deck, pool, and shed.

Because this property is in a riparian zone, we recommend that the new retaining wall for the pool be monitored for changes in stormwater runoff to the sides and rear of the property. Plantings with native plants and shrubs should be added to mitigate any changes.

[Block 268 Lot 756, 159 Lackawanna Drive, Wroblewski](#): application for garage expansion.

Because this property is across the street from Lake Lackawanna, we recommend that the owner continue efforts to keep stormwater on site. We noted a rain barrel in the application photos of the existing garage, and recommend continued use.

Highlands Interactive Map: <https://www.nj.gov/njhighlands/gis/REX/#-74.69086,40.90764,5.17>

Training – NJUCF CEUs – 2 needed.

Membership – Alternate I and II positions vacant.

Annual Budget – \$2,600 – ANJEC \$500 renewal + root-cutting shovel (\$50) spent

Next Meeting to be held Thursday, April 23 at 7 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm