

**Environmental Commission Minutes**  
**January 23, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.**

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**Roll Call** – Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>
Peter Dlugos – Chair	X
Eric Duch – Co-Chair	-
Dana Flynn	X
Christine Aboulhosn	X
James Myers	X
Lisa Shimamoto	X
Randy Gutwein	X
Andrew McElroy – Planning Board Liaison	X
Harvey Roseff – Council Liaison	X
Elaine Evers – Secretary	X

**Public Participation** – No members of the public were present.

**Open Public Meeting Statement**

Adequate notice of this meeting has been published specifying the time and access information in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting has also been electronically sent to the newspapers and uploaded to Byram’s website, at no less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. In addition, a copy of this notice is on file in the office of the Environmental Commission Secretary.

**Review of December 2024 Meeting Minutes** – Minutes approved as written.

**Committee Reports**

- **MRMC** – Last meeting December 17; next meeting February 18
  - No meeting since the last EC meeting, but Randy shared some findings of an MWA webinar on PFAS pollution in the Musconetcong Watershed in the area of Washington Township.
  - Peter shared that the HAB presentation at the 12/17/24 WMA meeting, which he summarized at the 1/13/25 OS meeting, will be presented at an upcoming Planning Board meeting.
- **Open Space** – Last meeting January 13; next meeting February 10
  - Peter reported that a Forest Stand Improvement will take place on an approximate 5-acre parcel of Cranberry Overlook. Forester is supervising.
  - Forester has recommended mechanical invasives removal at Glenside Woods and Cranberry Overlook and partnering with the EC to organize some volunteer days for this purpose. Interested EC members can walk these tracts with her in February for planning purposes (date TBD). She is also interested in applying for a controlled burn near the Tamarack Trail in the spring of 2026. The application is due in October 2025.
  - Peter described discussion of a provisional email proposal from Peter Dolan of the NYNJTC to assist Byram in implementing the Trails Master Plan contained in the 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The OC was supportive of the proposal, and pending discussion with the EC, requested that a more detailed scope of work and budget be prepared for review at the 2/10/25 meeting.
- **Council** – Last meeting January 21; next meeting February 4
  - Harvey stated the COJ playground will be finished by mid-spring and repairs to Field Eight will be finished by late spring.
  - He attended the recent NJFA Forest Fire presentation and recommended organization and its events.

- Report that the Fairshare Housing Plan came out last quarter and Byram has a new planner; Byram has six (6) months to respond.
- Reassessment Tax was deferred for another year.

Peter recommended moving the agenda to address the Planning Board applications before New Business.

### **Planning Board Applications**

- [SP5-2024-Block 41 Lots 90.01, 90.02, 94, 18, 22, 24 Route 206 \(Gary Niec\)](#)  
The main items for review are the most recently uploaded on Sharepoint (the Limited EIS, Site Profile, and Traffic Impact Study) (not finalized).
  - The EC discussed the EIS and Traffic Impact Study and reviewed the new amended Variance Plan site plan documents. Given a project of this size and the close proximity to a residential neighborhood, the EC has significant concerns about the impact of stormwater runoff, lighting, the size of landscape buffers and impact on traffic. Given the small size of the planned landscape buffers and the large amount of impervious surface, there are concerns about the adequacy of current stormwater management plans. While it is true the adjacent businesses create ambient light and traffic throughout the night, we believe a residential building of this size and capacity will, given the anticipated number of vehicles to be parked onsite, create *significantly* more light and noise during the evening, as well as significantly more traffic at all times of the day. Given close proximity to a residential neighborhood, the size of the buffers, especially along the rear of the building, is inadequate.
- [Z23-2024 Block 360 Lot 3, 8 Cub Lake Road \(Donald Cocchi\)](#) (not finalized)
  - The proposed work is located within the anticipated 150-foot wetland transition area of the delineated wetland boundary. A Transition Area Waiver is required from the NJDEP Division of Land Resource Protection for development in a wetland transition area. All other environmental concerns have been addressed.
- [Z15-2024 Block 344 Lot 2.03, 271 Lackawanna Drive \(Jennifer Schuffenhauer\)](#) (not finalized)
  - The EC continues to be concerned about the disturbance of the steep slope areas, including the proposed gravel driveway to already disturbed storage areas that exceed the acceptable grade for that material. The property is in an environmentally sensitive area. It is deemed a critical wildlife habitat, it is in the Highlands area, and the front of the property is in a riparian area (Lubbers Run, which is a C-1 designated stream). As such, great care should be undertaken to ensure that stormwater is adequately managed and soil erosion control measures are taken. The EC recommends that they be restored to their natural condition, utilizing non-invasive, native species landscaping plants appropriate for use in steep slope areas.

### **New Business**

- 2025 Goals/Event Planning:
  - Peter suggested several possible points of focus for 2025 have already emerged, including:
    - (1) working on invasives with the township forester
    - (2) organizing a “zero waste” themed event or events, including a presentation by the owner of Simple Bare Necessities and a community “swap” event
    - (3) collaborating with the NYNJTC on a multi-step plan to ultimately have the Trail Conference formally “adopt” the Byram trails, which means the Conference, through an MoU, overseeing a program of volunteer trail monitoring and maintenance. Peter shared a draft of the proposal that includes mapping, assessment, and workshops, and indicated that the proposal would be funded by the Open Space Committee (to be discussed and possibly decided at the 2/10 OS meeting) provided that the EC serves as the municipal hosts. No objections were expressed, and one observation was that the EC’s participation would look much like it has over the past few years, with periodic sponsored trail improvement projects. Mention was also made of a 2026 ANJEC grant that supported gathering and posting trail information on the township website.

- There was also some discussion of the provisional goal to expand outreach to the town, and the idea of identifying a liaison to the EC for every lake community and neighborhood in Byram. Mike Walsh, Cranberry Lake CC, was recommended; it was suggested Mayor Rubenstein might be a good person to suggest a liaison to Lake Lackawanna Club.
  - Harvey suggested we consider participating in Canal Day on June 3.
  - Peter will draft some Annual Goals language for review and discussion at the February meeting.
- James learned that the 400 tree seedlings provided by the state in 2024 will not be available again this year. That led to discussion of what might be done to celebrate Arbor Day 2025. Peter asked the group to think more about some of the suggestions made, with discussion to continue in February.
  - Peter brought attention to the upcoming MWA River Talk on Invasives on 1/28, taking place from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Zoom.

### **Old Business**

- Mission Statement
  - Peter recommended forming a subcommittee to complete revisions to the EC mission statement and content on Township's web pages. Lisa volunteered to work with him. They will prepare for review at next meeting.
- Mansfield Trail Superfund Site
  - Lisa provided an update on the Community Advisory Group Meeting held January 15. The new loop system being constructed is at a standstill as a property owner does not want the line to cross through their property. The EPA will look for another viable route. Other alternatives were discussed, including residents continuing to use their existing remediation systems if they wished. Lisa also shared that more excavation and treatment are being planned for residual contamination on the hill.
- Lakes and Watersheds Management Plan
  - Harvey commented that the plan had been approved. Dana suggested we keep the plan as a standing item under Old Business. Peter suggested recent attention to the MWA study of conditions for HABs may keep the recommendations from the LWMP relevant.

**Training** – Annual training needs have yet to be identified.

### **Membership**

- Alternate II position is vacant.
- Dana confirmed that no additional positions are available

**Budget (TBD)** – No information is available on the budget at this time.

**Next Meeting** to be held (in person) on February 27, 2025.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:02 p.m.