

Environmental Commission
October 24, 2024 @ 7:30 pm

Roll Call - Meeting called to order at 7:32 p.m.

<i>Dana Flynn</i>	<i>Chairperson</i>	X
<i>Eric Duch</i>	<i>Vice Chairperson</i>	X
<i>Lisa Shimamoto</i>	<i>Member</i>	X
<i>Peter Dlugos</i>	<i>Member</i>	X
<i>James Myers</i>	<i>Member</i>	X
<i>Christine Aboulhosn</i>	<i>Member</i>	X
	<i>Member</i>	
<i>Randy Gutwein</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	X
	<i>Alternate 2</i>	
<i>Andrew McElroy</i>	<i>Planning Board Liaison</i>	X
<i>Harvey Roseff</i>	<i>Council Liaison</i>	X
<i>Elaine Evers</i>	<i>Secretary</i>	X
<i>Debbie Armeno</i>	<i>Recreation Director, Byram Twp</i>	X

Public Participation – Patricia Moschella, Judy Cohen

Open Public Meeting Statement

Review of Meeting Minutes – Motion to approve by Lisa, seconded by Christine Aboulhosn.

Committee Reports

- **MRMC** (Peter):
 - MRMC is trying to coordinate a committee for the Highlands Council Open Space and Recreation Plan. There is 7.2 million available from the federal government (with match) to protect lands, including agricultural land or consider for recreation opportunities. 13,000 acres are available for purchase.
 - MRMC has developed a Watershed Vision Plan and includes Section 319 plans for addressing non-point source pollution.
 - Upcoming events include a Highlands-sponsored hike.
- **Recreation** –Director in attendance with Rec report/collaboration ideas. (Report attached).
- **Open Space** (Eric/Peter):
 - CO Johnson Field 8 Improvements – covered under ARP/Open Space funds, 2025 completion
 - Township forester was present at OS meeting and discussed a timber sale, an invasive program for Glenside Woods, and potential prescribed burn.
 - Community Forestry Plan discussed. Dana expressed confusion regarding why the previous forester was preparing the plan and not the current one. Noted that the EC and DPW do all of the CEUs for the plan, perhaps other OS members can participate moving forward.

- Township manager wants to hire an “open space consultant” to focus on stewardship, trails, and overall leadership. Judy C. (public participant) suggested Ridge & Valley Forest Management.
- Trail Map update – OS will cover remaining balance to update the Trail Map. Quotes are needed, and Council approval.
- Lake Management Plan – needs approval. Noted that Princeton Hydro helped secure a 319 grant for a project for another management plan. Important to note that projects cannot be on private land.
- Discussed general frustration with deer feeding, especially in Forest Lakes neighborhood. Peter has suggested a no-feeding ordinance for deer.
- **Council (Harvey):**
 - CO Johnson Field 8 is under contract for improvements.
 - Mentioned the upcoming 11/22 BTHS bourbon-tasting event at the firehouse.
 - Harvey is still questioning the values noted in the Lake Management Plan, and accuracy of PH data.
 - Harvey attended the NJ Rivers Conference at Centenary and attended a talk on the effects of salt on lakes and recommended the group, NJ Salt Watch. Also attended a presentation from a NYC group about Highlands forestry.

New Business

- Avian Wildlife Center Presentation (November 3) – Elaine to contact Fire Department contact to arrange entry and room/audio set up for presenter. 2 PM start, some members to arrive around 1 PM for setup. Giselle can bring a projector. EC will provide a signup sheet. Patricia M. (public participant) contacted Eugene Zisa during the meeting and confirmed that the firehouse has an HDMI cable and can hold up to 500 people, 200 seated. Judy C. (public participant) suggested using a QR code as a sign-in option.
- MWA Septic Inspection course – Peter provided Christa (MWA) with a contact at Cranbury Lake and he has not had any response to-date.
- EC hike or trail clean-up - Peter suggested hiking the Wolf Lake Trail. Date/time TBD.
- 2025 Goals - Moved to November meeting.
- 2025 EC Meeting Time Change – Members approved proposed 2025 schedule of dates listed below. This schedule will be posted on the township’s website.

January 23	July 24
February 27	August 28
March 27	September 25
April 24	October 23
May 22	November 18*
June 26	December 15*

New start time: 7:00 p.m.

*These two dates are outside the normal 4th Thursday of the month due to Thanksgiving

Old Business

- Mission Statement – To be continued.
- Mansfield Trail Superfund Site – Lisa noted that no meeting was held in October, sampling is to start in December.
- Lake Management Plan – discussed previously.

Planning Board Applications

- Rupesh Patel (1 Catalina):
 - The EC reiterates the need for a landscaping plan for this property and will conduct a more thorough review once that is provided.
- Mountainside Country Store (Rudy and Lou Coviello):
 - No environmental comments.
- Alan Tedesco (25 the Rotunda):
 - No environmental comments.
- William Grabler (39 Meteor Trail):
 - A septic report is required if increasing from 2 to 3 bedrooms.
 - Where will the runoff from the new addition go/drain? Consider incorporating a rain garden at drainage locations.
 - A 10-foot vegetative buffer is required along 80% of the waterfront if there is no bulkhead (which is uncertain).
- Greg Smith (26 Crescent Drive South):
 - Consider using native landscaping in lieu of a fence.

Training

- NJUCF CEUs completed for 2024

Membership

- Welcomed new member, Randy Gutwein, although he is still awaiting confirmation of his appointment.
- Alternate II position remains vacant.

Budget

Remaining balance = \$0.00

Other

Next Meeting to be held Tuesday, November 26 @ 7:30 p.m. (in-person)

Motion to Adjourn – Motion to adjourn made by Christine, seconded by James at 9:35 p.m.