

Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes – August 26, 2021

Call to Order/Role Call – The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm and the following members were present: Katie Baron, Eric Duch, Dana Flynn, Lisa Shimamoto (Planning Board Liaison), Harvey Roseff (Council Liaison) and Donna Fett (Secretary).

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 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 Environmental Commission Secretary.

Public Participation – no members of the public were present.

Review of June 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes – a motion to accept the meeting minutes was made by Katie B., seconded by Dana and all members were in favor.

Committee Reports

- MRMC – Katie P. was not present, but provided the update as follows:

Representatives from the USDA Rural Development office in NJ came to speak about grant and low interest loan options for rural communities - includes development projects, water and waste management, municipal buildings and climate resilience projects

Byram could possibly qualify for some of them; additional details were sent to Secretary. The Highlands Council also shared that they have funds to support towns that want to pay for research/work to pass environmental ordinances. Katie thought perhaps this could be used for our lot coverage project?

The 2020 Integrated Water Quality Report was received from NJDEP and sent out for comments. MRMC is submitting group comments on it. Unfortunately, it showed that Lubber's Run is impaired – both temperature and pH.

Katie shared that Byram is working on a lot coverage ordinance proposal. A representative from the US National Park Service offered to write a letter in support of a lot coverage ordinance; Katie thanked them and said she would speak with the commission

- Recreation – meeting was held last week; the next meeting will be Sept. 20th
- Open Space – the next meeting will be Oct. 11th. Eric advised that the dog park and trail connector projects are moving forward
- Council – Harvey reported that the municipal building project is moving forward. He indicated that several Council members are looking to focus on sewers in 2022 and asked if EC members would be

interested in assisting with this. Discussion occurred and this topic will be included on future agendas. A brief discussion regarding SUEZ also occurred and it was noted that there was an article in the Township Journal regarding this topic.

New Business

- Girl Scout Troop Silver Award Project – Donna discussed the girl’s “Two on a Trail” project. The girls propose to walk several Byram trails, identify invasive plant species and pick up litter. They would create a video and post it on a YouTube channel for the community to enjoy. They also plan to develop a QR code and pamphlet.

EC support was requested to train the girls on how to identify invasive plants on the trails. Members were very interested to support the girls and Donna will forward the dates when available. They plan to start walking the trails in September. The girls propose to do the following trails: Mansfield Woods, Lubbers Run Preserve, Brookwood Park, CO Johnson Park Path and Glenside Wood.

- Invasive Species Event for Fall – Mike Van Clef is available on Saturday, Oct. 2nd for our event. His fee is \$250. A motion was made by Katie B., seconded by Eric to confirm the date with Mike. All members were in favor. Members discussed the possibility of either holding the event on Tamarack Park again or another trail such as Glenside. Glenside Trail presents parking challenges. Donna will ask Township Management for direction.

Old Business

- Impervious Coverage Ordinance – Lisa reported that progress is slowly being made
- Plastic Bag Challenge Update – A Nixle notice was issued and the collection box has been placed at the Municipal Building. Residents are dropping off plastics on a daily basis. Almost 300 lbs. have been collected to date. In order to meet our goal, an additional 208 lbs. are needed by Nov. 24th.

Donna distributed a draft article to consider submitting to Township Journal. A concern was raised that perhaps residents would drop off more plastics than are needed for our project. EC could not sponsor another challenge for six months after completing this challenge. However, another community group could sponsor a challenge. Members thought that Recreation Committee might be interested in doing this and Donna will contact Kymberli (Rec Liaison) to inquire if there is interest on their part.

If an article is submitted, EC would like to offer residents a recycled bag we have available. Donna will request permission to put the bags on the table in the Municipal Building lobby for residents to take a bag when they drop off plastics.

Planning Board Applications

- Dennis Fornarucci – 3 Opa Pass – Block 142, Lot 102. Requesting to erect a storage structure/garage for woodworking and hobby shop. EC members reviewed the application and had the following comments:
 - Please provide details on how the stormwater run-off will be managed on the property. Please advise what steps will be taken to control this (example establish a rain garden, install gutters, etc.)

- Dustin Lovenberg – 151 Lake Drive – Block 250, Lot 135. Requesting to add an addition and garage. EC members reviewed the application and had the following comments:
 - Please provide details on how the stormwater run-off will be managed on the property. Please advise what steps will be taken to control this (examples include establish a rain garden, install gutters, etc.)
 - We noted there is a bulkhead but there appears to be a section of the shoreline without a bulkhead. If there is a section without a bulkhead, please adhere to the Township ordinance Chapter 24 on the need to establish a vegetative buffer 10’ wide covering at least 80% of the shoreline, with special required plantings (native, non-invasive species)
 - Due to the close proximity to the C-1 lake, please be mindful of this special designation
 - Regarding the existing parking area, please return this to its natural state and consider adding some native, non-invasive species plantings

- Eric Schuffenhauer – 271 Lackawanna Drive – Block 344, Lot 2.03 – this was previously reviewed by EC. Refer to “EC Review dated April 22” for our previous comments. Requesting to add attached garage, front porch, deck and pole barn. EC members reviewed the application and had the following comments:
 - We are concerned about the motorized equipment and vehicles that are being stored on-site. Are there hazardous materials stored on-site and what special precautions will be undertaken to ensure safe handling and disposal of these materials?
 - The environmental site assessment provided is incorrect and incomplete
 - Please provide the surface area of the outdoor storage area
 - It does not appear that previously submitted comments were addressed. These comments still apply and are submitted again below:
 - The EC was very concerned about the disturbance of the steep slope areas. If this project is not approved, the EC recommends it to be restored to its natural condition and utilize non-invasive, native species landscaping plants and those that are appropriate for use in steep slope areas. We suggest that the restoration plans should be provided to the Township professionals for review and approval.
 - The property is in an environmentally sensitive area. It is deemed a critical wildlife habitat, 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 soil erosion control measures are taken and any disturbed areas are returned to their natural condition.

- Regarding the pole barn,
 - Please provide your stormwater run-off handling plans. How is run-off being handled and where is the run-off being directed towards?
 - It appears that retaining walls may be needed in the areas behind the pole barn. Please provide details if this is required.
- Provided approval is obtained, when construction is completed, EC recommends the removal of the existing construction driveway. The area should be restored as close as possible to its original condition, or to the satisfaction of the Township Engineer. If there are areas that need to be refilled, please ensure clean soil is used and provide the analytical soil data of the soil used as referenced in your letter to Mr. Dixon.
- The EC has no issues with the garage and porch requests

Training – members did not report any training completed

Membership

Resignation – No response was received from the letter previously sent to Helene Jaros. As per ordinance S-35B, the membership wishes to declare this position vacant. A motion to communicate this to Council was made by Lisa, seconded by Katie B. and all members were in favor.

Budget - \$2,210 remains

It was noted that the Norway Spruce tree at Municipal Building appears to be dying. Members would like to replace the tree, but thought it better to wait until the new Municipal Building plans were finalized as it is possible that the area would be disturbed. Members discussed possibility of doing some plantings in other Township areas, if needed, and Donna will follow-up with management.

Other

- Hudson Farms Charity Hike – Saturday, Oct. 16th
- The annual stormwater letter was mailed and is posted on the Township website
- Members were reminded to let Donna know if there were changes to their contact information (ex. phone or email)

Next Meeting to be held September 23, 2021

Motion to Adjourn at 9:20pm was made by Lisa, seconded by Katie B. and all members were in favor.