

Minutes for the Environmental Commission December 12, 2013

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:32 pm.

Members present – Baldino, Clapp, Hall, Dale (TC liason), Longhi, Neufeld, Piel, Urbanski, Van der Veen, Zuzov.

Minutes of November 14, 2013 were approved

The progress on the Sustainable Jersey Grant was discussed. Final grant funding of \$5000 will be in March/April 2014, as soon as the final documentation has been submitted. Cathy is working on finishing the easement inspections and the Easement Stewardship Plan. The grant money has been used up, with a deficit. The AAC paid for this.

The 319h Grant was discussed. The Orleans storm water retention basin project was discussed. The original plan was to plant shrubs and grasses to create a rain garden to remediate temperature and runoff problems downstream. The Homeowners Association was initially for this project, but the property owner was against it, as the mowed look was preferable to plantings. There is another detention basin in Orleans, which has a conservation easement on it. Cathy reported that the deed has not been located, after searching. She will go to the Hall of Records. Joan volunteered that she may have access to the deed. The members also discussed dispersing information about the importance of healthy water ways through a newsletter. Focus would be brought to the grant project which and the plans to decommission the dam currently in disrepair at the Alexauken Creek Wildlife Management Area. Clapp requested reviewing the design of the dam project. Information which the EC could provide would focus on how dams threaten the health of a waterway by retaining water in pools that quickly warm up and how that increase in temperature is not conducive to trout and other aquatic organisms. The spotlight on the 319h grant would, in turn would be a great way to educate the public about rain gardens and their benefits. The rain garden at South Hunterdon would make an excellent example.

The “After the Bell” program was discussed. Due to scheduling and other difficulties with the elementary school, the winter program was subsequently dropped, with a spring 2014 program possible. Joan and Janice had put a serious effort into this and whether they should pursue the spring program is up to them and any volunteers who would like to help.

JCP&L has submitted to the DEP a request for wetland, floodplain permits and other exceptions in order to renovate/expand the current substation on Rocktown Lambertville Road. This is in order to make future power outages more easily resolved for West Amwell. Their plans include a separation from Lambertville, so if Lambertville gets flooded, West Amwell will still have power. The Commission reviewed the site plans and questioned some of it. A subcommittee consisting of Piel, Clapp and Van der Veen was appointed to send comments to the DEP.

Cathy reported that our 2014 ANJEC dues will be paid from our 2013 budget.

Our Sustainable Jersey certification is up for renewal in 2014 and a general consensus of indecision was reached. Many agreed that it would be difficult to maintain the certification as the program is geared more towards urban areas and their efforts to remediate environmental problems. It was agreed that it may be in our best interests to focus our attention on other more substantial projects, such as the 319h

grant. Cathy will review the current status of renewal for certification for SJ and report at the next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Minutes prepared by C.Hall