

Environmental Commission Minutes

January 12, 2012

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chairperson Urbanski.

The Commission voted to have Jeff Slowick continue as Secretary for 2012.

In attendance: Baldino, Hall, Rich (TC liaison), Slowick, Urbanski, Smith-Casey, Van der Veen,

Absent: Neufeld, Piel

Approval of minutes

The minutes from December 8, 2011 were approved.

Opportunity for public comment

There were no members of the public present for comment.

Business

Sustainable Jersey: The Commission has not heard anything yet concerning our certification from Sustainable Jersey.

The application package for the 319h grant for the Alexauken Creek has been completed. The Commission is now waiting for information from Princeton Hydro as to how and when to proceed.

2011 Annual Report to the Township Committee – The Commission discussed and voted to approve the following report to be presented to the Township Committee at their next meeting:

Environmental Commission Annual Report of Activities, 2011

1. Review of Renewable Energy Ordinance and Further Comments on Solar Application before the Zoning Board

The zoning board requested commission feedback on the application for a solar facility that is currently before the zoning board.

The commission decided to use the proposed renewable energy ordinance as the basis of its feedback to the zoning board.

The commission chose not to simply send the draft ordinance to the zoning board because the application process started before the ordinance was approved.

2. “Celebrate West Amwell” Country Fair

The EC had a table with educational materials for the fair on May 14, 2011.

The Commission had a planned nature based scavenger hunt to be held at the fair.

3. Citizen Stormwater Advisory Committee

An Environmental Commission subcommittee was formed to assist the township with their requirements for Stormwater education.

Neufeld, Van der Veen and Urbanski were appointed as members. The sub committee met and subsequently provided Stormwater Training for Township Committee members which fulfilled a state requirement.

4. Alexauken Creek Watershed Protection Plan

The Commission had input into the 319h grant to implement some of the recommendations of the Plan. West Amwell, with Princeton Hydro as a partner, received a grant of \$541,300.

5. Renewable Energy Ordinance Amendment

The Commission proposed an amendment to the Renewable Energy Ordinance to address compliance with state statutes and also to address cadmium telluride issue.

6. Invasive Species Project

The Commission made considerable progress in identification/narratives for the invasive species in West Amwell. These are to be used for public education and will be posted on the website and possibly in the Lambertville Beacon.

7. Sustainable Jersey Certification

The Commission applied for Sustainable Jersey certification, submitting 200 points, with 150 needed for the certification. This project took up the greater part of the year.

Action Item	Responsible Members	Points	
		Available	To date
Green Team	Cathy, Charity, Cindy	10	10
Energy Audits	Art and George	50	50
Wind Ordinance	Cathy	10	10
Sustainable Land Use Pledge	Joan	10	10
Farmland Preservation Plan	Cathy	10	10
Environmental Commission	Cathy	10	10
Natural Resource Inventory	Cathy	20	20
Wildlife Action Plan	Members	10	10
Clustering Ordinances	Cathy	10	10
Community Forestry Plan	Karen	20	20
Tree Protection Ordinance	Cathy	10	10
Recycling Depot	Jeff	10	10
Sustainable Master Plan Element	Cathy	10	10
Sourland Alliance	Cathy	10	10
Total Points to date			200

Chairperson Urbanski thanked the members for their contributions to the invasive project: Multiflora Rose (Art), Stilt grass and Garlic mustard (Cathy), Norway Maple (Becky),

Autumn Olive (Joan and Cathy), Burning Bush, Moneywort, Canada Thistle (Cathy), Privet (Karen and Cathy), Lesser Celandine, Wineberry (Cathy), Bamboo (Karen), Honeysuckle Vine and Bush Honeysuckle (Joan), English Ivy (Charity), Vetch (Rob), Knotweed (Art).

Still to be done are Giant Hogweed and Purple Loosestrife by Jeff. Cathy offered to do Purple Loosestrife if Jeff would make the Hogweed very special and scary. Agreed. Becky suggested that we offer native alternatives to invasives. Cathy said that she will have something prepared for the next meeting. We still need to get a good photo of ground ivy.

The members discussed the content and look of the Commission's page(s) on the new website. We want to add our mission statement; have the invasive material ("mug shots", suggested Jeff); photos of native West Amwell wildflowers (Cathy has a collection); either post our old newsletters or recreate parts of them, maybe update the plastic article; keep the links; delete the rest of the material on the current website because it is dated.

Chairperson Urbanski reported that it would be nice to do a newsletter but there is no funding. Discussion followed: a newsletter could be posted on the website or we could just do a few articles instead of a newsletter.

Chairperson Urbanski reported that A4358 - Harvesting trees on Public Lands was tabled on 1/10 and that the letter concerning A3992 –Wind Towers on preserved farms – was sent to our legislators.

An email from a resident concerning the solar portion of the renewable energy ordinance was discussed. The resident had sent an article about Hamilton Township's recent ordinance which makes it more difficult to have ground mounted solar panels in residential and rural zones, giving preference to such projects on landfills, industrial districts, etc. The Commission decided to file it away for use in the future if the need arose.

The members discussed that according to the MLUL, the Commission should be reviewing applications before the Zoning and Planning Boards. Chairperson Urbanski will draft a letter and send to members for their approval. Letter to then be sent to the respective boards.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.