

Minutes for the Environmental Commission

October 13, 2011

Call to order

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

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

Absent: Hall, Piel, Strauss

Approval of minutes

The commission approved minutes from October 13, 2011

Opportunity for public comment

There were no members of the public present for comment.

Business

1. Alexauken Creek Watershed Protection Plan

Chairperson Urbanski reported to the commission that about \$500,000 has been earmarked for the Alexauken Creek watershed protection plan. There are five focus areas for which the money is directed. This can be changed if necessary.

One will segments that the money is directed to is a local farmer who has already indicated that he is not interested in participating.

The Orleans development is also one of the segments.

The commission went over the budget and the requirements that need to be met.

The commission noted that community outreach and education is part of the project.

The plan does require that the water quality is improved as a result of the project. The most recent tests of the water in Alexauken Creek showed that the water is compromised. The commission considers that this is due in part to run off from the Orleans development.

The projects outlines in the grant will take 42 months to complete. Chairperson Urbanski will keep the commission up-dated as to progress.

2. Request for Help from a Resident with Irene Damage

Chairperson Urbanski thanked commission member Piel for helping to direct a Harburton/Mt. Airy road homeowner to the correct state office in order to get help with repairs to their private bridge over the Alexauken Creek. The bridge was damaged by Hurricane Irene and the storm caused a changed in the flow of the creek.

3. Possible Amendment to the Renewable Energy Ordinance

The commissioned discussed the approved renewable energy ordinance. At the last meeting, the commission discussed the definition of an intermediate sized facility. The Planning Board did not approve of a new definition which the state had not itself defined. The commission continued the discussion for properties with more than 10 ground mounted panels and decided to regulate any installation producing more than 20 KW DC. A site plan approval would also be necessary for such installations as well as fencing.

The commission discussed feedback from residents of the area around Route 518 where a major solar installation was proposed. The installation was rejected but will be appealed. The feedback from the residents generally was that the ordinance needed to be more restrictive.

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For example, the residents proposed prohibiting the installation of solar panel in residential zones. This was recognized to be opposition to the state statute and therefore not possible.

The commission discussed if major installations in residential zones should be prohibited.

The commission also discussed if buffers required for major installations should be increased.

The commission decided to refer the homeowners to the state because the ordinance was based on the state statute.

The commission went back over the definitions in the ordinance of minor roof top installations. A concern was raised that the current ordinance regulates these installation beyond what is allowed in the statute. For example, the current ordinance limits these installations to producing no more than 110% of the annual energy use. The statute does not have this limitation. The commission discussed removing this limitation from the ordinance.

Chairperson Urbanski planned to review the other solar ordinances and report back to the commission.

4. Sustainable Jersey Action List

The following is a summary of the Sustainable Jersey action items to date:

Action Item	Responsible Members	Points	
		Available	To date
Green Team	Cathy, Charity, Cindy	10	10
Energy Audits	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

Items in **BOLD** are priority items

Chairperson Urbanski planned to review the documents and submit the week following the meeting.

Opportunity for public comment

There were no members of the public present for comment.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:38PM.