

# **Minutes for the Environmental Commission**

## **April 14, 2011**

### **Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by Chairperson Cathy Urbanski.

In attendance: Baldino, Piel, Slowick, Strauss, Urbanski, Van der Veen

Absent: Hall, Neufeld, Fisher (TC liaison), Smith-Casey

### **Approval of minutes**

The commission minutes from the January 13, 2011 and March 11, 2011 meetings were reviewed and approved.

### **Opportunity for public comment**

There were no members of the public present for comment.

### **Business**

#### **1. Training Video**

Chairperson Urbanski asked new members if they had seen the training video.

Commission member Strauss confirmed that she had seen the video in February.

#### **2. Fundraising**

Chairperson Urbanski summarized her meeting with the Chief Financial Officer.

It was determined that the commission can raise funds through donations.

Chairperson Urbanski asked the commission members to consider how the commission can raise funds. The commission discussed using the money to publish a newsletter.

#### **3. West Amwell Fair (May 14, 2011)**

The commission discussed having a scavenger hunt at the fair.

Items considered for the scavenger hunt included acorns, pine cones, and feathers.

The area will have to be walked the week before to see what kind of additional items are already on the property.

The commission also discussed who will man the EC table at the fair. It was reported that commission member Hall volunteered to be there for the duration of the fair. Chairperson Urbanski would send an electronic mail to see who else can be there.

#### **4. Sustainable Jersey**

Chairperson Urbanski reported the solar/wind ordinance was submitted for another 10 points. Currently West Amwell has 70 points that count toward accreditation.

The commission discussed the pledge to support the New Jersey wildlife plan that was assembled by commission member Neufeld. The commission reviewed the pledge and noted that many of the provisions are already being done. Some revision to the pledge will be made and the discussion will be continued in the May meeting.

The commission also discussed the Sustainable Land use pledge. The applicability of the provision for mix housing options was discussed. The concept of the town center was also discussed. The commission decided to continue to revise pledge in order to make tailor it more to West Amwell.

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The commission discussed the recycling depot and the need to provide instructions to the town residents as to what is to be recycled. Commission member Slowick will ask the recycling committee to meet in order to discuss the preparation of a visual aid to be used at the recycling depot that will provide guidance as to what cannot be recycled.

The commission discussed an anti-idling provision. It was noted that idling wastes gas. The commission will further discuss the need for an anti-idling provision and possible enlisting outside help to create a provision.

The commission discussed the recycling of electronic waste and that it was required under law. It was also noted that the recycling of many items that plug in is required.

The commission discussed that batteries are no longer being accepted by the town for recycling, they are no longer considered hazardous waste. The issues related to recycling will be deferred to the recycling committee.

The commission discussed rain gardens and getting the school involved to create the gardens. Commission member Strauss will work with the schools to create a program.

Chairperson Urbanski discussed the town energy audit and noted that the town would receive credit for it towards certification.

The commission discussed the open space plan. For certification, a more current plan is required. The existing plan is 12 years old. Chairperson Urbanski reported that the open space committee is reviewing the plan in order to bring it up to date. However, it is unlikely to be done this year due to the anticipated expense of doing the update.

Chairperson Urbanski reported that West Amwell and Lambertville have signed agreements to install solar panels at the schools. The installation will reduce electricity costs to the schools and will count towards certification.

The commission discussed the “other” category and what to use for that category.

Chairperson Urbanski noted that very good progress toward accreditation has been made.

### **5. Solar Panel Installations in West Amwell**

Chairperson Urbanski reported that the solar farm on Route 179 will be approved though an appeal is expected.

Chairperson Urbanski also reported that another solar application is expected from a company named Garden Solar. The installation will be located on Route 518. The issue for that installation is that the minimum acreage for such an installation is 20 acres however the property is only 18 acres. The state DEP is reviewing the application specifically as is related to wetland, flood plains, and transition zones. It was noted by commission member Piel that the DEP responses will be open for and should be reviewed by the commission. The commission can provide comments back the DEP.

### **Opportunity for public comment**

There were no members of the public present for comment.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:43PM.