

Minutes for the Environmental Commission

July 14, 2011

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm by Chairperson Cathy Urbanski.

In attendance: Baldino, Fisher (TC liaison), Hall, Neufeld, Piel, Slowick, Smith-Casey, Urbanski

Absent: Strauss, Van der Veen

Approval of minutes

The commission minutes from the June 2011 approved.

Opportunity for public comment

There were no members of the public present for comment.

Business

1. Anti-idling

Commission member Piel obtained information regarding the dangers of idling and shared the information with the commission.

2. Alexauken Creek Watershed Protection Plan

Chairperson Urbanski reported that she will be meeting with Dr. Souza from Princeton Hydro to discuss grant money that may be available for a restoration project for the Alexauken Creek. The chairperson will report progress at the next meeting.

3. Tree Canopy Goal

As part of the Sustainable Jersey initiative, the commission discussed the adoption of a tree canopy goal. Chairperson Urbanski presented a goal to the commission that was leverage from the master plan. It was noted that West Amwell current canopy is around 50% which exceeds the current recommendation from the National Forestry recommendation of 40%. Chairperson Urbanski suggested that

the West Amwell Tree Canopy Goal should be to preserve the current canopy. The commission members discussed the wording of the goal.

4. Definitions of “Minor” Solar Energy Facilities

The commission was contact by the planning board regarding the definition of “minor” solar facilities. The issue is that the solar energy facility currently plans for the West Amwell schools qualify as a minor facility under the current solar energy ordinance developed by the commission.

The commission discussed the definitions in the current ordinance and determined that the state statutes were adequate and that the current West Amwell ordinance would not be changed.

5. Solar Energy Request from Hopewell

The town of Hopewell contacted the commission regarding West Amwell’s solar energy ordinance. Hopewell has several large solar projects in the works and is interested in the commission’s input. Commission member Neufeld took an action item to meet with Hopewell.

6. Sustainable Jersey Solar Energy Action Items

The commission discussed the Sustainable Jersey solar action items and that item’s requirement. Liaison Fisher reported that the energy audits are done. The commission discussed the narrative to be submitted to Sustainable Jersey.

The commission also discussed that the plan being made in response to the audit is being executed. The target for completion is the end of October. The item could be worth as much as 50 points. Chairperson Urbanski would up load the information to Sustainable Jersey.

7. 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	
Energy Audits	George	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	
Tree Hazard assessment	Karen	10	
Tree Protection Ordinance	Cathy	10	10
Recycled Materials and Composting	Jeff	10	
Recycling Depot	Jeff	10	
Solar	George	10	
Sustainable Master Plan Element	Cathy	10	10
Sourland Alliance	Cathy	10	
Rain Gardens	Cindy	10	
Community Gardens	Cindy	10	
Total Points to date			110

Items in **BOLD** are priority items

Chairperson Urbanski stated that she anticipates up loading more than enough information to meet the minimum 150 points needed for certification but that she wanted to be in excess of minimum as a safety margin.

8. Storm water Advisory Committee

Chairperson Urbanski reported that the committee did meet. One of the things that the committee was going to do was to send out the storm water information along with the tax bills.

The commission briefly discussed alternatives to sending out the information with the tax bills. The option of using a Facebook page was briefly discussed.

Opportunity for public comment

There were no members of the public present for comment.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:28PM.