

Minutes for the Environmental Commission

August 11, 2011

Call to order

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

In attendance: Hall, Neufeld, Slowick, Urbanski, Van der Veen

Absent: Baldino, Fisher (TC liaison), Piel, Smith-Casey, Strauss,

Approval of minutes

Approval of the commission minutes from the July 2011 was deferred until the next meeting.

Opportunity for public comment

There were no members of the public present for comment.

Business

1. Alexauken Creek Watershed Protection Plan

Chairperson Urbanski reported that she met with Dr. Souza from Princeton Hydro. Chairperson Urbanski reported that Dr. Souza wants to focus the project resources on the retention basin at the Orleans development. She noted that the basin is located below the development and is discharging the storm water from the development directly into the Alexauken Creek. This is leading to poor water quality and erosion of the banks down stream of the basin. This was also discussed with a farmer who owns the land downstream from the basin. Dr. Souza was to have further discussions with the farmer and get back to the chairperson after those discussions.

2. Possible Amendment to the Renewable Energy Ordinance

Commission member Neufeld met with the Hopewell Township Environmental Commission. He reported that it was a good opportunity to see things from that commission's view point. The content of the current West Amwell ordinance was reviewed.

The need for security fencing around minor installations was discussed. It was noted that the state statutes limit the ordinance for some minor installation. Installations with 10 panels or less can't be regulated. The commission decided to recommend that, for safety reasons, ground mounted panels less than eight feet off the ground should be fenced.

The definition of a minor versus a major installation was also discussed. In the Hopewell ordinance the definition of major or minor was based on how the energy is being used and not necessarily on the size of the installation.

Commission member Neufeld suggested that there is a need to define an intermediate facility. For example, such a system might be defined as a 20kW (DC) system which is twice the size of a typical house system. Also, the zoning would be the same as a minor system but the installation requirements would be that of a major system (e.g., wet land protections, height restrictions, set backs).

The commission discussed what requirements that apply to major installations should also be applied to intermediate installations. The revision to the ordinance will be introduced at the next town meeting.

3. Possible Cancellation of the September Meeting

The commission decided to cancel the September meeting.

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 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	10
Total Points to date			190

Items in **BOLD** are priority items

Opportunity for public comment

There were no members of the public present for comment.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:34PM.