

**West Amwell Township  
Environmental Commission  
March 11, 2010**

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

In attendance: Joel Coyne, , Robyn Myhre, Rob Piel, Jeff Slowick, Rob Tomenchok, Cathy Urbanski, Joan Van der Veen, George Fisher (Township Committee liaison)

Absent: Charity Hall

**Membership**

Chairperson Urbanski noted that John Hoff has resigned from the commission in order to focus on a position on the zoning board. He was a valuable member of the commission but it was a conflict for him to be on both the zoning board and with the commission simultaneously.

**Oaths of Office**

Chairperson Urbanski administered oaths of office to the Rob Tomenchok and Joel Coyne.

**Approval of minutes**

A few minor changes we noted for minutes from the January 14, 2010. The most significant change was a note clarifying that the commission had no concern regarding the environmental impact of the request for zoning board application that was reviewed in the January 14, 2010, meeting.

**Opportunity for Public Comment**

No members of the public were present.

**Old Business**

**Green Team and Sustainable Jersey**

The check list provided by Sustainable New Jersey was reviewed. The check list is used by Sustainable Jersey to determine if the town can be certified "Sustainable" because of certain qualifying initiatives that it has undertaken. Points are assigned for those qualifying initiatives. If the town is able to earn 150 points, it becomes certified and is eligible for grant money which can be put back in sustainable initiatives.

Mr. Coyne spoke briefly of his experience as the sustainable coordinator for the town for which he works. He stated that while the program seems geared towards larger communities, it is possible for smaller, more rural communities such as West Amwell to accrue points and become certified.

The following items from that list were discussed:

The check list includes a requirement for the formation of a town green team. It was noted that the Environmental Commission is in fact the town's green team and qualifies for this item.

Mr. Fisher noted that the list also included a requirement for an energy audit and that an audit is currently being discussed by the Township Committee.

Mr. Coyne noted that the requirement for a community out reach program might be fulfilled by the commissions current initiative with the school.

Chairperson Urbanski noted that the town does not have an energy education out reach program and could not check off that item from the list.

She also noted that the town has previously discussed clean energy initiatives but has not acted on them and can therefore not check off that item.

The commission noted that there is an item for freezer recycling. The town does collect freezers but the town's current program probably does not qualify. However, Mr. Coyne noted that the item might be negotiable.

The commission noted that there is an item for school based conservation programs. Mr. Tomenchok noted that in 2000 there was an infrastructure upgrade to the elementary school that included low energy lighting and higher efficiency boilers. Mr. Tomenchok took an action item to review the requirements to determine if what was done to the school qualified for the item.

The commission noted that there was an item regarding sustainability education. Mr. Tomenchok noted that there were educational materials already available as part of the New Jersey State educational materials.

A number of items were reviewed that were more for urban communities. These items included green challenges committees, green fairs, representation of different cultures on the board, and environmental justice and planning.

The commission noted that there is an item regarding lead paint awareness education. Ms. Van der Veen offered to try to obtain some lead paint educational brochures.

The commission discussed the item relating to a wind ordinance. It was thought that this was to promote the use of windmills for power generation. It was thought that the town's ordinance would not allowed installation of a windmill. The commission asked Ms. Van der Veen to discuss it with the planning board.

The commission noted that there is an item for anti-idling ordinance. There was much discussion about the whether or not there already was a state model ordinance against idling. Ms. Myhre agreed to look into the model ordinance.

The commission noted that there is an item for sustainable land use pledge. Most of the pledge was tailored for a more urban community. However, Mr. Coyne suggested that we could discuss the pledge with Sustainable Jersey and revise it to state what West Amwell can pledge to do to support sustainable land use.

The commission noted that there is an item for having sustainability element in town master plan. That element is being worked on and will be shared with sustainable New Jersey.

The commission noted that there is an item for farm land preservation. That is also currently in progress.

The commission noted that there is an item for open space preservation. That is already an open space initiative in West Amwell.

The commission discussed the item relating to tree protection and a community forestry plan. West Amwell has a forestry plan. Mr. Tomenchok noted that many of the small farms have woodlands set aside for which there are management plans.

The commission discussed the use of clean diesel in the town vehicles. While a retrofit of the town vehicles is not economically feasible, the commission could ask the town to put in place a plan to replace the vehicles with greener alternatives when each vehicle is replaced.

The commission discussed the item relating to the recycling depot. It was noted that the town has fulfilled the requirements though our existing recycling program.

### **Greenhouse Gas Reduction Grant**

Still waiting.

### **Meeting with Art teacher**

Chairperson Urbanski met with the art Teacher for West Amwell Elementary on 1/26 and planned nature art work for display at municipal building. This is to be coordinated with "Arbor Day". Township Committee approval obtained on March 3 for the art display of an environmental theme.

## **New Business**

### **Review of Flood Mitigation Plan for the NJ section of the Delaware River Basin.**

A request from the Township Committee regarding the flood plan was discussed. The plan was reviewed and it was determined that the plan contained errors. The commission agreed that the errors need to be corrected.

### **JCP&L is considering expanding the substation located on Rocktown-Lambertville Road**

A meeting has been set up. While the commission noted that JCP&L probably is exempt from any town regulation they may want to hear town feedback in order to maintain good community relations.

### **PA Black Fly Spraying**

This was provided for information only. The state of Pennsylvania will be spraying BT in order to control black fly populations.

### **Environmental Commission Budget**

The commission budget was discussed briefly.

### **Letter from Stonybrook Millstone Watershed Association**

Concerns were raised by the Water Association due to excessive E. coli strains present in West Amwell streams. The association recommended a septic ordinance be put in place.

The commission noted that only a small portion of the water shed is in West Amwell and that there were many potential causes for the excessive E. Coli other than defective septic system as proposed by the associations report. The commission decided that this was non-issue and that nothing should be done at this time.

### **Opportunity for Public Comment**

No members of the public were present.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:05.

Minutes prepared by Jeffrey Slowick