

**West Amwell Township  
Environmental Commission  
May 13, 2010**

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

In attendance: Joel Coyne, Charity Hall, Jeff Slowick, Rob Tomenchok, Cathy Urbanski, Joan Van der Veen.

Absent: George Fisher (TC liaison), Rob Piel, Robyn Myhre

**Approval of minutes**

There were minor changes to the minutes of the April 8, 2010. Chairperson Urbanski will make the changes and submit them to the township clerk.

**Opportunity for public comment**

No members of the public were present.

**Old Business**

**1. A Report on Arbor Day Celebration** with WAT Elementary was presented to the commission. Charity and Joan were great. The children present were very attentive and had many questions.

A picture was taken of the fourth grade class with the re-useable shopping bags was published in the Beacon along with a description of the day's events.

The commission reviewed a letter drafted by Chairperson Urbanski thanking Shoprite for their donation of the re-usable shopping bags.

**2. Training Video for Volunteers** was viewed by some members. Those members signed the training form.

**3. The Sustainability Element of the Master Plan** was review by the commission members.

The plan has already gone to the township planning board. The members of the commission reviewed feedback from the board. It was noted that the Sustainability element did not recommend any new ordinances. The element would promote sustainability through education rather than through regulation.

**4. The Alliance to Save the Sourlands** was discussed by the members. Chairperson Urbanski noted that in the last alliance discussion, the alliance focused on the creation of new ordinances to protect the Sourlands. The chairperson recommended focusing on retaining open space instead of establishing new ordinances.

The commission then turned its attention to a referendum that the township committee is considering. The referendum would be a proposal to the voters to reduce the open space tax in order to reduce taxes.

The commission debated a response to the referendum. The commission decided that it is important for the referendum to be worded clearly so that the voters understand that a reduction in the open space tax will have long term impact on the open space within the town. Also, an interpretive flyer could be handed out at the Saturday municipal trash collection and also could be sent via the listserv at the schools.

The commission agreed that a separate team (consisting of members of the Environmental Commission, the Open Space Committee and the Finance Committee) could be established to work with the township committee to draft an interpretive statement to go with the referendum question explaining the pros and cons of reducing the open space tax.

**5. The Green Team/Sustainable Jersey Certification** was discussed. The certification check list was reviewed. Each member of the committee will focus on portions of the checklist. Chairperson Urbanski will keep track of the assignments.

#### **Opportunity for Public Comment**

No members of the public were present.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10.

Minutes prepared by Jeff Slowick