

## Minutes of the Environmental Commission April 9, 2015

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7 pm.

Members Present –Hall, Neufeld, Piel, Urbanski,  
Van der Veen, Zuzov, Dale (TC liaison).

Members Absent – Clapp, Haug, Longhi.

**Approval of minutes** – March 12, 2015, approved.

**Opportunity for Public Comment** – no members of the public were present for comment.

### **Business:**

#### **319h Grant:**

Projects: Our project manager has been changed/reassigned four times. Our current project manager is Nick Zripko. There is a meeting set with Princeton Hydro and the DEP on 4-15-15 to further discuss the proposed grant projects.

#### **Alexauken Creek Dam decommissioning:**

The project for the Alexauken Creek Wildlife Management area is still being assessed by the DEP, with a need for an archeological survey of the area.

#### **Municipal Property Proposal:**

The EC members reviewed the recommendations we had made and the comments from Princeton Hydro. The assessment of the project is as follows, based on the Memorandum from Princeton Hydro dated 3-10-15:

1. Removal of the under-road cross-connection of the rain garden. The expanded rain garden will drain to the ditch as it does now using a properly designed control structure to regulate the rate and volume of discharge. **EC agreed.**
2. Expansion of the tree planting area. The selection and grouping of trees can be worked out with the EC. **EC wants to make the tree plantings to be easily be maintainable by our DPW.**
3. Adding water bars to the recycling facility access road while a good idea is not going to work. This would place a significant maintenance burden on the DPW / Road Dept. Our approach kept the road work simple, with its maintenance easily achieved by simply going over the road with a grader pitched to western side. The water bars which will be tricky to build and difficult to maintain. **EC decided to eliminate the water bars.**
4. If the lower part of the ditch is extensively modified as proposed this will trigger a number of NJDEP permits. This will slow down the entire project and add extraneous costs. Presently the project does not require any NJDEP permit. As you are aware the need for a permit with the dam

project has ground its implementation at this time to a halt. I strongly recommend not doing this. Rather, separate from this grant we can pursue perhaps some funding through the NRCS and conduct some of the simple plantings and vegetative improvements. I can elaborate on this further. Bottom line avoid for now any extensive work within the ditch. **EC decision to stay short of the 300' buffer for the Alexauken and the wetlands and stay away from the northern part of the ditch.**

5. Our design shunts drainage to the field away from the ditch. This is where the runoff flows now. Diverting to the east to the ditch only exacerbates the erosion problems that are now affecting the ditch. As such, we do not recommend "shaping the grass to direct flow into the ditch". **EC agreed.**
6. The vegetated buffer (which is really a vegetated FILTER STRIP) shown on our plan can be expanded to further encompass the paved portion of the **recycling garbage** staging and drop off area as shown on the modified plan. **EC agreed.**

Members decided that the final plans should be reviewed by the Planning Board and the Township Committee.

Members are requesting that Steve Souza review the plans for the municipal property and physically examine the property in order to avoid having the expanded rain garden infringe on the septic system and the future expansion of the septic system.

**Woodlands Ordinance mitigation:** The tree and shrub planting is being handled by the Parks and Rec committee. The EC will recommend to P&R that the plantings be pollinator friendly and will provide a list of such trees and shrubs.

**PennEast proposed pipeline:** continued discussion.

**Bylaws:** Members reviewed our current bylaws. It was noted in section 2(e) that the Commission can acquire property, etc., basically the duties of the Open Space Committee. The question raised was why this in the EC's bylaws. It was noted that the EC was formed in 1972 and the Open Space Committee not until 2000. Also noted that section 2(e) is part of the state statute forming the EC and is currently in the Code, therefore it must remain in our bylaws.

**Open Space update:** review of current projects and the possible loss of funding for farmland preservation. The Open Space Committee is working very hard to secure the funding.

**Review of Planning Board application, block 8, lot 38, minor subdivision:** it was noted that since there was to be no new construction, that the waivers were appropriate.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski