

## Minutes for the Environmental Commission 1-08-15

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:03 pm.

Members present – Clapp, Neufeld, Piel, Urbanski, Zuzov, and Township Committee liaison John Dale.

Members excused – Haug, Van der Veen.

Members absent – Hall, Longhi

Minutes of December 11, 2014 were approved.

**Opportunity for Public Comment** - No members of the public were present for comment.

### **319h grant**

Members had reviewed the revised plan and memo from Princeton Hydro for the municipal property and had offered the following comments, questions, and recommendations:

Questions:

1. Where does the water go that enters the proposed cross drain? EC felt that it went to the proposed vegetated swale.
2. What about having something done with the triangle of grass between the road in and the road out to the garbage truck area. EC felt it best to leave this area as is.
3. Why does the water coming from the existing proposed rain garden area have to cross the gravel road? According to the memorandum from Princeton Hydro the existing ditch has become eroded. EC questioned this.
4. The road by the recycling area also gets muddy and should be slated in the gravel road improvements. EC decided that this was beyond the scope of the grant.
5. What will prevent water from the proposed step stool system from overflowing onto the road when there is heavy rain? EC discussed the Princeton Hydro proposed plan for a rain garden expansion which would prevent this and prevent standing water.
6. Will the tree planting area need to be mowed and will it be like woodlands or an arboretum? EC reviewed the memorandum from Princeton Hydro which allowed the EC to determine the tree planting.
7. Questions about the proposed cross drain included the uncertainty of the construction to function with a gravel road and the ability to clean it out when filled with debris. The EC did not like the cross drain design.

8. Life span of the cross drain and maintenance requirements of the cross drain were discussed in response to questions about these.
9. Questions about the proposed gravel road improvements were discussed. P.Hydro to provide further information.
10. It was questioned whether the grant could pay for an analysis of the proposed plan from the township engineer. EC discussed and the probability is close to zero.

Recommendations: These are from Dave Clapp with input from the EC.

#### Existing Stormwater basin

1. Turn existing retention basin at the west end of the parking lot into an infiltration basin for a water quality storm with a 2 stage outlet
2. The outlet to the existing ditch/channel east of the gravel lane: don't cross the gravel road, stabilize the ditch by grading, use erosion control fabric, and buffer the ditch with woody vegetation to reduce water temperatures using lower growing vegetation such as willow and dogwood for fast growth, easy maintenance, and for future cuttings for additional projects.
3. Stabilize the remainder of the channel with ditch plugs or step pools. It was thought that the DEP would waive the permit fees for these projects.

#### Driveway

1. Possibly add water bar/speedbump to the gravel driveway just below the recycling area to direct the water to the west.
2. Grade edges of driveway to be lower than center. Or tip road one way or another.
3. Add water bars to direct water to east side of lane. Shape grass area east of lane to direct flow to ditch.

#### Garbage Area

1. Add diversion to south of garbage area to direct water west. Diversion will outlet to vegetated swale along north edge of garbage area. Make swale smaller on the east side.
2. Grade swale so that overflow flows into field to the north.

#### Stream Area

1. Riparian enhancement – invasive removal and stream buffer expansion.

The members questioned the location of the well and septic system. Will need this information to design these projects in order to prevent any contamination of the well and not to interfere with future expansion of the septic field.

Cathy will construct a map of the municipal property with the EC's recommendations for submission to Princeton Hydro.

### **Proposed PennEast Pipeline Alternate Route**

Janice and Cathy had met with PennEast officials on 1/6 to ascertain what the route was. Basically it would co-locate along the existing transmission lines with a new lateral line which would connect with Texas Eastern. The route would travel east through the Toll property and close to the Elementary School. We found the alternate route to be just as unacceptable as the original route.

### **2014 Annual Environmental Commission Report to the Township Committee**

Members approved of the report provided.

### **NRI Update**

Joan and Cathy will complete it this month.

### **Durand Tract in Cumberland County**

New Jersey bought this 80-acre tract of critical forest habitat to expand the Menantico Ponds State Wildlife Management Area. The purchase was part of a 40-year effort to protect the headwaters of the pristine Menantico and Manumuskin Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The Durand tract is an essential part of a core forest ecosystem. It is confirmed breeding habitat for threatened Northern Pine Snakes, very likely habitat for endangered Corn Snakes, and breeding habitat for rare species including Box Turtle, Wood Thrush, Black-billed Cuckoo, and Whip-poor-will.

The DEP is proposing to sell off this 80 acre preserved property to the municipality for development. Approval of this 80-acre sale would set a devastating precedent and open the floodgates for any municipalities to seek to sell off preserved lands for commercial use.

The proposal for the original plan was to use the proceeds from the sale of the 80 acres to purchase at least 900 acres nearby to add to the same WMA. This is the standard for "diversions", at least 10 acres of new open space for every 1 acre diverted. Then they decided to just give up on the 900 acres, which is the real problem.

Members discussed this sale and although we confirmed that the 10:1 rule was being broken, we felt that we did not have enough information to further comment.

### **Review of application from the Planning Board**

Members reviewed the application from Investment Group LLC (Strober) for Block 3 Lot 21. The application is for a 10,000 sq.ft. warehouse with 1474 sq.ft. of office space and a new parking area. This property is located on Route 179 and is zoned HC. Members noted that many waivers were being requested including an EIS and wetlands report. Of concern was the indication that no stormwater management was being proposed. Art will report our findings at the next planning board meeting.

**Opportunity for Public Comment** - No members of the public were present for comment.

**Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski