

Highland Park Environmental Commission
Meeting of July 18, 2001
Minutes

Present: Arnold Henderson, Michael Rosenberg, Jonathan Abrahams, Wendy Rosen, Loren Muldowney, Elsie Foster-Dublin

Absent: Laurel Kornfeld, Anthony Puniello

Guests: Hank Suhr, ShayMaria Sylvestri, Eugene Young, Richard Marx

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:20 p.m.
2. The minutes of June 20, 2001 were approved without comment.
3. Correspondence

Received a letter and questionnaire from the Lower Raritan Watershed Management Area 9 (WMA 9) Restoration Subcommittee asking for identification of streams and other waterbodies with problems that may require restoration activities. The questionnaire will be completed and returned to the committee by the end of July.

4. Site Plans

Judith Anne McCarthy
119 Harper Street
Docket No.: 16-22-01
Block and Lot: B-16, L-22

Applicant wants to add a deck in line with the house. A bulk variance is sought for side yard setback.

No comments.

Raya Benhaim
419 Grove Avenue
Docket No.: 39-69-01
Block and Lot: B-39, L-69

Applicant wants to add a deck. A bulk variance is sought.

No environmental concerns. No comments.

Michael G. Kovalchik
63 N. 5th Avenue
Docket No.: 142-22-01
Block and Lot: B-142, L-22

Applicant wants to enlarge house, and seeks several variances. Impervious cover is already in excess of the borough maximum and would be increased by proposed plan. No showing of any extraordinary circumstance is made.

Comments: Impervious cover is already in excess and should not be increased. Perhaps the applicant can remove impervious cover from another portion of the property.

The Commission agrees to put on a future agenda to discuss the recurring requests for variances to the impervious cover maximum, where there is no showing of extraordinary circumstance. Perhaps we could provide a list of suggestions, which will enable applicant to make desired changes without increasing impervious cover. Wendy suggested a mechanism for long-term tracking of impervious cover and other variance associated with specific parcels. For future discussion.

5. Old Business:

Biosurvey: Arnold spoke to Thonet Associates today. They found good base maps with 5 foot contour intervals and provided copies to us. We will see draft of the Biosurvey before the final version is prepared. They will make one more field survey in the fall, to complete the four-season survey. DEP has granted us a 6-month extension to allow the four-season survey to be completed. The biosurvey is now due for completion by December 31, 2001.

Concept Environmental Education Centers: The Commission reviewed a set of sketches that were prepared by the "Pro Bono Landscape Architecture Group," a group of Highland Park residents that are experienced landscape architects. Extensive discussion ensued based on the sketches. A general consensus was reached on the concept of distributed environmental education areas rather than a single large building.

Loren reports that there are no individual Hydrologic Use Codes for Highland Park waterways, that all streams within Highland Park are lumped together as HUC-14: 02030105120170

As the hour was getting late, other old business was tabled, and we moved ahead to new business items.

6. New Business:

Mike distributed a Draft of proposed Ordinances on Retaining Walls, Steep Slopes and a new residential district:

Page 2 was omitted, making most coherent discussion of the draft impossible. There also appear 2 parts "E." We did note that "open space" as used in the description for the new zone, lacks a definition. We have many questions, which require answers, before we can offer opinions. The date of the next planning board meeting is unknown. Members will submit all comments on the draft to Mike by July 31 for him to present to municipal bodies.

7. Meeting Adjourned at 10:43 p.m. The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 12, 2001 at 8 p.m. in Borough Hall.