

Highland Park Environmental Commission
Meeting of October 19, 2005
Minutes

Present: Michael Rosenberg, Arnold Henderson, Laurel Kornfeld, Mary Ellen Tuccillo
Absent: Jonathan Abrahams, Gabor Grunstein, Loren Muldowney, Anthony Puniello
Guest: Allan Williams

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 PM.
2. The minutes of the September 21, 2005 meeting were approved.
3. Correspondence
 - a) We received a copy of a PSE&G application to DEP for a Modified Freshwater Wetlands Statewide General Permit #1 for the PSE&G Natural Gas Distribution System. PSE&G is seeking authorization to repair, replace, and maintain gas mains within freshwater wetlands and their transition areas located in public rights of way.
4. Site Plans
 - a) Bor-John, LLC
254 South 7th Avenue
Docket No.: # 46-32-05
Block and Lot: B-46, L-32

This is a revision of a previous application to the Zoning Board. The applicant seeks to demolish a single-family residence and construct a two-family home with parking underneath. Variances are being sought for minimum side-yard setback, minimum size for one side, maximum lot coverage, and maximum impervious coverage. Maximum lot coverage allowed by ordinance is 30 percent; they are asking for 32.8. Maximum impervious coverage is 40 percent; they are asking for 43.1. The landscaping plan submitted is minimal, and the applicant proposes to remove trees in front of the existing house.

Comments: Seek to reduce impervious coverage to comply with the ordinance. Consider pervious materials for the walkways and driveway. If possible, retain existing trees or replace them at the front or in the rear.

5. Old Business
 - a) Environmental Education Center. We have a draft site investigation report prepared by Icon Engineering, a division of CME Associates. They did several soil borings and found contaminants including some heavy metals, cinders, and ash, all consistent with historic fill. The main area of concern is the historic fill under the site. Arnold noted that a second round of testing is being done only in the upper levels. CME is submitting this report as a draft and will combine the data in it with the data from their second report before issuing a final report on the site. Mike will stay in touch with Borough Engineer Bruce Koch about this.
 - b) Valley Place Ravine Restoration. Water Watch has new liaisons for this project, who have contacted Arnold. They also did a recent cleanup in Johnson Park.
 - c) Raritan River Dredging. The river dredging began last week. Two large red dredging barges are working on the channel closer to the New Brunswick side of

the river. Commission members would like to know how we could get more information on the status of this project, which is being done by the Army Corps of Engineers. Allan noted that he received a response to a letter he sent to the Army Corps. Mike will find out more about the status of this project.

- d) Donaldson Park Improvements. Laurel will contact the Freeholders to find out the status of this project.

6. New Business

- a) Recreational Trail Grant. DEP is awarding Highland Park \$10,000 for trail restoration in the lower meadows. Arnold suggested we construct the trail making a loop from the foot of the bikeway and going from there down to the river. We may need to hire people to use a hand-held brush cutter to cut brush on the Edison side where people have blocked the trail with garbage. Laurel suggested asking Water Watch if they could work with us on this. Arnold reported that Carol Avelsgaard of the Shade Tree Committee is interested in trail creation and also noted that Steve Barnes knows how to make trails. Arnold will bring a copy of the grant application for this award to our next meeting.
- b) Forum with the Board of Health. Laurel reported that the Board of Health is holding a forum on Children and Environmental Health on Thursday, December 15 and is requesting that the Environmental Commission co-sponsor the program. We agreed to do so.
- c) Stormwater Management Plan. Mike reported that we now have a municipal stormwater management plan for Highland Park, which was prepared by CME Associates. Mike will review the plan and then pass the report around so that each of us on the Commission can review it.
- d) ANJEC Environmental Leadership Training. Laurel reported that ANJEC held a two-day environmental leadership training seminar, which she attended. It was offered in October and will be offered again in November. Discussions focused on practical issues facing Environmental Commissions. She will look through the event binder for publications we might want to put in our library folder or on our web site.

- 7. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will take place on Wednesday, November 16 at 8 PM in Borough Hall.