

**Highland Park Environmental Commission**  
Meeting of May 17, 2006  
Minutes

Present: Michael Rosenberg, Jonathan Abrahams, Arnold Henderson, Laurel Kornfeld,  
Mary Ellen Tuccillo

Absent: Joan Ehrenfeld, Gabor Grunstein, Loren Muldowney, Anthony Puniello

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:20 PM.
2. The minutes of the April 26, 2006 meeting were approved with the following corrections:  
Item 6d should read "One of the first steps we need to take in planning the trail is having the head of DPW, Don Rish..." not Frank Troy, as was incorrectly stated. Also, Item 6d should read "DPW suggested a gas-powered portable weed whacker."

3. Correspondence: None

4. Site Plans

- a) Red Pepper Entertainment  
1163 Raritan Avenue  
Docket No.: # 123-23-06  
Block and Lot: B-123, L-23

The present use of the building is a bar. The applicant is seeking a C variance to add a proposed use of three private karaoke rooms. No new construction will be done.  
No Comments.

- b) Jeff Borell  
117 Washington Avenue  
Docket No.: # 125-1-5-06  
Block and Lot: B-125, L-1-5

The applicant proposes a one-story addition which includes a kitchen and bedroom, along with a deck to a two-family house on a 122 X 100-foot lot. This is an expansion of an existing non-conforming use, so applicant is seeking a variance. No Comments.

- c) 433 Cleveland Ave, LLC  
433 Cleveland Avenue  
Docket No.: # 191-6-06  
Block and Lot: B-191, L-6

The Garlatti Office Development Company is proposing to expand an existing structure used for business offices, medical offices, and warehousing. The property contains three currently occupied buildings. The applicant proposes to construct an additional 6,446-square foot office space and convert an existing one-story warehouse building into business offices, medical offices, and warehouses. The site plan was prepared by Menlo Engineering and includes an Environmental Impact Study (EIS), drainage report, grading plan, landscaping plan, lighting plan, and soil erosion and sediment control plan. No variances are being sought for maximum lot coverage or maximum impervious coverage. Maximum impervious coverage allowed is 80%, and the applicant is proposing 73.7%. The variances that are being sought are for parking and

signs. The ordinance requires 253 parking spaces while the applicant proposes only 180. The applicant also plans to plant three trees on the slope and provide a vegetative buffer along the sides of the building. The proposal calls for construction of a retention basin, and the applicant claims the project will reduce the flow of water off site.

Comments: Use a greater proportion of native species for the plantings, given the natural character of nearby areas in the Mill Brook Watershed. Minimize spillage of light to adjacent offsite properties. The strip along the rail line serves as a natural wildlife corridor and should not be disturbed by spillage of light.

#### 5. Old Business

- a) Environmental Education Center. Construction is moving along. One concrete wall of the building is already up. Footings are in for the shade structure. The foundation of the building is being completed. Johnson and Johnson will be offering volunteers to do grounds work at the Native Plant Reserve some time during the summer.
- b) New Jersey Community Water Watch. No new information. Arnold will email Emilie Rabbitt to find out if we will be getting a summer intern from Water Watch.
- c) Rezoning of the Y Property. Mike submitted the Environmental Commission's comments on this to the Planning Board. The next Planning Board hearing on the Y will take place on Wednesday, May 31 at 7:30 PM.
- d) Recreational Trail Grant. No new information. Mike will contact Bob Spiegel of the Edison Wetlands Association. Spiegel has expressed interest in attending one of our meetings. Laurel suggested we look into the exact deadline date for the grant so we are aware if we need to request an extension.
- e) Forum with Board of Health. The forum was held on Thursday, May 4. The Commission thanks Dr. Mark Robson for the presentation and thanks the Board of Health for sponsoring this event.
- f) Donaldson Park Improvements. A lot of work is being done in the park. The boat ramp is being redone and is now a concrete structure that is still unfinished. Many areas are cordoned off. It looks like the county is getting ready to work on the pond since the pond area is also roped off. Laurel will contact County Parks Superintendent Ralph Albanir to find out if there are pictures of the plans for Donaldson Park on the Middlesex County web site or hard copies we can scan into our web site.
- g) Raritan River Dredging. No new information.

#### 6. New Business

- a) Street Fair. The annual Street Fair will be held on Sunday, May 21 from 11:30 AM-4:30 PM. On Saturday, May 20, Main Street is doing a Planting Day along Raritan Avenue in preparation for the fair. The Environmental Commission will share a table with the Shade Tree Advisory Committee. The Shade Tree Committee will be selling plants, with a few featured on their table and the rest underneath. They are also giving out tree seedlings. Shade Tree volunteers will arrive at 10:45 AM at the Stop and Shop parking lot to begin setting up, and members of the Environmental Commission are encouraged to meet and help them at that time. Mary Ellen will make phone calls setting up a staffing schedule at the table for Environmental Commission members.
- b) Board of Health Events. Laurel reported that the Board of Health will hold its annual Health Fair on Tuesday, June 6 from 6-9 PM at the Bartle School gym. The Board of Health will also hold its annual Dog and Cat Rabies Clinics at the DPW garage, on the corner of South Fifth and Valentine Streets, on Thursday, June 11 from 7-9 PM and on Sunday, June 15 from 10 AM-12 PM.

7. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will take place on Wednesday, June 21 at 8 PM in Borough Hall.