

Highland Park Environmental Commission

Meeting of May 16, 2007

Minutes

Present: Jonathan Abrahams, Steve Barnes, Arnold Henderson, Michael Rosenberg
Allan Williams, Councilwoman Fern Goodhart

Absent: Joan Ehrenfeld, Gabor Grunstein, Anthony Puniello, Mary Ellen Tuccillo

Guests: None

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 PM.
2. The minutes of the April 18, 2007 meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. Correspondence:
 - a) We received the 2006 Recycling Tonnage Report from Frank Troy, the Borough's Recycling Coordinator. The total for the year was 14,638.52 tons of which 12,068.3 tons (82.4%) was from commercial sources and 2,570.22 tons (17.6%) was from residential sources. The single largest item by weight 11,219 tons (76.6%) was concrete/asphalt/brick/block. Some of the other recycled items included; mixed paper (6.2%), cardboard (3.0%), Glass (3.3%), Brush/Tree parts (2.7%), Leaves (3.1%).
4. Site Plans:
 - a) Verizon Wireless
505 Raritan Avenue
Block 5 Lot 1
The applicant is requesting approval from the Zoning Board for a use variance to add a cellular antenna on the roof of 505 Raritan Ave, the Ausonia Apartment Building. This rooftop already contains four other cellular antennas, Sprint, Nextel, T-Mobile and AWS. Comments: Is there any shielding advisable to protect residents of the apartment building below? Are there any cumulative effects from the multiple antennas in a single location?
5. Old Business Items
 - a) Earth Day Celebrations – The April 22, Earth Day activities were a huge success and Mike Rosenberg thanked everyone that participated. The full day of activities included the dedication and grand opening of the Environmental Education Center, the grand opening of Centennial Park, a presentation by Rutgers landscape design students of possible plans for the International Garden, and a tour of the Meadows Trail. All of these activities were well attended by the public. We should post photos of these events on our web site.
 - b) Environmental Education Center - The Borough donated a table and chairs for the building and storage cabinets will be purchased. The roll-up garage door facing the river will be replaced with clear doors so that the building will be see-through. The new solar powered crosswalks on River Road are complete. Potential soil contamination is still an issue for certain portions of the property, but the vicinity of the building has been capped with clean soil and is safe. Hopefully we will continue to have full access to the entire property. A meeting with Edison Wetlands was held to discuss the extent of the soil contamination and possible solutions. Three of the lots may require a Remedial Action Work Plan submitted to NJDEP followed by capping with six inches of clean soil.

- c) Midland Ross (Honeywell Site) Remediation – Honeywell Corporation, the current owner of the contaminated Midland Ross site, began remedial work at the site. The roadway from River Road into the site has been opened and widened to accommodate trucks and to avoid residential roadways. Over 100 truckloads of contaminated soil have already been removed from the site including the one area with PCB contamination. A total of 20,000 cubic yards will be removed. The air monitoring network was set up and is currently collecting data. The data is being posted at the North Second Avenue entrance to the site and on the Borough's website. No air quality exceedances have been reported to date.
 - d) N.J. Community Water Watch – Did a cleanup at the Johnson Brook area of the Meadows at 10:30 AM on Earth Day.
 - e) Recreational Trail Grant Meadows – Bob Spiegel of the Edison Wetlands Association is still looking for additional grant funding for the Meadows trail.
 - f) Rezoning of Borough owned properties for Conservation – The Environmental Commission submitted a memo (prepared by Arnold Henderson) to Borough Council recommending rezoning of certain Borough owned properties adjacent to the Southside Bikeway, South 7th Avenue, Buck Woods Ravine, and Crowells Road. The Environmental Commission's recommendation is to change the zoning from residential to conservation/recreation.
 - g) Highland Park Community Habitat Program – The National Wildlife Federation has a program for communities to get certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat. The second meeting of the project team chaired by Steve Barnes was held earlier tonight. The team received approval for a logo and is now looking for 3 demonstration sites.
 - h) The Highland Park Street Fair will be this Sunday May 20.
6. New Business Items
- a) Unwanted Circulars - The Commission discussed the problem of unwanted free newspapers and circulars. The Borough Council passed a new littering ordinance that applies to these types of items. Circulars must now be placed within 3 feet of where mail is delivered.
7. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will be on Wednesday, June 20, 2007 at 8 PM in Borough Hall.