

Highland Park Environmental Commission

Meeting of June 20, 2007

Minutes

Present: Steve Barnes, Gabor Grunstein, Anthony Puniello, Michael Rosenberg, Allan Williams, Councilwoman Fern Goodhart

Absent: Jonathan Abrahams, Joan Ehrenfeld, Arnold Henderson, Mary Ellen Tuccillo

Guests: None

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:10 PM.
2. The minutes of the May 16, 2007 meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. Correspondence: None
4. Site Plans:
 - a) Rite Aid of New Jersey
332 Raritan Avenue
Block 31 Lots 17-22 & 33
The applicant is requesting site plan approval from the Planning Board for Rite Aid Pharmacy store renovations, parking lot & landscape site improvements, and NJDOT streetscape improvements. Number of parking spaces will decrease from 111 to 99. Proposed new wall signs on front, rear, and side of store exceed maximum size permitted. A Stormwater Management Report was included. The proposed site improvements will reduce impervious coverage and therefore reduce stormwater runoff. Comments: All outdoor lights should be shielded to direct light downwards. The Shade Tree Advisory Committee will provide additional comments on the landscaping plan.
5. Old Business Items
 - a) Environmental Education Center - The Green roof has become an issue. Weeds (some invasive) were growing on the roof and were removed by hand. A plan for long-term maintenance of the roof is needed. The building has still not been officially turned over to us and there is still a lengthy punch list of items that must be completed. There has already been some minor vandalism at the site. The roll-up garage door facing the river was replaced with clear doors so that the building is now see-through. The new solar powered crosswalks on River Road are complete.
 - b) Midland Ross (Honeywell Site) Remediation – Mike Rosenberg spoke with a Honeywell Corporation representative and gave the following report. The project is 65% complete. Approximately 19,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil have been removed. Approximately 40 trucks per day are entering and exiting the site from River Road. A 500 gallon underground storage tank for diesel fuel was discovered and removed. No air quality exceedances have been reported to date. The data is still being posted at the North Second Avenue entrance to the site and on the Borough's website. Due to the good weather, the project is ahead of schedule and Honeywell anticipates completing the job by the end of July. Steve Barnes and Karen Swaine went to look at the site and will come up with some recommendations for the steep slopes and site restoration at the conclusion of the cleanup.

- c) Recreational Trail Grant Meadows – Steve Barnes sent Bob Spiegel of the Edison Wetlands Association a list of potential consultants to prepare a concept plan for the Meadows trail site.
 - d) Rezoning of Borough owned properties for Conservation – The Environmental Commission will resubmit a memo 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.
 - e) Highland Park Community Habitat Program – The National Wildlife Federation has a program for communities to get certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat. The Environmental Commission is sponsoring this project in Highland Park. Steve Barnes reported that the registration process is now 90% complete.
 - f) Unwanted Circulars - The Borough Council passed a new anti-littering ordinance that applies to unwanted free newspapers and circulars. Circulars must now be placed within 3 feet of where mail is delivered. The Borough's ordinances will soon be available on line at the Borough's website.
6. New Business Items
- a) The Random Acts of Fun program scheduled for the evening of July 5, on Raritan Avenue will have an environmental theme. Anyone with ideas for a children's program should contact Jill Levey.
7. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will be on Wednesday, July 18, 2007 at 8 PM in Borough Hall.