

Highland Park Environmental Commission

Meeting of April 16, 2008

Minutes

Present: Jonathan Abrahams, Steve Barnes, Michael Rosenberg, Allan Williams,
Councilman Jon Erickson

Absent: Joan Ehrenfeld, Gabor Grunstein, Arnold Henderson

Guests: Jill Seprion, Eleanor James, Frank Toth

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:20 PM., in the Environmental Education Center.
2. The minutes of the March 19, 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. The Environmental Commission currently has two vacancies. Mike Rosenberg will contact a couple of people who may be interested and invite them to our next meeting. We need active members who are willing to contribute time to the Commission. We also still need to choose a member to serve as our liaison to the Planning Board.
4. Correspondence: None
5. Site Plans:
 - a. Raymond Mahon
227 Volkert Street
Block 61, Lots 30 and 31
The applicant is requesting a use variance from the Zoning Board to convert a one family house to a two family house. office into residential use. This property is in the RA zone.
No change to the footprint.
No Comments
6. Old Business Items
 - a) Environmental Education Center –. DPW to turn water on for drinking fountain. A key is still needed for the double doors. The working group for the Environmental Education Center met on March 30, to review needs and priorities. Signage to identify the building is still a top priority. Frank Toth volunteered to help work on signs for us. The main identification sign is needed for the wall and should read “Eugene Young Environmental Education Center”. Signs for River Road could be supplied by the County.
 - b) Recreational Trail Grant Meadows – Allan Williams and Steve Barnes sent a memo (dated April 8) to Borough Administrator Karen Waldron regarding needed equipment, hand tools, and signs for the Meadows Loop Trail Project Grant. The total estimated cost for these items is \$3,159.09. DPW suggestions and comments were incorporated into the list. Karen Waldron will speak to NJDEP about potential modifications and may request an additional 12 months to complete the project.
 - c) Highland Park Community Wildlife Habitat Program – Volunteers put in 32.5 hours between March 30 and April 10, removing invasives. Brian Marsh of the US Fish and Wildlife Service came on April 9, with a truck and sprayers to spray the invasives. Fish and Wildlife will supply us with 100 trees and shrubs to plant along the side of the bikeway. A new web site is up and running and is linked to the Environmental

Commission web site. Allan Williams showed photos of the Meadows Trail progress and improvement. The new photos will be put on our web site. 3 new backyards included in the program, expecting 5 more, for a total of 35-37 backyards.

7. New Business Items

- a) Steve and Allan attended a Rutgers conference on Climate Change and Global Warming
 - b) Jon Erickson reported that all trucks must meet new diesel emission standards. The State will pay for retrofitting of Highland Park's garbage trucks.
 - c) There is an idea being considered for a new program that would provide a 5-year tax abatement only for green remodeling projects but not for other home improvement projects. It is unknown if this can be done or if it requires some sort of State legislation.
8. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will be on Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at 8 PM.