

Highland Park Environmental Commission
Meeting of October 21, 2009
Minutes

Present: Jonathan Abrahams, Steve Barnes, Joshua Fine, Gabor Grunstein, Michael Rosenberg, Kristen Ross, Allan Williams, Councilman Jon Erickson

Absent: Joan Ehrenfeld

Guests: Karen Swaine, Mary Denver

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:10 PM in the Environmental Education Center.
2. The minutes of the September meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. No correspondence
4. Site plan review

Overlook @ Highland Park – Pulte Homes
411 River Road
Block 190 Lot 4 &4.1

The Commission continued the discussion and site plan review from the September meeting. The applicant proposes 82 townhouses with 285 parking spaces on a 12.65 acre parcel. This is a revision to the plan approved by the zoning board in January 2007. The EC submitted detailed comments to that plan in 2006. Mike Rosenberg will attend the Zoning Board meeting on October 26, to present our new comments. The comments will focus on grading, retaining walls, storm water detention, tree saving, and archaeological concerns.

5. Old Business
 - a. Zoning of Highland Park Meadows - The Master Plan Advisory Review Committee had a meeting last night (Oct 20). There is a new draft plan that is being worked on and so far, 85-95% of our recommendations have been accepted. The future of the Upper Meadows parcel is still under discussion and may be considered for required affordable housing.
 - b. Environmental Education Center – Karen Swaine and Carol Avelsgaard from the Shade Tree Advisory Committee plan to inventory the various books, documents, and other items in the EEC. The Borough submitted a pre-application to qualify for a \$300,000 grant from EPA that would include solar panels for the EEC. The Borough also signed a \$40,000 contract with CME for additional investigative work regarding the soil contamination issue.

- c. Meadows Project – Approximately half of the 276 new plants that were purchased are now in the ground. Another 70-75 will be planted this weekend. The remaining plants are temporarily stored near the pump house until they are planted. The boardwalk is half complete. It will be made of four 12-foot sections for a total of 48 feet in length. This weekend, we will borrow an electric generator and the County Park's utility vehicle to spread more wood chips along the trail. We have received an offer for 30 cubic yards of top soil for use on the trail.
- d. Community Wildlife Habitat Program – Mary Denver has obtained wildlife habitat certification for the Irving School site.

6. New Business

- a. Mike Rosenberg presented some information about the Fair Fish Campaign from an organization called Food and Water Watch. They want to make sure that U.S. fish are managed for the long term benefit of the fish population and fishing communities. The website is www.foodandwaterwatch.org.
- b. NJDEP Outdoor Water Conservation Ordinance – This ordinance is intended to curtail unnecessary water waste associated with seasonal outdoor water usage. The Environmental Commission voted to endorse consideration of the ordinance.
- c. Sustainable Land Use Pledge – The pledge is designed to be a public affirmation of a municipality's intention to align its land use decision making and policies to support smart growth and sustainable development. The Commission voted to endorse the concept of the pledge with certain issues that still need to be resolved.
- d. The Borough is being sued under COAH by American Properties, the proposed developer of the Illuminating Experiences property. 20% of that proposed development (denied by the Zoning Board) was to be low income housing.

7. The meeting adjourned at 10:35 PM. The next meeting will be on Wednesday November 18, 2009 at 8:00 PM.