

Highland Park Environmental Commission
Meeting of October 20, 2010
Minutes

Present: Michael Rosenberg, Allan Williams, Steve Barnes, Laurel Kornfeld, Karen Swaine, Councilman Jon Erickson

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:10 PM.
2. The minutes of the September 15, 2010 meeting were approved.
3. Membership. Allan Williams is now officially a member of the Planning Board and is serving as Environmental Commission liaison to the board.
4. Correspondence: None

5. Site Plans

- a) Clear Wireless, LLC
SE of the intersection of South 5th and Valentine Streets
Docket No: # 210-08
Block and Lot: B-75, L-8

The company is proposing to place 3 panel antennas at the 176-foot, 9-inch level on the existing 202.5-foot WCTC tower. They also propose to add one equipment cabinet and 1 GPS antenna within an existing fenced compound. The lot is 2.07 acres. The application was denied by the Planning Board, which referred the applicant to the Zoning Board because they need to apply for a use variance and a bulk variance.

Comments: The roadway there could use some landscaping to absorb runoff.

6. Old Business

- a) Environmental Resources Inventory Project Update. Deborah Kratzer has sent Allan 30 different maps, which he will send to the ERI project team. Allan finished identifying coordinates for all town historical sites and is halfway done in getting coordinates for sites that are open space but are not listed on county maps. We need to get criteria from the state as to what constitutes a historic structure. The ERI team will meet again in November after everyone reviews the maps. Steve noted we will do a stream walk along Mill Brook, which has migratory fish and runs the whole length of the borough. We will use GPS to determine the location of all storm drains there.
- b) Meadows Activities/Trail Activities/Eagle Scout Projects. An impromptu 3-person cleanup was held at the Meadows. We noted someone has placed surveyor marks on the lots marked with tape by state surveys. There is evidence that the new benches are being used (trash and graffiti).

Ira Herniter has submitted an Eagle Scout proposal to build a 50-foot section of boardwalk on the trail to go over the wetlands area. The 100-foot long boardwalk we built has started to sag, so Steve and Allan did some work on it. Mike noted that trees have fallen at a few locations along the trail, blocking it. We are asking DPW to remove these. There will be a cleanup and trash pickup at the Meadows on Sunday, October 24 by the Ahavas Achim Environmental Committee from 10 AM-1 PM.

Next month, our end-of-the-year report on activity in the Meadows is due. This report will include a work plan for 2011. We will continue the maintenance of the trail and trailside areas and will survey routes to get the trail area out of the flood plain, where it is close to the river.

- c) 2010 National Recreational Trail Grant. We were awarded the \$10,000 grant, which calls for a \$2,000 match in volunteer labor. In our application, we noted that the existing trail will loop back on itself, curve up, then go out to the corner of Donaldson Street and South Seventh Avenues. Work hours from the October 24 cleanup can count toward matching volunteer labor. We submitted a budget along with the grant application. There are areas where concrete needs to be pulled out or buried. It could be buried in the fenced-off area DPW uses. We will need to buy equipment to create the new sections of the trail.
- d) Environmental Education Center. Karen heard from Arnold Henderson, who said there is a grant that has never been used for plantings around the center in the soil that is already remediated. We don't know the title of this grant. Jon will ask Acting Borough Administrator Kathy Kovach for an accounting of all budget items relating to the center. Karen suggested placing a water spigot outside the center so we can water the plantings. The spigot would be covered with a plate. The question of whether the pump house will be fixed is undetermined.
- e) EPA Climate Change Grant. The borough hired Matt Kaplan, a local resident who works professionally in energy efficiency. He will be part-time for 2 years. A marketing firm in Philadelphia is doing the design and marketing plans and has put together information packets. Jon recommended Matt come to a Commission meeting and report on his activities.

7. New Business

- a) ANJEC Congress. Allan attended the annual ANJEC Congress and reported on it. DEP Commissioner Martin spoke and was questioned about DEP policy, which some believe is too friendly to corporate polluters. Attendees were especially concerned about a new program in which private companies will be hired to oversee cleanups by companies that have facilities in NJ. The DEP has already started to license some of these

companies to oversee the cleanups. There were also concerns the state would relax rules for protection of the pinelands and highlands. Measures will be put in place to clean up Barnegat Bay. Former DEP Commissioner Chris Daggett, now CEO of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, spoke of involving young people in environmental issues. Allan also reported that the League of Conservation Voters is forming a New Jersey chapter to hold legislators and the governor accountable for their environmental policies through keeping environmental scorecards on individual office holders. A list of 15 bills that need to be watched was discussed as well. There was general concern that the governor may want to roll back environmental regulations.

- b) Project with Rutgers Class. We heard from Judy Shaw at the Bloustein School. Settlement funds from polluters are available through the NOAA. In her communication, Shaw discussed money to fund her class doing work at the Environmental Education Center site.
 - c) Attached Garage Ordinance. Jon reported the Council has passed an ordinance prohibiting front doors of single-family homes from being used as garages, a practice that has been done during subdivisions. The goal is to minimize runoff on the lot. Driveways 9 feet wide may be constructed with strips of paving 3 feet wide on either side and no paving in the middle 3-foot strip, which should be planted with grass and covered with pervious material.
 - d) Steve and Allan attended a conference on Best Management Practices for Stormwater Management sponsored by the Lower Raritan Watershed. In discussing stormwater runoff issues, we noted that the storm retention area behind the high school had a plan for plantings that was never implemented. The plan called for cool season grasses.
 - e) Centennial Park. Karen and several other people examined the status of Centennial Park, noting which trees and plants have died and the state of the storm drain there. They noted a lot of what was planted there needs much maintenance. Jon suggested Steve and Karen write a letter to Mayor Nolan with recommendations on how the park should be managed.
8. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will take place on Wednesday, November 17, 2010 at 8 PM in the Environmental Education Center.