

Highland Park Environmental Commission
Meeting of March 3, 2021
Minutes

Present: Michael Rosenberg, Laurel Kornfeld, Ethan Schoolman, Karen Swaine, Allan Williams,
Council liaison Philip George

Guest: Mark Lesko

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:05 PM.
2. The minutes of the February 3, 2021, meeting were approved.
3. Correspondence: None
4. Site Plans: None
5. Old Business
 - a) 238 Cleveland Avenue. Allan reported that the Borough Planner confirmed the application is just for a subdivision, but the developer was told to consider various borough ordinances and the Master Plan when developing a site plan.
 - b) MS4 Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership. The partnership is promoting a stormwater protection program. Phil informed us that the Borough Council passed a resolution to hire the LRWP to do training and public education about the state's new stormwater rules. This effort will focus on informing people on how to treat stormwater catch basins correctly. The project will cost \$6,000, which the borough can fund using CDBG money.
 - c) Stormwater ordinances. The borough is working on final stormwater ordinance amendments to meet the revised state requirements. These will bring our ordinances into compliance with DEP requirements. Phil noted the borough is staying on the same page as the DEP rather than adopting even stricter ordinances. The county will have to approve our ordinance amendments once they are passed.
 - d) Trail Cameras. One of the cameras is up in the Meadows and has photographed a lot of deer. Allan will go to the Meadows on Sunday, take out the card, and share pictures with Commission members and volunteers. Karen noted that a New York Times article recommended setting up cameras near bodies of water. We need to buy a case, which costs \$38, for the second camera. Mark suggested we put that camera near the stream by DPW headquarters. Mike recommended we put it at the Native Plant Sanctuary.
 - e) Meadows Trail Work. Mark will reach out to Craig to find out when the work will start up again. We noted the Environmental Commission has stewardship over the Meadows and that the trail committee is a subcommittee of the Environmental Commission. Mark requested he be added to the Commission's email list. He noted we need to update the map of the Meadows Trail, which Allan plans to do. We noted it would be a good idea to get another aerial map of the Meadows.
 - f) Several low spots throughout the trail need to be fixed because they are getting wet. Some need to be regraded. We also could add a few benches. Volunteers can do this work. They will need evaluate the status of the new trees in the Meadows and the plastic protectors containing them. We need to do this twice a year as a condition of the grant. Karen recommended this be done in mid-April since we are unlikely to see

- foliage in late March and therefore would have a hard time determining which trees are dead. The second evaluation should be done in late September or early October.
- g) Earth Day. Sustainable Highland Park wants to do a virtual event in the spring and an in-person event in September, provided COVID is over by then. We discussed whether we could hold an outdoor event that isn't clustered. Last year, scavenger hunts were held for trees, animals, etc. Some were town-wide. The Meadows has a lot more diversity but also a lot more risks. We will communicate with Sustainable Highland Park about these potential events.
 - h) Website. Allan started working on a new map as part of his efforts to finalize the environmental section of the borough's Sustainable New Jersey application. This will be put on the website. Minutes have been updated. We will post photos from the trail camera on the site.
 - i) Meadows Volunteers. No letters have yet gone out to the Meadows volunteers for their work getting trees planted.
 - j) Deer Management Report. This has been put on the back burner until the fall. Allan will look for the report of the drone deer survey conducted around a year or two ago.
 - k) Milltown Environmental Commission. The Milltown Environmental Commission asked if we want to work with them on ordinances for green infrastructure and stormwater. Allan informed them that the Borough Council is handling this.
 - l) ANJEC Dues. Allan requested \$500 of our temporary budget so we could pay our annual ANJEC dues. To date, the borough has given us \$250. We will be given the other \$250 at the March 18 Council meeting.
 - m) SOLOP Conservation Easement. The path is five feet wide and wanders all over the place. We questioned who will do the necessary clearing, put down woodchips, etc. We can get volunteers to do the work, but the borough has to take formal action on this. Allan will request a full scale map from Menlo Engineering. The current plan is for the path to not go through the wetlands. While the property is privately owned, the borough will have a trail that the public can use with a conservation easement. Access is from Donaldson Park on one end and from the former Red's Marina, now owned by the county, on the other end. A stretch of it runs through the Polos property. Allan will email Phil for comments on this.
 - n) ANJEC Webinars. Ethan wants to attend some ANJEC webinars. The Environmental Commission membership allows any member to attend these at no charge. Allan sent Ethan's contact information to ANJEC after Ethan was appointed.
 - o) Native Plant Sanctuary. There is a broken fence at the site. The developer of 31 River Road agreed to repair it and to do several other improvements there.
6. New Business: None
7. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will take place on Wednesday, April 7, 2021, at 8 PM on Zoom.