

**Township of West Milford
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

MINUTES

March 1, 2021

Virtual Meeting - Via Zoom

The March 1, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Township of West Milford Environmental Commission was held virtually, via Zoom, beginning at 7:00 pm with a reading of the Legal Notice.

ROLL CALL

Present: Janet Little, David Ofshinsky, James Rogers, Thomas Tamayne, Douglas Trainor (7:36), Don Weise, Chairman Stephen Sangle.

Absent: None.

Chairman Stephen Sangle advised that Tim Dalton had resigned from the Environmental Commission. Commissioner Jim Rogers suggested that a letter be sent to Tim thanking him for his service to the community as a member of the Commission. Chairman Sangle advised that a quorum was present for this meeting.

PRESENTATIONS – None.

APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW – None.

ON GOING BUSINESS

Belchers Creek Testing: Commissioner Jim Rogers reported that he had attempted to take samples at various locations along Belchers Creek and was able to obtain a sample at John Street. Greenwood Lake at Brown's Point and several other locations were all iced over. Chairman Sangle noted that the readings have not been high since December. Commissioner Dave Ofshinsky advised that 10 is the maximum level from the State for nitrates with regard to drinking water. The Commissioners discussed the higher levels that had previously been obtained near Reflection Lakes. Commissioner Don Weise inquired whether Reflection Lakes can connect to the Suez plant at Bald Eagle Village. Mr. Ofshinsky noted that it was expensive to operate a plant, and they would have to enter into a contract with Suez, but it would be costly. Mr. Weise observed that the Reflection Lakes apartments are upstream from Pinecliff Lake, and there could be possible polluting effects on the lake, and suggested that the NJDEP should be apprised of the issues. Mr. Ofshinsky noted that the NJDEP may already be aware, and he would be interested to see where they are at with the Reflection Lakes sewer treatment plant. He understood that the permit had expired and the engineers were working on the renewal. Commissioner Tom Tamayne suggested that Suez should be approached about purchasing the Reflection Lakes sewer plant. Chairman Sangle recommended that samples from Belchers Creek be taken below Reflection Lakes, throughout the “Emerald Forest” area. Commissioner Doug Trainor remarked that when the weather gets warmer he will take photos of the Reflection Lakes plant. He noted that it is a raised bed treatment plant with pvc pipes approximately 50’x50’ in area. Mr. Trainor also suggested that in the Spring samples could be taken twice a month.

Shade Tree Committee: No update at this time.

Community Forestry Mgt. Plan: AAR – The Annual Accomplishment Report was due 02-15-21, and the report is in the process of being completed by various department in the

Township. Chairman Sangle requested some of the Commissioners to consider assisting to complete the forestry projects that Tim Dalton had been responsible for.

NJDEP NNL Forestry Grant Project Closeout: No update was available at this time but members were requested to assist with the closeout of the grant following Tim Dalton's resignation.

Greenwood Lake Bi-State Commission: Janet Little reported that there was a brief meeting of the GWL Bi State Commission. They are occupying an office by Camp Hope. She noted that no new information was provided on West Milford Lake and there was no discussion about the presentations at the prior meetings. Ms. Little reported that GWLC is researching companies to address the HABS – Harmful Algae Blooms - on Greenwood Lake. In response to complaints by residents on the lake, there was discussion about a possible boating charge for people who use the lake. Ms. Little noted that the GWLC discussed the issue of the geese who frequent the area, and it was suggested that the properties and septic systems along Belchers Creek were responsible for the water issues in Greenwood Lake, not necessarily the geese.

Lakes Committee: Jim Rogers did not have an updated report - the next meeting of the Lakes Committee will be held in March.

Open Space Committee: Don Weise reported that The Land Conservancy is completing the draft Open Space & Recreation Plan Update and will send it to the Environmental Commission for review. They are requesting any comments or edits before April, and will then forward the plan to the Governing Body for review. Mr. Weise further advised that he received a draft map of the Township from the Economic Development Commission that he is reviewing. The EDC is planning to make the map available at trail heads and they may be coordinating this with the Trail Conference.

A **motion** was made by Chairman Steve Sangle, with a **second** by Dave Ofshinsky, to **approve** the invoice submitted by The Land Conservancy for the Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan Update. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the payment of the invoice.

Environmental Contamination Issues: Tom Tamayne reported on the possible contamination notices that he received and those that were listed on the agenda.

Green Team–Sustainability Committee: No update at this time.

Environmental Boardwalk – Mr. Tamayne reported that the dam is down and there didn't appear to be any activity at this time.

NEW OR CURRENT BUSINESS – Assembly Bill A-4843–Forest Stewardship Plans

– Don Weise provided an update on the proposed Assembly Bill A-4843 and the associated bills, advising that this legislation's passage could be problematic for the Township due to the provisions of the bill that would require the Township to provide a forest management plan for each forested or recreational parcel of land that is 25 acres or more. It would necessitate contracting with a certified forester to prepare the new plan and get approved by the State, which will be costly and time consuming. To cover the costs of the management of the plans, forest logging will increase, creating a detriment to the environment, as well opening the land up to increased invasive vegetative and insect species. If passed, it will be essentially an unfunded mandate, just as the Highlands legislation is. Mr. Weise noted that he had spoken with one of the Councilmen and a resolution was prepared by the Township. The Councilman had also contacted representatives about the concerns with this proposed bill.

Emerald Ash Borer - On another matter, Mr. Weise reported that in the lower Hudson Valley, where the emerald ash borer is a major issue, there is an effort underway to harvest seeds for replanting from ash trees that have not been severely affected by the borer. Mr.

Rogers commented that he has observed trees that have been affected by the emerald ash borer and they need to be removed. Chairman Sangle cautioned that the wood from the affected trees cannot be taken to other areas, and he referenced the presentation that the Commission hosted several years ago when the emerald ash borer was first identified.

Climate Change – West Milford - Jim Rogers reported on the white paper regarding climate change assessment and mitigation that he prepared on behalf of the Commission. This matter would be placed on the April EC agenda for discussion, and following review by the Commission, would be forwarded to the Planning Board for review. If approved by all entities, this document will be included in the Open Space and Recreation Plan Update.

Stormwater Management Plan – Jim Rogers reported that the NJDEP has required new municipal stormwater management plans, and a recent ordinance was adopted amending/replacing the existing stormwater management plan, outlining the new regulations.

MINUTES

The minutes from the December 7, 2020 Environmental Commission meeting were approved on a **motion** by Don Weise with a **second** by Chairman Steve Sangle. The minutes from the February 1, 2021 meeting were approved on a **motion** by Dave Ofshinsky with a **second** by Tom Tamayne.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

The following correspondence was reviewed by the Commission:

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Correspondence

1. Correspondence from Arcadis, dated 02-10-21, advising that an application for a Highlands Applicability Determination was being submitted for Block 7601; Lot 2, former Texaco Service Station, owned by Randa Investments, 1463 Union Valley Road, regarding the installation of a groundwater treatment system, and requesting Exemption #15 which provides conditions for exempted projects focused on the remediation of a contaminated site pursuant to N.J.S.A. 58:10B-1 et seq.
2. Correspondence from Mott MacDonald, dated 02-11-21, advising that an application for a Highlands Applicability Determination – Exemption #11 was being submitted on behalf of the City of Newark, Department of Water and Sewer Utilities, Pequannock Water Treatment Plant Improvement Phase 2 – Chlorination Upgrades Chemical Line, at Block 14102; Lot 1 and Block 14101; Lot 1, 2224 Rt. 23 N.

NJ Department of Environmental Protection Correspondence

1. Correspondence from Stewart Surveying & Engineering, dated January 26, 2021, advising of an application being made to the NJDEP for a Treatment Works Approval for Lighty Residence, Block 11106; Lot 7, Roaring Brook Way.
2. Suspected Hazardous Substance Discharge Notice received from the NJDEP, dated February 6, 2021, for 169 Long Pond Road, Block 4104: Lot 1, regarding removal of a 1000 gal UST, with clean up pending.
3. Correspondence from the NJDEP, dated February 5, 2021, acknowledging the Withdrawal of a Treatment Works Approval Application #20-0434 for Donald Dickert, 4 Emerson Road, Block 2511; Lot 6.
4. Correspondence and Public Notice from Dynamic Engineering and the NJDEP Division of Water Monitoring and Standards, received February 19, 2021, regarding the Belcher's Run (Kingwood Flex) Dollar Tree Building Expansion; Block 6401; Lot 1, and a proposed amendment to the Northeast Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), requesting a written statement of consent, in the form of a resolution from the Governing Body, in support of the

proposed amendment to the WQMP, altering the West Milford Wastewater Management plan to expand the Belcher's Run Shopping Center discharge to groundwater (DGW) wastewater treatment facility sewer service area (SSA) by 0.125 acres to include the proposed increase of square footage to the existing shopping center for the proposed Dollar Tree retail store.

5. Suspected Hazardous Substance Discharge Notice received from the NJDEP, dated February 23, 2021, regarding Block 6714; Lot 6, 57 Greenbrook Drive, for the removal of one 550 Gallon UST, with clean up pending.

6. Suspected Hazardous Substance Discharge Notice received from the NJDEP, dated February 23, 2021, regarding Block 1808; Lot 7, 9 Avalon Road, for the removal of one 550 Gallon UST, with clean up pending.

7. Notification dated February 22, 2021 received from McKittrick Engineering, advising of a General Permit application being submitted to the NJDEP for 797 Warwick Tpk, Block 1401; Lot 7 for work being performed in wetlands and transition areas.

Miscellaneous Correspondence

1. ANJEC – Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions – Virtual Sessions - Feb. and March 2021

2. ANJEC News February 25, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Environmental Commission, the March 1, 2021 regular meeting held via Zoom was **adjourned** at 8:45 p.m. on a **motion** by Chairman Steve Sangle and a **second** by Dave Ofshinsky.

Approved: June 7, 2021

Respectfully submitted by

Tonya E. Cubby, Secretary