

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2019**

The meeting of the Environmental Commission, held at the Municipal Building, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, New Jersey, was called to order at 7:36 p.m. by Richard Wolf, Chair. The Opening Statement was made. Roll call was taken.

Present:       Richard Wolf, Chair  
                  Janet Ariemma  
                  Karin LaGreca  
                  Tom McKeon  
                  Carol Phiefer  
                  Richard Seibert

Jennifer Storms, Secretary

Absent:         Frank Pallotta, Planning Board Liaison

The minutes of the meeting held on April 24, 2019 were approved as submitted following a motion by Seibert; seconded by Phiefer. LaGreca abstained. All other present members were in favor.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Rain Garden

LaGreca said she and her students recently spread mulch and cleaned up around the rain garden. Phase III will soon begin. Plans call for a swale to direct runoff from the railroad tracks. LaGreca said we received a donation of rip rap rock from Bergen Brick that will be used for the next phase. DPW has the new rain garden sign and will be installing it soon.

Stag Hill Anti-Dumping Initiative

LaGreca said she researched different camera options with MEVO and will request quotes to submit for a purchase order when ready. May 11 is the next cleanup on the mountain, followed by the June 8 tire cleanup.

New Jersey Audubon Pamphlet

Seibert distributed a handout from New Jersey Audubon that lists familiar New Jersey pollinators and pollinator plants. LaGreca noted many of these plant varieties are already planted in the rain garden.

Recycling Updates

McKeon said the Senior Citizen Bulk Recycling Program went very well. He also recently met with the new recycling coordinator in town. Email invites are starting to go out for the Recycling Forum on October 15. Members discussed ways to support green building practices around town.

### Reusable Bag Samples

LaGreca brought some samples of reusable bags to show members.

### Artificial Turf/School Playground Update

Following our discussion of rubber crumb usage for playgrounds and playing fields at a prior meeting, the Environmental Commission has received several press requests for statements on these issues. In regards to the School playgrounds, Wolf said he believes the school district is already considering a new material to be used on at least one of the school playgrounds – Certified Playground Mulch. It is engineered specifically to use natural materials (wood mulch) to prevent playground injuries. This material has been installed in several other local towns.

Regarding the artificial turf at Continental Soldier's Field, Wolf said \$1.5 million in capital funding is currently allocated in the proposed budget to replace the turf in 2019. If approved, Wolf confirmed that the Commission members supported researching alternative options to the current rubber crumb turf at Continental Soldier's Field. We will present our findings to both the appropriate departments working on this project, Administration and the Town Council.

### Business View Magazine Request

The Commission received an interview request from Business View Magazine, which is preparing a series of articles on sustainable actions local governments are taking. The members unanimously supported participating in the interview process to promote the environmental initiatives Mahwah is pursuing.

### Stag Hill Cleanups - *continued*

Ariemma indicated the Town Council had received a complaint that trash from the last clean-up was not removed timely from the site. LaGreca said she spoke to MEVO, who confirmed that trash has always been placed on the side of the road for DPW to collect. MEVO said the trash is typically removed once every three cleanups. MEVO will follow up with DPW to ensure they are familiar with the Clean-up schedule and can remove the trash as soon as possible.

### **SITE PLAN REVIEWS**

#### RMR Group LLC, 725 Darlington Avenue, Block 135, Lot 61.03, Docket #377A-2

The Environmental Commission reviewed a Planning Board Application Review Report for an amended site plan and amended minor site plan on the property.

#### *Comments to Administrative Officer*

The Commission requests consideration for alternatives to impervious coverage. Please consider a rain garden as a landscaping alternative to capture additional runoff near the wetlands area.

The application review was accepted with the above noted comments following a motion made by LaGreca; seconded by Phiefer. All other members were in favor.

Realty Associates Acquisition Group LLC, 6 Industrial Avenue, Block 110.01, Lot 9, Docket #599

The Environmental Commission reviewed an amended Planning Board Application Review Report for a preliminary and final site plan approval.

*Comments to Administrative Officer*

Original comments from the Commission's previous review at our March 27, 2019 meeting remain the same.

The review of the amended application to reduce the footprint and increase the square footage was accepted with the same comments from our March 27, 2019 review following a motion made by LaGreca; seconded by Phiefer. All other members were in favor.

**SOIL MOVEMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS**

*None received*

**TENANT APPLICATIONS**

The following tenant applications were reviewed and approved:

River Palm, 209 Ramapo Valley Road, Block 132, Lot 4, TA19-0009

*Restaurant – change of ownership*

J-Preet Inc., 1 Lethbridge Plaza, Suite #12, Block 63, Lot 6, TA19-0010

*Medical billing office*

Primo Hoagies, 320 Ridge Road, Block 138, Lot 151.02, TA19-0011

*Food*

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The following correspondence was received and reviewed:

- Emails from ANJEC regarding recent and upcoming events
- Email newsletter from the Hackensack Riverkeeper
- Email from CDP Cities regarding upcoming webinars
- Various agendas, minutes and public notices

**NEW BUSINESS**

2019 Water Report

Seibert said he received the 2019 Water Report. Members briefly discussed the report's findings.

Tree Update

Phiefer said she thinks we should require tree vendors to get an annual permit to remove trees in Mahwah. Homeowners would continue to be subject to existing ordinances

covering tree removals. Members discussed the status of the township's municipal tree ordinance and the Commission's work requesting amendments to the ordinance.

#### Constituent Call

The Environmental Commission received a call from a resident of 759 Wyckoff Avenue, who recently received a letter from his homeowner's association indicating plans to treat the pond on his property with a chemical to remove weeds. The resident feels there are more eco-friendly alternatives to treat the pond. He is seeking guidance from the Commission. Wolf will request information on the proposed treatment for weeds to understand if the Environmental Commission should be involved in follow up.

#### **OLD BUSINESS, continued**

##### New Jersey Youth Audubon Initiative

Aiden Dartley's previously approved proposal to plant bird-friendly native species near Lake Henry will be installed in early May. Administration, Planning and Mr. Dartley will coordinate with DPW.

#### **NEW BUSINESS, continued**

##### Email from Passaic River Coalition

The Passaic River Coalition recently conducted a cleanup of a property it owns on Catherine Avenue near Bergen Place. They also noted items in and around the river that should be removed and inquired if the town had any plans for a river clean-up and they offered their assistance. The group would also like to acquire two of the homes on the property, convert them to open space and convey them back to Mahwah for use as a public park. Wolf will get more information.

There being no further questions or discussion, the meeting of the Environmental Commission was adjourned at 9:45 p.m. following a motion by McKeon; seconded by Seibert. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, New Jersey.

J. Storms  
Secretary