

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2021**

The remote meeting of the Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Richard Wolf, Chair. The Opening Statement was made. Roll call was taken.

Present: Richard Wolf, Chair
 Janet Ariemma, Council Liaison
 Frank Pallotta, Planning Board Liaison
 Carol Phiefer
 Jack Pfister
 Jennifer Storms, Secretary

Absent: Richard Seibert, Co-Chair

The minutes of the meeting held on January 13, 2021 were approved following a motion by Phiefer; seconded by Pallotta. All other present members were in favor.

Public Session

Pallotta made a motion to open the meeting to the public; Pfister seconded. All approved.

New DPW Site

There were several members of the present to voice their concerns with the location of the new DPW site on Micik Lane in their neighborhood.

Martha Steinbach, 8 Wanamaker, said she doesn't feel as though the town has taken into consideration all of the issues and problems present at the proposed DPW site. She said part of the Masonicus Brook is eroding the property on the other end of the street. She said residents are also concerned about the salt shed and the runoff it will generate. There are serious water issues because the water table in the neighborhood is already high. Pallotta said the salt issue was discussed at this week's Planning Board meeting. He said he would follow up with the township officials and get back to the resident with more information.

Loretta Cicchelli, 28 Wanamaker, also has concerns about the site. She said there was a preliminary soil test taken but the town does not have results yet. Wolf asked if there is a specific concern about the proposed retention basin. Cicchelli said there is a real water issue in the neighborhood, and that if this is going to be done, it needs to be done correctly. She said the site remediation needs to be completed accordingly.

Ariemma said this is starting to sound like the issues occurring at Apple Ridge. Wolf said the first step is to get the results from the current testing. Wolf & Pallotta will follow up with the town next week. If there is no contamination, it is unlikely that DEP will get involved.

Tim Fernandez, 30 Wanamaker, has the same concerns as the others. He would appreciate getting the DEP involved for the remediation. But he also feels as though we should have a more impartial tester complete the testing, rather than Boswell Engineering. Pallotta said he will inquire about the testing and get back to him. He said he wants the residents to be comfortable with the plans.

Steinbach said the rerouting of the brook has to be approved by the government.

Fernandez asked if there is anything we can do to urge the location of the shed to be moved. Wolf said we can continue to ask questions and continue to push for the results.

Kelly Burton, 31 Wanamaker, said her husband went through the reports and some contamination was found. Their family is also concerned about the location of the salt shed and its runoff. If it is going to be done, she said they all hope it can be done correctly.

Pfister made a motion to close the meeting to the public; seconded by Pallotta.

PRESENTATION – WUNDER CAPITAL

Wolf welcomed Payne Morgan to the meeting. Morgan is the associate director for a private developer of community solar programs. They are filing an application to participate in the NJ Community Solar Pilot program (NJCSPP) that was rolled out by the state in 2018. Under the program, solar facilities can apply to be treated as generators of electricity (and receive higher rate credits for energy generated) to provide power to energy “subscribers” throughout the local community. They are requesting a letter of support from the Town to improve their chances of approval for participation in the NJCSPP.

Pfister asked how the project would be funded. Morgan noted that Wunder Capital is funding the project and applying for the NJCSPP. The electricity generated would not be utilized on site. Wolf said if the town was willing to support this type of project, the program is very beneficial in a number of ways

- 1) Increased generation of alternate energy – aligned with Town’s Master Plan objectives.
- 2) Community (particularly low-income housing) would have access to this “green” energy at reduced rates
- 3) Sole Generation facilities may be subject to local property taxes, thereby increasing the tax base in town

Members were in favor of supporting this type of project, though not for a specific company. Wolf said he will prepare a letter of support for participation in the NJCSPP. Pfister made a motion to approve; Pallotta seconded. All members were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Sustainable Jersey Certification Updates

Wolf said Karin LaGreca will attend our next meeting to provide updates. He is scheduled to meet next week via zoom with the township’s new business administrator, Ben

Kezmarsky, to discuss our Sustainable Jersey efforts, solar initiatives, and other environmental priorities for the town moving forward.

Palisades Recovery Center Update

Pfister said he looked into the property and said he believes this is a zoning issue; not an environmental issue. He said the town has had issues with other similar organizations.

SITE PLAN REVIEWS

None received

SOIL MOVEMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Galanti, 207 Orchard Drive, Block 89, Lot 4, E-BD-216-304-696

The Environmental Commission reviewed a Soil Movement Permit Application for an in-ground pool, patio, outdoor kitchen, pavilion, waterfall and fencing on the property. The application indicates 10 trees will be removed; with zero replacements.

Comments to Administrator Officer:

Please note: if removing 10 trees from the property, the applicant is required to replace those removed with at least three trees. The trees must be native and deciduous.

This application review was rejected pending further information following a motion made by Wolf; seconded by Pfister. All other members were in favor.

Toll NJ IV, LLC, 38 Roxbury Road, Block 127, Lot 35, E-BD-216-3318

The Environmental Commission received a Soil Movement Permit Application for a new single-family home on the property.

This application review was accepted following a motion made by Pallotta; seconded by Pfister. All other members were in favor.

Apple Ridge Condo Association, Fisher Road, Block 126, Lot 4, E-BD-216-3315

The Environmental Commission reviewed a Soil Movement Permit Application for the installation of a new retaining wall on the western side of Fisher Road, to replace an existing railroad tie wall that has reached the end of its life. One Spruce tree will be removed and replaced with four Norway Spruce trees.

This application review was accepted following a motion made by Pfister; seconded by Phiefer. All other members were in favor.

TENANT APPLICATIONS

The following tenant application was reviewed and approved:

Farmacy Beauty, LLC, 300 Corporate Drive, Block 136, Lot 8, TA21-0002

Skin care/cosmetics

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received and reviewed:

- Copy of a letter re: a Freshwater Wetlands interpretation for 555 MacArthur Boulevard

- Email from Ed Rossler, Ramapo College, who is looking to join Tree USA, inviting us to serve on the committee with them. Wolf indicated he would ask our arborist, Kris Hasbrouck, if he is interested in participating in such a Committee at the College.
- Various copies of letters, agendas and minutes
- Emails regarding recent and upcoming events

NEW BUSINESS

Shade Tree Federation Membership Dues

The Commission received an invoice from ANJEC for our annual dues in the amount of \$95 this year for five members. The amount has been budgeted for in our 2021 budget. Members approved. Storms will prepare the purchase requisition as soon as our 2021 temporary budget is available.

Member Resignation

Tom McKeon has resigned from the Commission. Wolf reached out to a prior member of the Commission to ask if he was interested, but has not heard back.

Commission Reorganization

Wolf said we need to nominate members to serve as Chair and Vice Chair. Members elected to wait until Seibert is present to take a vote.

There being no further questions or discussion, the remote meeting of the Environmental Commission was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. following a motion by Pfister; seconded by Pallotta. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 7 p.m.

J. Storms
Secretary