



Kingwood Township Environmental Commission Annual Report for 2014

General

- ◆ Renewed membership in the Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).
- ◆ Meetings/Workshops:
 - S.McNicol - ANJEC webinar “Social Media for ECs” (6/26/2014).
 - J.Zgurzynski – Food and Water Watch meeting about fracking (10/22/2014).
 - D.Kratzer - ANJEC 41st Annual Environmental Congress (10/24/2014).
 - D. Kratzer - “The Science of Pipelines” (11/20/2014).

Recycling

- ◆ EC members volunteered for Saturday morning hours.
- ◆ Updated recycling instruction sheet, which was mailed to all residents & available on the website. Items accepted continue to include: metal/glass/plastic containers; paper/cardboard; scrap metal; electronics; and clothing. Tonnage amount is up 670 tons from last year.
- ◆ Volunteer clean-up days held (Girl Scouts 6/7/2014; Del Val Jr. Terrier’s Cheerleading Team 10/18/2014) (coordinated by S.McNicol).
- ◆ D & R Canal Cleanup organized by Lindsay Blanton, AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador (3/15/2014).
- ◆ Recycling coordinator had new signs installed with what can and can’t be recycled.

Open Space and Parks & Recreation

- ◆ A subcommittee was formed (D.Kratzer, S.McNicol, C.Niciecki, R.Dodds and J.MacConnell) to implement field management according to the recommendations of the North Jersey Butterfly Club (NJBC) (specifically for the rare Gray Comma butterfly (*Polygonia progne*), several other uncommon butterflies, and threatened grassland bird species).
- ◆ Identified a rare plant in Horseshoe Bend Park (Missouri Gooseberry, *Ribes missouriense*), which is listed as critically imperiled in NJ (S1). It is also host plant for the Grey Comma’s caterpillars. D.Kratzer and volunteers from the North Jersey Butterfly Club (NJBC) marked plants with yellow tags and park managers were informed so that the plants can be protected. D.Kratzer submitted a Natural Heritage report.
- ◆ Applied for 2014 ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grant to plant a native plant meadow for pollinators in Horseshoe Bend Park, but did not get funded.
- ◆ Applied for 2015 Holden Grant from the Washington Crossing Audubon society to restore and enhance meadow habitat for pollinators in a 2.5 acre field in Horseshoe Bend Park
- ◆ EC member C. Niciecki and about 30 others volunteered to build a bridge over the creek in Horseshoe Bend Park (April 2014).

Ordinances/Resolutions

- ◆ W.Reasoner participated in a subcommittee to amend Planning Board ordinances designating the Eastern Gateway Village (town center) and Scenic Overlay for Route 12 Corridor.
- ◆ Recommended that the Township Committee make a resolution to oppose the Repeal of RGGI Rules, which would impact air quality. Sample resolution was provided by ANJEC and sent to TC.

- ◆ Recommended that the Township Committee make a resolution to oppose the proposed 110 mile PennEast 36" high pressure gas transmission pipeline which is proposed to begin in Luzerne County, PA and end in Mercer County, NJ; with about 7 miles in Kingwood Township. A special Township Committee meeting was held 10/29/2014 with overwhelming public opposition to the pipeline. The TC made a resolution 2014-98 to oppose the proposed pipeline.
- ◆ Recommended that the Township Committee make a resolution to ban fracking in Kingwood (see USGS "Assessment of Undiscovered Oil and Gas..." <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2012/3075/>).
- ◆ Recommended that the Township Committee make comments on the proposed amendment to the Hunterdon County Water Quality Management Plan Frenchtown Borough Wastewater Management Plan Chapter. It was noted that their proposal to increase wastewater treatment capacity means that ground water withdrawals will also be increased in a watershed where ground water is already over-allocated. A memo of recommendations was given to the Township Committee.

Outreach/Education

- ◆ Completed 10 points of Stormwater education projects, as required by NJDEP.
- ◆ Community Day 9/20/2014 – Discounted water tests and septic pumping.
- ◆ Helped assemble a list of property owners in the proposed PennEast pipeline 400' corridor. Helped with a survey of these homeowners to determine what resources and concerns they have.

Site Plan Review

- ◆ Subdivision Application for Minor Subdivision – Block 9, Lot 13 (reviewed at January meeting).
- ◆ Application for Site Plan Approval – Block 15, Lot 8.0 (no plans for building and they just had to go to the Planning Board for approval of change use of the property (reviewed at February meeting).
- ◆ Subdivision Application for Minor Subdivision – Block 14, Lot 20 (reviewed at April meeting).
- ◆ Subdivision Application for Final - Block 28, Lot 11.01 – Van Holten Group, Inc. (corner of Route 519 and Fairview Road heading south). Seven lots to be subdivided (reviewed at October meeting).

Surface Water

- ◆ Cooperated with and supported implementation project(s) for Lockatong and Wickecheoke Watersheds Restoration and Protection Plan (with NJ Water Supply Authority). Project website: <http://www.raritanbasin.org/lockwick.html>.
 - Robert O'Neil, Principal Watershed Protection Specialist (NJWSA), gave an update on project at the February meeting.
 - Filter strips that were planted last year may need to be redone.
 - On 4/5/2014, 22 volunteers planted 1,000 willow and dogwood stakes along 1,000 feet of stream bank.
- ◆ A letter was written and a 2 minute summary presented at the 12/9/2014 DRBC meeting with our concerns about the surface and ground water impacts of the pipeline and urging them to exercise their jurisdiction in this application and deny it.
- ◆ A letter was written and sent to the NJWSA, Executive Director (H. Patterson) with the above letter to DRBC as an attachment, making them aware of our concerns about the surface and ground water impacts of the pipeline, specifically to the Lockatong and Wickecheoke Creek watersheds, which feed the D&R Canal.

Ground Water

- ◆ Community day well testing was coordinated by Margaret Logreira, Well Test Program Manager of the Raritan Headwaters Association.
- ◆ Columbia University did a survey about well water testing and arsenic.
- ◆ Reviewed MEL Quarterly Homeowner Well Sampling Results. Gail Ashley's students entered about 12 years of quarterly conductivity data into a spreadsheet for analysis. The data show salt levels increasing over time despite MEL saying salt levels have decreased over time. A letter was sent to MEL requesting the quarterly reports for 2014 because none were received this year.
- ◆ 3 EC members plus D.Haywood met with MEL on 5/6/2014 at MEL (details are in the May minutes).
- ◆ Sent letter to Karl Muessig, State Geologist, to ask for their assistance in regard to ground water contamination from MEL.
- ◆ Attempted to arrange for a representative of MEL to speak at a meeting.
- ◆ MEL had a spill of Zirconium Oxychloride, a very hazardous substance, in August but the township (including the emergency management coordinator) didn't know about it until a month later. The EMC contacted the appropriate people to be on a list to be informed of incidents. NJDEP says the spill is cleaned up.

Sustainability

- ◆ Nathan Charron, Environmental Coordinator for HART Commuter Information Services, came to the November EC meeting and gave information about the Sustainable Jersey Certification and offered assistance.
- ◆ EC members and others volunteered to handout free native tree seedlings on 4/12/2014 to about 40 families for replacement of trees lost due to hurricane Sandy. Leftover trees (red and pin oaks) were planted in a row at Horseshoe Bend Park to be transplanted to other locations in the future.
- ◆ Environmental Commission continued to receive meeting packages electronically to reduce waste.

Invasive Species

- ◆ Mile a minute weed was noted in the township.

2014 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

Deborah Kratzer (Chair)

Joseph Zgurzynski, **Alt. #1**

David Posey (Vice-Chair)

Willard Reasoner, **Alt. #2**

Gail M. Ashley

Diana Haywood, Township Committee representative

Timothy Cahalin

Cynthia L. Keller, Secretary

Sandra McNicol

Cynthia Niciecki

Lois Voronin