

KINGWOOD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 4, 2020
7:30PM

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Environmental Commission was called to order by Debbie Kratzer, Chairperson, at 7:30P.M. The below Notice Requirements were read aloud.

Notice Requirements

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and published in the Hunterdon County Democrat on February 6, 2020 and the Courier News on February 4, 2020. A copy of this Meeting notice was telefaxed to the Express Times and posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building on January 30, 2020.

In order to ensure full public participation in this meeting, all members of this Commission, and also members of the public are requested to speak only when recognized by the Chair so that there is no simultaneous discussion or over talk, and further, all persons are requested to utilize the microphones which are provided for your use by the Township. Your cooperation is appreciated.
[need to update notice statement]

Roll Call

Present

Maureen Syrnick
Debbie Kratzer
Mara Tippet
Timothy Cahalin
Gail Ashley
Ralph Celebre
Sandra McNicol
Lois Voronin

Absent

Cynthia Niciecki
Betsy Combs

Public Comment – Privilege of the Floor

NA

Minutes

(1). Approval of June 23, 2020 Environmental Commission Reorganization and Regular Meeting Minutes
It was moved by Sandra McNicol and seconded by Ralph Celebre and carried to approve the June 23, 2020 Environmental Commission Regular Meeting Minutes. Lois abstained.

Correspondence

ANJEC News <https://anjec.org/anjec-report/> - encourage everyone to read

Reports

The EC Annual Report is an annual summary of EC activities required to inform the Township Committee of activities. The 2018 EC Annual Report was reviewed as an example. Mara volunteered to do short write-ups on well testing and the Horseshoe Bend Park meadow. Sandy will write about recycling, including why the depot closed, and where can people recycle. Ralph will do short write-up on HBP beneficial insects. Gail will write something about Luxfer.

Hunterdon County Soil Conservation District "Certification Not Required Report" for Yard 1162 County Rt 519, Block 2, Lot 2 and 5 was reviewed.

Hunterdon County Soil Conservation District "Stop Construction Order Unauthorized Soil Disturbance/New Driveway Install" for Yard 1162 County Rt 519, Block 2 Lot 2 was reviewed. It was noted that this was the same lot as the previous report.

Hunterdon County Soil Conservation District "Letter of Certification" for Galleria Construction, 5 Tumble Idell Rd, Block 38 Lot 7.02 was reviewed.

Notice of upcoming meetings/workshops: Reminder of Dates

1. **August 25, 7:30 pm:** Next EC meeting. Everyone agreed that EC meetings will be held virtually on zoom through the end of the year. Debbie will ask the deputy clerk to post the public notice and make sure link is on the website.
2. **September 14-17:** Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum, A Virtual Conference Sponsored by the Coalition for the Delaware River. Register [here](#). if anyone is interested.
3. **October 6-8:** Rally 2020, Virtual National Land Conservation Conference. Register [here](#). if anyone is interested.

Stewardship

1. Stewardship Workday
 - We held our first voluntary Stewardship Workday in March just before the quarantine restrictions began. We straightened tree tubes in Kingwood Park and on the Melnyk property. We removed netting when trees were growing above the tube height and removed tubes where trees had died. Not many trees had died.
 - It was agreed to have a voluntary Stewardship Workday on September 8th from 5-7 pm. The priority will be to straighten and maintain the tree tubes on the Ukarish property.
2. Lockatong Creek Riparian Buffer
 - The spring Lockatong Creek Riparian Buffer tree planting that had been planned for April was delayed due to covid-19 until July. Safety Precautions for Tree Planting Projects and Map https://kingwoodtownship.com/KT_environmental/2020/Covid-19_Safety_for_Tree_Plantings_and_map.pdf and a species list for the July planting were shared. We had one preparation day on July 20th, where we flagged tree locations and Richard Dodds used his tractor with post hole digger to dig the holes. There were 4 separate planting days (7/23, 7/24, 7/29 and 7/31) in order to keep the groups small. Two Girl Scout groups, Troop 80213 and Troop 81176 helped plant trees on two different days. Parents worked with their kids and people wore masks and socially distanced as much as

possible. It was very helpful to have the holes dug ahead of time because it was very hot, and this helped the planting go more quickly. Debbie said she's hoping the trees are ok after tropical storm Isaias today, and she'll check on them tomorrow. The heat was extreme, but all 210 trees and shrubs were planted and protected.

- The EC discussed concerns about whether the birds had finished nesting before mowing. Sandy said that there are two different techniques to protect birds when haying. One way is to start in the center of the field to drive birds out of the field. The second way is an inexpensive attachment you can make – a long stick that attaches to the tractor and gets the birds out of the way. The farmer did comply with the lease requirement to delay mowing until after 7/15. It was noted that some birds have multiple broods, and they could have been on a second or even third brood. It was suggested that the topic be discussed with farmers at the Open Space and Agriculture Committee. There is always the need to balance farming while also protecting the birds.
- It was then discussed that bobolinks, savannah sparrows, grasshopper sparrows, and many redwing blackbirds have been observed in the area, as well as nesting killdeer at Kingwood Park. In general, it was a great year for migrating warblers, probably due to a lack of noise, pollution and human activity. However, there is concern about the apparent lack of insects this year, there have been fewer butterflies and other pollinators.

3. Fall Tree Planting

- We will have an additional 290 trees and shrubs for a fall planting. We can discuss an exact date (in October?) at our next meeting. We'll probably have the help of the next AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador, and Mara thought a teacher from Kingwood School might be interested in his class helping. It was agreed we should plan multiple days again to keep groups small for physical distancing.

4. Horseshoe Bend Park

- Mara reported that the meadow was mowed just a couple of weeks ago, including the area where we planted the meadow, which is not good. Either not a lot of seeds germinated, or the mower got them. The mower went around the milkweed stands, which is good, and the milkweed is becoming nicely established and enjoyed by butterflies. Mara said she hopes to plant more milkweed plants instead of seeds. She has registered the pollinator meadow with <http://monarchwatch.org> and obtained a sign to post. We're on their map under the name, "Horseshoe Bend Park pollinator meadow." There continues to be a big problem with the invasive plant, mugwort. There are big patches of invasives that need to be addressed, including mugwort and a pawlonia tree. The meadow sign still needs to be installed.

5. Mask up

- Most people are using good judgement and using masks when near others in parks, but it was agreed that the signs are a good idea as a reminder, especially on trails where people pass others. Debbie volunteered to print up some mask up signs and put them on the kiosks at HPB and Kingwood park.

6. Invasive Species Do Not Plant List <https://www.fohvos.info/invasive-species-strike-team/info-center/>

- It was agreed that this is a good thing to put on the township website and also social media; maybe local nurseries. Mara will be on Parks and Rec Committee starting tomorrow and will bring up this issue.

Well water testing and septic system pumping

(9) Castle Septic Quote for Township Discount Septic Program

- It's unclear how much of a discount their quote is, since it's higher price than last year.
- Lois will try to call a couple other septic pumping companies for quotes.
- Sandy will ask Michele - when will newsletter go out, so that we can include this info?
- For well water testing, it was agreed that we should work with Raritan Headwaters Association again this year. Mara will coordinate, maybe the first week or 2 in October?
- There will be a Saturday for bottle pickup and payment; probably Sat. Oct 3, Tues. Oct 6; and return filled bottles on morning of the 7th
- Mara will update last year's announcement and send to Michele for the township newsletter that will be mailed soon.

Sustainable Kingwood – Update

Luxfer (MEL) – Update

- Debbie recused herself from this discussion as required for NJDEP matters.
- Gail contacted Andrew Doyle from NJDEP and asked if we in the township should have any concerns about the discharge permit renewal. He said that the recent application is a routine 5-year renewal permit, which is about Luxfer's wastewater that's being trucked to Trenton for discharge and treatment. The permit is about the quality of the water that's being trucked; and has nothing to do with the hazardous waste clean-up of the property. Gail also checked with Environ's LSRP, who didn't get back to her. Luxfer's final report has been submitted to DEP and the final report has been approved. The LSRP should have provided the EC with a copy, and Doyle recommended that the EC go to DEP to request a copy through OPRA. It was suggested that someone should find out who to complain to at NJDEP about the LSRP not doing what they're supposed to do.
- There was a lengthy discussion about concern over the radionuclides from the pond leakage, and also questions about the level of radioactive material in their discharge, and if that is natural background or not. While Mara informed the EC of the acceptable gross alpha levels in drinking water, no one was sure what the acceptable levels are in wastewater.

Note that Debbie lost power and left the meeting about 9:00 pm and the remaining EC members voted to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment