

KINGWOOD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2021
7:30 PM

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Environmental Commission was called to order by Chair Debbie Kratzer at 7:35 P.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 and the Courier News on February 11, 2021. A copy of this Meeting notice was telefaxed to the Express Times and posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building on February 12, 2021.

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.

Due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was conducted by a virtual Zoom meeting. Information on the meeting notice was posted on the Kingwood Township website.

Roll Call

Present

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

Absent

Cynthia Niciecki

Public Comment – Privilege of the Floor

N/A

Approval of Minutes

Motion to Approve the April 27, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Environmental Commission

It was moved by Sandra McNicol and seconded by Ralph Celebre and carried to approve the April 27, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Environmental Commission.

All present from the Environmental Commission voted Aye on Roll Call Vote with the exception of Mara Tippet and Elizabeth Combs who abstained.

Correspondence

Chair Debbie Kratzer reminded the members that there was not a new ANJEC report this month, as it is a quarterly publication and was distributed last month.

Chair Debbie Kratzer explained that Richard Dodds requested the addition of Conservation Easements to the Environmental Commission agenda. Richard Dodds provided the Kingwood Township Deed of Conservation Easement ordinance and a Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association brochure for the EC members to review. Richard Dodds inquired if the EC could prepare a similar conservation easement brochure for Kingwood Township property owners. The members discussed whether there is an existing inventory of properties with easements in Kingwood Township so that they could do a targeted mailing of the brochure to those properties. Mara Tippet offered to work on a rough draft using the Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association brochure as a guide.

Reports

Chair Debbie Kratzer stated that she did not work on the Draft 2020 Annual Report since the last EC meeting.

Notice of upcoming meetings/workshops: Reminder of Dates

Chair Debbie Kratzer reminded the members that the third Wednesday of each month is slated for Stewardship activities: June 16, July 21, August 18 and September 15.

Stewardship

Chair Debbie Kratzer reported that at the first Stewardship date on Wednesday, May 19, 2021, several members participated by removing unneeded tree tubes, straightening tree tubes, weeding and general clean up. She suggested continuing these efforts at other areas in Kingwood Township on Wednesday, June 16.

Rockfall Mitigation

Chair Debbie Kratzer reminded the members that Kingwood Township and Hunterdon County adopted resolutions opposing the Rockfall Mitigation project. She reported that she has observed survey work being done for this project in the proposed area.

Sustainable Kingwood – Update

Mara Tippet had no updates for Sustainable Kingwood at this time.

PennEast Pipeline – Update

Chair Debbie Kratzer pointed out that the Supreme Court heard arguments of the case on April 28, 2021 and understands that there has not been a decision yet but possibly one will be delivered in June.

ERI Update

Chair Debbie Kratzer noted that she did not work on the Draft 2020 Annual Report since the last EC meeting however, once her summer classes are done she should be able to continue working on the update.

Revised Well Ordinance Update

Lois Voronin reported that she, Gail Ashley and Mara Tippet met as a subcommittee to begin working on the memo detailing the revisions to the Well Ordinance that the EC disagrees with and compiling the supporting data. Lois Voronin indicated that she still has not received the 3-part pump test and aquifer test data that she requested from Kingwood Township. Maureen Syrnick explained that the vendor who scanned the documents had not yet located the hard copies of the reports and the vendor offered to provide a report generated from the scanned documents that may provide the requested data. Several members suggested that the request for the data be made by specific Block and Lot number instead of the current search method to access the requested data. Chair Debbie Kratzer indicated she will prepare a brief memo to the Board of Health alerting them that the EC disagrees with the changes to the Well Ordinance and include a few bullet points and note that they are in the process of gathering data to support their position.

Open Space and Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting News and Update

Sandra McNicol reported that two properties were preserved: the Oertle Farm located on Tumble Idell Road (Farmland Preservation) and the Maritan property located on Barbertown Idell Road (Open Space).

Planning Board Site Plans, News and Updates

Chair Debbie Kratzer inquired about the Master Plan and Sandra McNicol explained that some elements might need to be updated. Chair Debbie Kratzer would like the Environmental Commission to be involved in the review process of the update of the various elements of the Master Plan. The last update was done in 2018.

New Business

Gail Ashley shared two graphs regarding rainfall data. The New Jersey long-term rainfall graph (provided by NOAA) shows the magnitude and frequency of large rainfall events is increasing as well the actual average rainfall. The second graph she prepared using rainfall data from her backyard meter, which she has been collecting and recording rainfall information for the last 10 years. She would like to have this information posted on the Kingwood Township website in order to help educate the public regarding rainfall, runoff and recharge rates in New Jersey and Kingwood Township. Chair Debbie Kratzer would also like this information included in the updated ERI.

Chair Debbie Kratzer noted that there was an unhappy Facebook post regarding the larger parking area that NJDEP is building for river access. She asked Richard Dodds for information about this in the event that someone contacts the Kingwood Township Environmental Commission seeking information.

Old Business

Chair Debbie Kratzer asked Mara Tippettt to gather information when she attended the last Parks and Recreation meeting regarding environmental issues. Mara Tippettt asked the Parks and Recreation Commission if any biodiversity studies were done in the park areas and they indicated none have been done. She noted that she attended the trail opening for two new trails in Horseshoe Bend Park. Chair Debbie Kratzer suggested a possible future project of adding information to the various kiosks in the open space and park areas to enhance the public's experience when they visit these areas.

Maureen Syrnick reported that a DPW staff member checked for the chimney swifts in one of the buildings and they are present. Sandra McNicol indicated she is still hoping to get the chimney swift tower built. Tim Cahalin offered to donate lumber to this project.

Adjournment

Sandra McNicol made a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 P.M., seconded by Mara Tippettt, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Hutton, Secretary