



TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Approved Minutes

For the rescheduled meeting of
Thursday, September 20, 2018

* The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Nora Sirbaugh.

Statement of Compliance & Roll Call

Members present: Bill Washburn, Andrew Plunkett, Ray Nichols, Jim Gambino, Rex Parker, Vanessa Sandom, and Nora Sirbaugh

Members absent: Mike Aucott, George Kerr,

Also present: Mark Kataryniak – Twp Administrative Officer

Members of the Public present: Melanie Phillips, Jim Burd, Harvey Lester

Minutes for Approval

The July 17, 2018 draft minutes were approved with no changes – Motion, Ray; 2nd Bill; Abstentions - Nora, Rex, and Vanessa

Action: Jim will forward these minutes to Mark for posting on the Township website.

Public Comment

1. Melanie Phillips discussed her concerns regarding the effects on local groundwater supply if the proposed affordable housing developments are constructed at the nearby Scotch Rd and Zaitz parcels.

Ray suggested contacting NJDEP to review the local geological survey for our area. Rex suggested reviewing the township's Scotch Rd monitoring well data.

2. Jim Burd discussed his concerns about an apparent tree clear-cut on a parcel near Hopewell Borough.

Ray suggested contacting NJDEP to review the forestry management plan for this parcel (if there is one) together with the regional forester for Mercer County.

Zoning Board Application Reviews

1. Case No. 2018-17: **William Jackson**
Block 78.12, Lot 4; 8 Wyckoff Drive; R-5 District
Residential Addition – Patio & Shed
Bulk Variances

We reviewed and discussed this application together with Mark Kataryniak.

We understand the existing property exceeds the maximum allowable lot coverage area of 35% and the proposed additions will exacerbate this issue.

Exceeding the allowable lot coverage area has detrimental effects on our environment.

The applicant did not provide any proposed mitigation plan to offset the additional coverage.

We do not recommend approving this application unless the applicant provides mitigation efforts that will result in no net gain of impervious coverage for this property.

2. Case No. 2018-18: **Assisted Living, Inc.**
Block 98, Lot 29; 1266 River Road; R-150 District
Residential Construction
Minor Subdivision & Use Variance

We reviewed and discussed this application together with Mark Kataryniak.

We understand an “identical” application was submitted to the township and reviewed by us in 2011.

We also understand the existing parcel exceeds the maximum allowable lot coverage area of 15%, but the subdivision will result in less overall impervious cover as compared to the original parcel although the resulting two lots will be at or above the 15% allowable coverage.

We have concerns about the impacts of adding a second septic system to serve one of the newly formed lots.

We also have concerns about the amount and type of tree removal required for this project as stated in the application, and the necessity to comply with the Township’s tree protection ordinance.

3. Case No. 2018-19: **Timothy & Heather O’Connell**
Block 93.04, Lot 4; 8 Brookside Drive; VRC District
Residential Addition – Pool Cabana
Bulk Variance

Note: we were told this application was incomplete and did not review or discuss it.

Action: Jim will prepare and send our review comments via memo to Mark to post with these applications on the Township website.

Subcommittee Reports / Discussions / Updates for on-going projects

A. Chestnut Tree Planting Project

Rex shared a related news article with us prior to our meeting concerning transgenic chestnut biotechnology which could help with restoration efforts. The nuts we planted at Hollystone Preserve this spring, if they succeed in growing into seed-bearing trees, could provide a resource for future cross-breeding with transgenic trees to help generate blight resistant chestnut trees.

Action: We plan to check all our plantings this fall to see how many survivors there are.

B. Legislative Update: single-use carryout bags

Governor Murphy recently vetoed Assembly Bill 3267 concerning single-use bags. We will watch for new legislative initiatives on this issue.

Actions: Nora will research where the recycled plastics bags go.

Andrew will research plastic bag bans in other communities / states.

C. Hopewell Harvest Fair

Action: help staff the Green Team booth if you are available Sep 22.

D. Drainage Basin Conversion Project @ Public Works

Mark reported that we are in the third and final stage of vegetation removal in the basin and that new planting will begin soon.

Action: Nora recommended for us to read the book “Beyond the war on invasives”.

E. ANJEC Conference

Ray and Jim are signed up for the Oct. 12 conference.

F. NJ Shade Tree Conference

Ray said he was interested in attending and must let Mark know ASAP which day he plans to attend; Oct. 18 or 19.

New Business

A. Public Awareness – Spotted Lantern fly

Nora provided and reviewed with us a 1 page handout regarding this new invasive species. She also shared with us a related Penn State web link prior to our meeting.

The township has posted related information on their website.

Mercer County is in a quarantine area and all items must be checked for signs of this pest before moving them out of the quarantine area.

Action: Nora plans to present this topic at an upcoming Township Committee meeting.

B. Stream Corridor Waiver Update

Vanessa Pellington - Block 49, Lot 4; 25 Yard Road

Note: we granted a waiver with conditions for the original application for reconstruction at this site in July 2017.

Mark informed us that the owners would now like to add a new rear deck in the buffer zone.

Members unanimously approved this request.

Action: Mark will notify the owners of our approval.

* The meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm: Motion – Ray, 2nd Rex; all in favor.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Gambino
Secretary