



# TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

**Approved Minutes**  
For the regular meeting of  
Tuesday, September 21, 2021

**Note: this meeting was conducted and recorded using a Zoom videoconferencing application.**

\* The meeting was called to order at 7:11 pm by Nora Sirbaugh.

### **Statement of Compliance & Roll Call**

Members present: Nora Sirbaugh, Rex Parker, Vanessa Sandom, Mark Bean,  
Jim Gambino and Paul Kinney

Members absent: Andrew Plunkett, Mike Aucott, George Kerr,

Also present: Jim Bash - Twp Engineer

Courtney Peters-Manning – Twp Committee Liaison

Members of the Public present: none

### **Minutes for Approval**

The July 20, 2021 draft minutes were approved as amended – Motion, Rex; 2<sup>nd</sup> Jim; all in favor.

**Action:** Jim will forward these minutes to Jaimie Laird for posting on the Township website.

### **Zoning Board Application Reviews**

#### **Case No. 21-18: Rout Porch**

Block 8, Lot 91; 294 Hopewell Amwell Road;  
VRC Zoning District  
Bulk Variance to construct Front Porch

We reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Jim Bash and have no environmental concerns for the proposed project.

#### **Case No. 21-19: Larthey Deck**

Block 92.02, Lot 32; 5 State Park Drive;  
R-100 Zoning District  
Bulk Variance to expand Front Porch

We reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Jim Bash.

We understand the existing property exceeds the allowable impervious lot coverage area of 15% for properties located in the R-100 zone. The proposed project may exacerbate this issue if the addition increases lot coverage.

If that is the case, we ask that mitigation be provided into the future for any additional impervious cover.

Lots exceeding the maximum impervious coverage area have an adverse affect on our community and environment by increasing storm-water run-off and flooding, sedimentation of our streams, and other impacts to water bodies including loss of biodiversity and degradation of water quality. The cumulative effects of multiple approvals are of serious concern.

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

### **Planning Board Application Review**

#### **Titusville Legacy, LLC**

Block 132, Lots 4, 6, 8, 10; 1460, 1462, 1464, 1466 River Road;  
C-1 Zoning District  
Preliminary & Final Site Plan, Bulk Variance

We reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Jim Bash.

We understand the proposed project is considered a major development and must comply with existing stormwater management regulations, since it will disturb more than one acre of land.

Although we are happy to see the project will reduce the lot coverage area from 71% to 48%, it is not clear if the proposed porous pavement will function properly since the existing grades are greater than those recommended for its use. Excessive grading may be required or alternate green infrastructure solutions will be needed. We suggest that proposed lawn areas could be changed to no-mow deeper rooted grasses or other native plants that will absorb more stormwater runoff and provide needed pollinator habitat.

The plans do not show adequate landscape buffers along the eastern and southern property lines and ask that additional plantings be required as per our ordinance.

The following proposed shrubs are not on the Township's approved plant list and should be replaced with approved species:

Wintergreen Boxwood, Dwarf Deutzia, Black Diervilla, Margarita Jessamine,  
Aaronsbeard St. Johnswort and Skip Laurel

Finally, additional lighting may be needed in certain areas, especially along the A.D.A. accessible route.

**Action:** Jim will prepare and send our review comments via memo to Linda Barbieri to post with this application on the Township website.

### **Subcommittee Reports / Discussions / Updates for on-going projects**

1. **Twp Committee Liaison Report** – Courtney reported the township has passed a cannabis ordinance that will allow cultivation and manufacturing in certain areas. Also, [BeiGene](#) is working on a revised redevelopment plan for the old Bristol-Myers Squibb site.
2. **Planning Board Liaison Report** – Rex reported The Collection project was approved.
3. **Zoning Board Report** – none.
4. **EC Members Outreach Articles**

Members agreed to write environmental outreach articles for 2021. Topics will be posted on the Twp web site's EC issue page. Topics may include: leaf mulching, septic system maintenance

(Mike); dark sky, pesticide reduction & chemical fertilizers (Rex); trees (Jim); recycling, plastics (Paul); native plants, native gardens, turf lawns (Andrew); healthy food (Vanessa), responsible gardening (Nora). Lead in drinking water (Ray - already submitted), perhaps arsenic in drinking water (Mike & Twp Health Dept), stormwater basin naturalization (Mark B).

We decided the submittal protocol would be to send your article to members for review. Replies shall only go back to the author (i.e. do not reply all). We will discuss the article at our next meeting. Upon approval, the article will be sent to Reba Holley, the Township's Communications and Outreach Manager, for posting on the Twp website and social media.

**Actions:** Mark will send us his article on stormwater basin naturalization to review. Paul will work on his recycling and plastics article.

#### 5. **Native Plant Demonstration Garden**

Andrew was not present to give us an update.

#### 6. **4H Fair**

We discussed our recent outreach effort at the Mercer County 4H Fair where we educated the public about the Spotted Lantern Fly and Emerald Ash Borer. This led to discussion about the Sourland Conservancy's effort to partner with us to help prioritize planting projects to help replace ash trees lost to the emerald ash borer

**Action:** At our October meeting we will revisit the Conservancy's request.

**New Business** - none

#### **Announcements & Correspondence**

Nora discussed a potential ash tree hazard at the Stony Brook Elementary School. The dead trees are on school property.

**Action:** The school district needs to be informed of this hazard.

- \* The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm: Motion – Rex, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vanessa; all in favor.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 19, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Gambino  
Secretary