

MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Thursday, May 17, 2018

Manchester Township Municipal Building
1 Colonial Drive, Manchester Township, NJ

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Middaugh called the Regular Meeting of the Manchester Township Environmental Commission to order with the following statement: “Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with Open Public Meetings Act. Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was advertised in the Asbury Park Press and the Star Ledger and was posted in the lobby of the Municipal Building.”

Time: 6:00 PM

This was followed with the Salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL:

William Cook	Present
William Foor	Present
David Kiernan	Present
Peggy Middaugh	Present
Rory Wells	Present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve March 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes with minor change made to page 4, “Save Barnegat Bay”, by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Foor.

Roll call vote: Mr. Cook, Mr. Foor, Mr. Kiernan, Ms. Middaugh; yes. Mr. Wells abstained. Motion carried.

Ms. Middaugh welcomed newest member, Rory Wells to the Environmental Commission.

NEW BUSINESS:

NV5 – Ridgeway Blvd. Bridge

Mr. Cook: I reviewed the application. The only issue I saw is with wildlife. No immediate issues. Looks like they’re doing everything correctly to avoid impact on the environment. They are only removing the trees that are absolutely necessary for construction. Mr. Foor agrees with Mr. Cook.

Ms. Middaugh: I agree that that they are taking adequate concern for the environment. Do we know how long construction will take?

Mr. Cook: There isn’t a timeline included in documents. Bridges usually take a long time.

Mr. Foor: The road will be closed for a while which will lead to additional traffic, especially at the Hope Chapel Rd. intersection. They may put a traffic light there.

Mr. Cook: I think we should send an interoffice memo to the Clerk’s Office informing them that the Commission does not have any major environmental concerns about this project at this time.

Rt. 37 Retail Development

Ms. Middaugh: The project location is the old proposed Walmart site.

Mr. Foor: Councilor Fusaro mentioned at the last Council Meeting that the area is Schedule A, meaning there needs to be a 300 ft. setback. If Schedule A is enforced, the property would be undevelopable. The Commission has not formally received a copy of this CAFRA application yet. Mr. Foor thinks we should wait to make comments until it is formally received. Further review is also needed.

Ms. Middaugh: Maybe we should comment to CAFRA that they should not allow variances until the Commission receives this application formally. Comments end on June 14th. It doesn't look like there will be a public hearing.

Mr. Foor: We may not yet be able to comment officially as a board because we haven't formally received a copy.

Mr. Wells thinks it would be a good idea to call CAFRA to confirm all of the information in the application we have is accurate and there isn't any new information. Mr. Foor noticed that some of the documents in the application package are dated.

Mr. Foor thinks a memo should be sent to the Council asking if they have any additional information on the project timeline and if it would be appropriate to comment on the application before the June 14th deadline.

Ms. Middaugh made a general comment that she thinks the Commission should still discuss applications found on the state website, such as this one, even if the Commission hasn't formally received a copy of the application. The other Commissioners agree.

Heritage Minerals Site Tour

Ms. Middaugh: John Pagenkopf would like to come to the next Environmental Commission meeting on June 21st to give a presentation about the status of the Heritage Minerals site. A site tour for the Commissioners will then be scheduled after the presentation.

The Commissioners agree to invite Mr. Pagenkopf to the next meeting to give a presentation as long as it is limited to 20 minutes.

Ms. Middaugh: The main concerns are the contamination and status of cleanup.

Mr. Foor: There are three options: encapsulate area, truck stuff out or mixing the contaminated sand with clean sand until it is acceptable to the State.

Mr Cook: What is the timeline now having received the letter of deficiency?

Ms. Middaugh: Email will be sent to Mr. Pagenkopf that the Commission welcomes his presentation at the next meeting on June 21st.

OLD BUSINESS:

Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)

Mr Foor: I was asked to go to the Planning Board and ask about our Environmental Assessment. Our current version is from 2005. I spoke to the Chair of the Planning Board and the Engineer and they agree it should be updated. Request to update the NRI to be sent to the Mayor.

Earth Day Project

Whiting Elementary School and Ridgeway Elementary School participated; students decorated paper bags with Earth Day themed pictures. These bags were given out at Manchester Shoprite and Stop & Shop on Earth Day. MTES did not participate because they had other projects planned.

Mr. Wells thinks the Commission could do other projects involving Manchester schools such as giving certificates recognizing students for doing something in line with the Commission's goals and visions. The other Commissioners think this is a good idea.

OC Landfill Air Pollution Control Permit

Ms. Middaugh: The public hearing was held here on May 8th. The permit is pretty tight, the main concerns were air pollution. Ocean County received an F in air quality from the American Lung Association, as did Monmouth County.

Mr. Cook: They will be increasing air pollution controls.

Ms. Middaugh: Need to watch out for the gas plant, sulfur dioxide plant.

Mr. Cook: It is a well-engineered facility.

Mr. Middaugh: I would be open to touring the facility.

Mr. Wells will look into the Sunshine Law to see if all Commissioners can tour the facility at the same time. He will also look into Ocean County receiving an F for air quality according to the American Lung Association.

Ms. Middaugh: Ocean County also has a high rate of asthma.

Mr. Foor: The extended capacity of the plant will extend the operation to 2030.

Amerco Real Estate Uhaul Facility

Mr. Cook: The application was withdrawn without prejudice from the Zoning Board. They may do something else.

No further discussion needed at this time.

MEMBER REPORTS:

OC Landfill Public Hearing

Mr. Foor: I informed the gentleman I mentioned at the last meeting that lives adjacent to the Landfill about the public hearing at Town Hall. He went to the hearing and spoke.

Mr. Wells: I am a resident of Holly Oaks; the landfill is a neighbor of mine. They are good neighbors. The control of the smell has improved a lot of the years. A lot of positive comments about them from the community.

ANJEC Climate Change Conference

Ms. Middaugh attended the ANJEC Climate Change Conference on April 26th. New Jersey is one of the states hit hardest with sea level rise and is already sinking. There are a lot of things people can do to help deal with climate change such as purchasing electric vehicles. Ms. Middaugh would like to see Manchester step in front of the electric vehicle revolution and consider putting an electric vehicle charging station in Manchester. The biggest expense would be the underground utilities. The closest charging station is in Tinton Falls by the Premium Outlets.

MEMBER REPORTS (Cont.)

ANJEC Environmental Congress

The Environmental Congress is an annual statewide gathering of environmental commissions, local officials, agencies, citizen groups and environmental organizations. It will be held at Mercer County College on October 12th

Environmental Commission Budget

Brief discussion on requesting an annual budget for the Environmental Commission for educational and outreach projects and the Natural Resource Inventory update. Per Mr. Foor, the Statute does allow for a budget although they have never had one that he knows of. Request to be sent to the Mayor.

Future Grant Projects

Ideas to be discussed at the next meeting

PUBLIC FORUM:

Irene Tish, Resident, 26A Valley Forge Drive: Point Pleasant Beach has in effect a plastic ban. Manchester should consider doing the same. There are great swirls of garbage in the ocean. The ocean wildlife eats the plastic, then we eat the fish.

Mr. Cook: At a conference I attended a couple of months ago they said that at the turn of the century, 30% of the ocean will be plastic.

Mr. Wells: Did Point Pleasant Beach switch to paper bags?

Ms. Tish, Resident: I am pretty sure it is a complete plastic ban.

Ms. Middaugh: The other option is reusable bags at supermarkets. The Atlantic County Clerk has just recommended banning plastic bags because they are bad for the beaches and therefore the tourist industry. Manchester is not as close to the ocean. I will contact Joe Veni, part of Manchester's Sustainable Jersey Green Team about ideas.

Mr. Wells: Maybe we can gather information find out about costs, meet with Shoprite, set a goal. Not anti-business – give incentives or send a survey.

Mr. Kiernan suggests we reach out to Point Pleasant Beach to find out how they've gone about the plastic ban. Mr. Wells offers to contact them.

Mr. Cook will reach out to the NJ League of Municipalities to find out if they have any information on the transition.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Foor, meeting was adjourned. All in favor, motion carried.

Time: 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Frazee
Commission Secretary