

MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Thursday, December 20, 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, arrived at 6:20 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve September 20, 2018 Meeting Minutes by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Foor.

Roll call vote: Mr. Cook, Mr. Foor, Mr. Kiernan, Ms. Middaugh; yes. Mr. Wells absent at time of vote.

Ms. Middaugh will meet with Planning Board Secretary Marianne Borthwick to discuss the Development Application process and find out how the Environmental Commission can be part of the process before the applications go before the Board.

Mr. Foor stated the Councilor on the Planning Board has an action to go back and review the responsibility of the Environmental Commission in the application process but does not yet know the outcome.

2019 Meeting Schedule Discussion

The Environmental Commission would like to meet every second Thursday in 2019 since the Court Room is not available every third Thursday. Secretary to send request via interoffice memo to the Mayor and Business Administrator.

NEW BUSINESS:

Green Infrastructure Municipal Toolkit

Ms. Middaugh: We received a Press Release from New Jersey Future which contained a link to a Green Infrastructure Toolkit.

Mr. Cook: It's quite complete and lengthy. A good portion has to do with some ordinance changes - proposed state changes. It may not be necessary. There have been rules submitted, comment period through January.

Ms. Middaugh: It's about different ways of dealing with stormwater. Green infrastructure versus gray infrastructure. Gray infrastructure has to do with piping water off of properties; green infrastructure is about creating ways to keep water on the property with rain gardens, planting trees, rain barrels, etc.

Ms. Middaugh requested that the toolkit link be posted to the Environmental Commission website for residents to learn more about green infrastructure. Secretary to post.

Ms. Middaugh: In an email we received last week, the NJDEP is moving to require green infrastructure. Instead of saying they want builders to look into green infrastructure, they would like to start requiring it. There is a rain garden in the municipal complex by the parking lot. You can see it in operation if it is raining really hard.

Mr. Cook: The concept is that instead of rain coming down and picking up pollutants from oil, grease, animal droppings, etc. and contaminating the bay or river, it will actually naturally filter back through the dirt and back down to the aquifer.

Ms. Middaugh: Along those lines, at the last meeting, I suggested bringing someone in to do a training for us. Save Barnegat Bay will come in whenever we ask if everyone agrees. They have a very vested interest since all of our stormwater ends up in Barnegat Bay.

Green Team Rain Barrels

Ms. Middaugh: The Chair of Manchester's Green Team, Joe Veni, would like us to hold a rain barrel workshop where residents build rain barrels that they can take home and use. Save Barnegat Bay will be giving the workshop and it will take place here at Town Hall in the Civic Center on Tuesday, April 23 at 2:00 pm. The town has agreed to pay for 12 rain barrels. The first 12 residents that come will get them. They will have to go through a training session, a presentation on the value of rain barrels and will help put them together and take them home.

Mr. Foor will extend the invitation to the Planning Board.

Mr. Cook: The Toolkit stressed the importance of involving the Planning Board.

Brentwood Estates Technical Review

Ms. Middaugh: At the last meeting, we discussed this in quite a bit of detail and the next day we received the Consultant's Technical Review.

Mr. Cook: This application has already been approved by the Planning Board

Ms. Middaugh: We put it on here because it's unfortunate that we didn't have that report before the meeting because it was so comprehensive. It clarified a lot of question we had discussed.

Mr. Foor: Part of the challenge is the time constraints. From the time the town receives the application to when they vote on it is very short. It might be possible to get Marianne to give us this information beforehand.

Mr. Kiernan: Maybe there could be a "checkbox" that the Environmental Commission has reviewed the application before it goes before the Board.

Middaugh: I'd like to get with Marianne before the next meeting, if possible. Brentwood was a 10 acre parcel being subdivided and clear-cut. Clear-cutting seems to be contradictory to our tree ordinance.

Mr. Cook: The tree ordinance states every tree that is cut down should be replaced, but that's physically not possible.

Mr. Foor: They do have a nice tree barrier, in excess of what the Zoning Board requires. At least they are trying to be a good steward in that area.

Ms. Middaugh: Just putting it out there. It is a concern and I would like to make sure the tree ordinance is followed.

Mr. Cook: If you look at a lot of the lots, it's not possible to replace every tree. I know the Zoning Board, as well as probably the Planning Board, tries to preserve as many trees as possible. On this development, the lots average half an acre.

Ms. Middaugh: I'd like it to go on record that we should still think of ways to preserve more trees instead of clear-cutting,

Heritage Minerals CAFRA Denial

Mr. Cook: The denial is quite lengthy. I doubt anything is going to happen in our lifetime given all the requirements.

Ms. Middaugh: It was denied on a lot of grounds, including wildlife. There are a lot of threatened species out there and one endangered species – an owl.

Single Family Construction Permits

Ms. Middaugh: It looked to me these were all regarding septic systems.

Mr. Cook: This is a relatively new process that's been around for about 10 years, of bioreactors where you don't have to have these huge fields and tanks. I believe it's been approved by the EPA. Pinelands Commission regulations are the old style, that's why we've been seeing these letters.

Ms. Middaugh: One of the applications confused me. On the same application two completely different lots were referenced – Block 74, Lot 3 and Block 99.222, Lot 1. One is by Harry Wright Lake and one by Lake Horicon. The letter addressed both of them.

Mr. Foor: Basically what they do is move some property from one zone to the other and part of that is done as a trade-off to cover some of the properties. In general it can be traded back and forth on some of the properties.

OC Freeholders Bus Garage

Mr. Foor: It came before the Planning Board as a courtesy review. It's something the township doesn't have jurisdiction over. The first time it came before the Planning Board it was a small complex and it seems to keep growing. They keep coming back with alternate phases, it's huge out there. The concern I had was the road that comes out by Albas, by the base. They will be putting traffic light by the road that cuts over by that new road and also a traffic light on Route 571 which will help manage the traffic flow a little better.

Ms. Middaugh: My concern is it's another clear-cut.

Mr. Foor: It would be hard not to clear-cut. It's a large parking area, a significant number of buses will be parked there. The township has no jurisdiction; it's at the county level.

Ms. Middaugh: I know, I just want to again bring up my concern about clear-cutting. As a result, we're going to see flooding in places we didn't before.

MEMBER REPORTS:

Plastics Ban

Mr. Wells suggested the Environmental Commission put together a comprehensive plan with a series of recommendations for the township and the community regarding limiting and reducing plastics. He is open to any suggestions and input from the other Commissioners and the community. There are a lot of little things you can do to make a difference: not accepting bags at stores if not necessary, not accepting straws at restaurants.

Mr. Foor mentioned a show on the National Geographic channel about Midway Island and the impact of plastics on the albatross population. The death of the albatross is directly related to plastics.

Ms. Middaugh met with Assemblyman Wolfe who said he thinks the state ban will be passed this year which would take it out of our hands completely. She commented that behavior change takes a long time and we may not have that long. The latest statistic is by 2050 there will be as much plastic in the ocean as fish. This is not acceptable.

ANJEC Conference on Oct. 12th

Ms. Middaugh: Christine Todd Whitman was the guest speaker; she was very energized and inspiring. I took a workshop on electric vehicles where they discussed grants for installing EV charging stations at municipalities. I mentioned it to Joe Veni, we would get points from Sustainable Jersey. He said in the past, it had been shot down. I will talk to the Mayor to see if he has a different view now. It is happening at state level, there is a bill to improve EV infrastructure.

Mr. Wells: EV prices are starting to go down, more affordable. Mercedes and several companies have plans to develop EV cars. As price comes down, there will be a greater demand for charging stations.

Block 44, Lot 15.01

At the last Council Meeting, there was a resolution authorizing the Planning Board to investigate the redevelopment of Block 44, Lot 15.01. Ms. Middaugh asked the other Commissioners if that is the old asphalt lot and what the resolution means. Mr. Foor responded that the Township sometimes looks at properties that are not in a state of good repair for possibilities to redevelop them.

PUBLIC FORM:

Frank Stavalo, 12 Charles Ave., inquired where he could find information about the rain barrel workshop. He stated he thinks it's a great idea and will spread the word at his next Neighborhood Watch meeting. Ms. Middaugh advised that information and an application will be posted on our website in the near future.

John Pagenkopf, H. Hovnanian, confirmed that Block 44, Lot 15.01 is indeed the old asphalt plant, what they call the Davies Site. Mr. Pagenkopf also commented on the Heritage Mineral CAFRA Denial. The state didn't have time to review all of the information demonstrated and the application is currently under appeal. There is not a court date set at this time.

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