

MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Thursday, January 16, 2020
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: 6:15 PM

This was followed with the Salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL:

Peggy Middaugh	Present
William Cook	Present
Rory Wells	Present
William Foor	Present
David Kiernan	Present
Genevieve Stavalo	Present
Mary Demarest-Paraan	Present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

December 19, 2019 Regular Meeting

Mr. Cook made a motion to approve the December 19, 2019 Meeting Minutes, seconded by Mr. Foor.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Middaugh noted there were a few additions to the agenda: two Pinelands notices and a report on the Plan Endorsement the town is pursuing.

Pinelands Notice – Block 79, Lot 20

This is a septic system approval by Pinelands Commission. No comments.

Pinelands Notice – Block 83, Lot 12

This notification is regarding a home office that is not in compliance at 457 Old Lacey Road. Mr. Cook commented that this will probably come before the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Plan Endorsement Self-Assessment Report

Ms. Middaugh: There is a public hearing scheduled for January 27, 2020 at 6:00PM in the Courtroom.

Mr. Cook: They mentioned wildlife and groundwater recharge rates in the environmental section.

Mr. Foor: Several of our actions are highlighted in the report – The NRI, rain barrel workshops, very positive. Certain sections need updating.

Ms. Middaugh asked the secretary to post the report on the town website.

Ms. Middaugh: The town center will be from Route 70 and along Route 37. The town is asking for a waiver from the 30% impervious cover to 70%. I think we should ask them to scale that back, it is a very large area of the town.

Mr. Wells: I am no longer on the Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee because of a conflict with another board I am on, but I attended the first meeting. The town needs permission from the state to develop. Their intent is not necessarily to develop the entire piece of land and there aren't any development plans yet.

Ms. Middaugh: How can we make comments?

Mr. Cook: I need a little more time to look it over.

Mr. Foor: Toms River is up to 70% impervious coverage.

Mr. Cook: Because of the available technology, the new dollar store on Route 571, all water will stay on site, recharging the entire parking lot.

Ms. Middaugh: Can we still comment after the public hearing? It would be helpful to hear what the public has to say first.

Mr. Foor offered to draft an interoffice memo with the Commission's comments.

Secretary will ask the Municipal Clerk if the Environmental Commission can comment on the report after the public hearing.

Ms. Middaugh asked the public if they had any comments concerning the report.

Karen Argenti (public) commented that 70% impervious coverage is significant and it shouldn't be more than 30%. There are a lot of trees along Route 37. When the trees come down, how many will go back up? Ms. Argenti urges the commission to take a long look at this report and take a position.

Ms. Bette Chosak (public) asked where she can get a paper copy of the report. Mr. Wells gave his paper copy to Ms. Chosak.

Ms. Irene Tysh (public) asked how she can find out about upcoming public hearings. Ms. Middaugh advised her that public notices are posted in the Asbury Park Press and Star Ledger.

Earth Day Plans

Ms. Middaugh: We are planning an Earth Day barbeque celebration. Leisure Village West is having an Earth Day celebration on April 25th. Mary is bringing her electric vehicle.

Mr. Wells: I think it may be a good idea to combine the Earth Day celebration at town hall with the high school/middle school video contest. The library manager is on board with letting us have the celebration in the parking lot. Ms. Middaugh and I are on the sub-committee. I want to see if we can get a representative from both the Manchester Planning Board and Dept. of Public Works on the committee.

Ms. Middaugh asked the public if anyone would be interested in being on the Earth Day celebration sub-committee. Ms. Stavallo and resident Bette Chosak volunteered.

Plastics Project

Mr. Wells suggested that the Environmental Commission hold a plastics information session at one of their meetings, similar to the recycling forum they had in September, 2019. In March or April, one or two speakers and it will be heavily promoted. Ms. Middaugh will make a few calls and they can discuss at the next meeting.

Ms. Middaugh inquired about the progress of the school video contest. Mr. Wells stated he would be ready to launch it by the next meeting. He will send draft rules to the other Commissioners.

OLD BUSINESS:

Area in Need of Redevelopment Process / ANR – Block 102, Lot 2

Ms. Middaugh: This was approved by the Planning Board. I want to understand the ANR process better.

Mr. Foor stated there is a state document that explains it well. He will look it up and send it to the Commissioners and secretary to post on the town website.

Ms. Middaugh: The way I understand it is when there is a distressed lot that is in excess of 6 acres, the property owner can come to the Town Council to ask them to consider redevelopment. The Council asks the Planning Board to look into it. The applicant hires a consultant to make a report which tells them if they recommend redevelopment. If the Planning Board approves it, a redevelopment plan is generated and it goes before the Council.

Mr. Foor: There are short term negative benefits, but overall it is positive for the town.

Ms. Argenti (public) commented that the Environmental Commission is in a position to make recommendations. This is a piece of property that could be preserved. It is a very strategic area for wildlife.

Mr. Foor: The next step is the redevelopment plan and then we can comment. It will still go through the whole planning process.

Ms. Middaugh: The wildlife corridor is not mentioned in the report. I think we should send a memo to the Planning Board so our concern is on record.

Mr. Cook made a motion to send an interoffice memo to the Planning Board about the Commission's concern for the tract as a wildlife corridor, seconded by Mr. Kiernan. **Roll call vote: Mr. Cook, Mr. Foor, Mr. Kiernan, Mr. Wells, Ms. Middaugh; yes. Motion carried.**

Ms. Middaugh will email the wildlife corridor map to the secretary to attach to the memo.

Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) Update

Ms. Middaugh: The town contracted with Heyer, Gruel & Associates to update Manchester's NRI. I spoke with the consultant; they are ready to get started. I am asking if we can hold a public hearing to meet with them so we can give them input, as well as the public. I think a tree canopy layer should be included.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Project

Ms. Middaugh: This is on hold. A state bill is being passed promoting more EVs and charging stations

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Rutgers Environmental Stewards Program – classes starting 1/28/20

One class per week in Atlantic County for \$150. There are speakers every week about different topics.

Ms. Middaugh stated it is worth the trip.

Pinelands Short Course at Stockton College – 3/14/20

A day-long event featuring educational presentations that explore the unique history, ecology and culture of the Pinelands. Educators can earn 5 Professional Development Credits. The cost is \$50.

ANJEC Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions 3/7, 3/14 or 3/28/20

Ms. Middaugh and Mr. Cook attended last year. Ms. Middaugh planning to attend again this year.

MEMBER REPORT:

Mr. Wells is noticing more restaurants becoming environmentally sensitive; the behavior seems to be changing.

A question was raised at the last meeting as to when Manchester Planning Board applications go before the County. Mr. Foor found out that applications go to the county when the development sits on a county road.

Ms. Demarest-Paraan participated in the litter cleanup with Save Barnegat Bay. Tons of plastic was discarded. You can make a big difference in small bits – if you see trash, pick it up! During the cleanup Ms. Demarest-Paraan found rare turkey beard plants.

Mr. Cook delivers for the holiday food drive every year. This year the food was sent out in reusable bags instead of paper or plastic.

PUBLIC FORM:

Ms. Catherine Gilbreth (LVW resident) inquired about the wildlife corridor map the Commissioners were discussing. Secretary will post on website.

Regarding the Area in Need of Redevelopment discussed, Ms. Gilbreth suggested referring the lot in question to the Freeholders. Ms. Argenti (resident, Save Barnegat Bay) advised that what is done with the property is at the seller's discretion.

Ms. Gilbreth invited the Commissioners to the Leisure Village West Earth Day Celebration on April 25, 2020. They will have speakers from different organizations. Alternatives to plastics is one of the topics. RSVP required.

Ms. Karen Argenti (resident, Save Barnegat Bay) announced that SBB is collaborating with the Manchester Green Team on a rain garden workshop to be held at town hall – 2 sessions: one for the high school children during the day and one at night for the adults. Date to be determined.

Ms. Argenti mentioned the Manchester Coordinating Council is having a rain garden presentation at Crestwood Village V.

Mr. Mike Hogan, 679 Timberline Lane, expressed concern about the effect of lawn fertilizers on the water table and inquired about the possibility of Manchester getting a grant to put rain gardens in the adult communities to reduce pollution and save the residents money.

Ms. Argenti, (resident, Save Barnegat Bay) commented that there is a group of people at Rutgers that design rain gardens with native plants.

Mr. Wells said it would be up to the individual communities since they are privately owned.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Time: 8:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Frazee
Commission Secretary