

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
September 12, 2011**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Szabo, Mrs. Tracey, Ms. Ramberg, Mr. Nystrom, Ms. Kathy Fobes-Jacoby, Mr. Branagan
MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Klimek, Mrs. Emmetts, Mrs. Fleck

Mr. Branagan called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m. with the statement that this meeting is in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. This was a regularly scheduled meeting of the Stillwater Township Environmental Commission. Regular meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at the Stillwater Township Municipal Building located in Middletown, New Jersey.
The flag was saluted and roll call taken.

Minutes

Mr. Szabo made a **motion** to approve the minutes of August 8, 2011, seconded by Ms. Ramberg.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Ms. Ramberg, yes, Mr. Nystrom, yes, Ms. Fobes-Jacoby, abstain, Mr. Branagan, yes

Bills

Mrs. Tracey made a **motion** to approve the following bills, pending availability of funds, seconded by Mr. Branagan:
Secretary \$ 180.25

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Ms. Ramberg, yes, Mr. Nystrom, yes, Ms. Fobes-Jacoby, yes, Mr. Branagan, yes

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:22 p.m.

Bill Steckowich, 907 Hardwick Road spoke about the storms over the last week and commended the DPW for their efforts. He stated the DPW refilled stone along Hardwick Road several times following wash out. Mr. Steckowich felt the Township did not have an adequate emergency plan in place. He noted there were live wires and a hanging pole on Hardwick Road, and he stated the utility company had no report of the problems even though they had been called in. He felt the DPW does a tremendous job and does not get enough credit.

There being no further members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:26 p.m.

Correspondence:

- 1) NJH article dated August 17, 2011 re: Hardyston Sustainable Jersey Program – Green Initiatives
- 2) SCMUA announcement for E-Waste Collection Event to be held on Saturday, 9/17/11 7 a.m. - 2p.m.

Old Business

Land Conservancy of New Jersey (LC) Update: This item will be added to the next agenda.

Trail Map Update: This item will be added to the next agenda.

Outdoor Woodburning Furnace (OWF) Ordinance Update: The ordinance was introduced and passed at the Township Committee meeting held on September 6, 2011 and will be considered for adoption and public hearing on October 4, 2011.

Committeewoman Straway indicated that Committeeman Gross expressed concern with the restrictive setback requirements included in the ordinance.

Recycling Signs: Mr. Branagan and Mrs. Straway reported the signs have been placed in the appropriate locations and are visible.

Veteran's Memorial Park (VMP) Invasive Species:

Mr. Branagan reported that a letter was sent to the Sheriff's Department by Lisa Chamblings on behalf of the Recreation Commission and it included scheduling a date for invasive removal at VMP. Ms. Chamblings was present and indicated that she received a memo from the Mayor indicating that requests for the Sheriff's Labor Assistance Program (SLAP) are to be handled by the Township Committee. She was not sure if all requests were to be handled in that manner or just the one that she had submitted. Ms. Chamblings did receive approval for two dates, however due to the recent hurricane those dates will be pushed back. She is waiting to hear back from SLAP to reschedule.

Sustainable Jersey Grants:

Mr. Nystrom provided the following to the EC: Information from the NJDEP Office of Planning and Sustainable Community

Mr. Szabo provided the following to the EC: www.FreedomAdvocates.org Understanding Sustainable Development Agenda 21, including a cover sheet with instructions to Google additional information

Mr. Branagan had a nine minute internet presentation entitled, "Sustainable Development for Dummies," but could not provide it due to problems with the internet server. He would email the presentation to Mrs. Wunder to be forwarded to the EC members.

Referencing the material he provided, Mr. Szabo gave a brief overview of the information and stated he felt more research was needed on the subject. Mr. Branagan agreed. Ms. Ramberg could not understand what the issue of concern was and she felt it was nothing more than political alarmists that would cause the EC to miss out on grant funding opportunities. Mr. Szabo agreed the material was political but was concerned about the connection between the UN portion and the local government relationship to that. Ms. Fobes-Jacoby felt strongly that whether or not it was politically motivated, green initiatives should be pursued. Mr. Branagan felt Agenda 21 was a type of Master Plan and he referred to the dots on the map included in the handouts that indicated the limited locations that people would be able to live in. Ms. Ramberg saw no connection between the Sustainable Jersey Program and Agenda 21 and she noted that nine other communities in Sussex County are participating in the program at this time. Mrs. Tracey felt further review was necessary before the EC makes a commitment one way or the other. Mr. Szabo announced that a seminar on the subject (Agenda 21) will be held at the American Legion Post on Grove Street, Hackettstown, NJ on 9/17/11 from 3-5 p.m. at a cost of \$2 per person, sponsored by the Tea Party. He urged the members to attend. Mr. Branagan also felt that more research was necessary prior to a decision being made. Ms. Fobes-Jacoby asked if other green initiatives would be pursued as that is the only reason she joined the EC. Mr. Branagan stated that the EC has been and will continue to pursue green initiatives, and Mr. Szabo stated the EC as a group has positively addressed several environmentally sensitive issues. Following further discussion, the EC agreed to review the information provided and the item will be added to the next agenda.

NJDEP General Permit No. 25 Application, Mandle, Block 1703, Lot 4.02; NJDEP Authorization for General Permit No. 25, Mandle, Block 1703, Lot 4.02

Mr. Szabo described the location of the property, and after further review of the tax map and tax book, it was noted that the actual location was different than Mr. Szabo referenced. The EC reviewed the site plan depicting the septic location dated 6/6/11 drawn by Howard C. Bach. It was noted that the Neldon Brook runs through the property and was involved in the catastrophic flooding in Swartswood following the hurricane and subsequent storm. Mr. Nystrom reviewed the General Permit 25 application process and Mrs. Wunder noted that approval was obtained from NJDEP for the septic repair. Mrs. Straway described the location of the septic as she is familiar with properties in the flooded area. She noted that the septic is located away from the stream and during the flooding the water only washed over the property and did not sit on the property as was the case with other areas. Mrs. Straway stated the Township is currently working with the County and State to rectify the situation in Swartswood. The problem began at Willow Lake at the top of Mt. Benevolence Road, which overflowed, took out the Old Tannery Bridge and then proceeded downhill and blew out the bank of the stream in Swartswood causing the massive flooding. Mrs. Straway reported the NJDEP has provided a 30-day moratorium to allow the problem to be addressed. The Township will continue to work with the County to resolve the matter. Mrs. Straway provided a background history on the Township's pursuit to resolve the flooding problem since 2005 and she noted the State did an aerial survey and felt it was not a life safety issue. Mrs. Fisher, Zoning Officer, was in the process of pursuing grant funding to address the matter and was still working on it just prior to the hurricane and catastrophic flooding. The Township should hear within the week if it will receive an emergency designation. Ms. Ramberg stated with all the different issues, the Township needed to be better prepared. Mrs. Straway stated Stillwater has an Emergency Plan in place and she commended the fire departments for their efforts. She noted that Stillwater was very organized compared to other municipalities. Mr. Szabo referred to the hiring of Jackman Excavating at the last Township Committee meeting for \$6,000 to remove the debris from the stream in Swartswood and stated that a resident spoke at the meeting regarding the North Shore House side of the bridge and whether or not it would be addressed as restoration of only one side would be a waste of time. Mrs. Straway stated that immediate action was needed for the breached portion of the stream and the Township would proceed to the other side of the road after addressing the immediate problem first.

Mr. Szabo and Mr. Branagan will visit the site and Mrs. Straway will accompany them as she is familiar with flooding and the properties in that area.

Beaver Dam: Referencing the beaver dam problem at Plymouth Lake, Mrs. Straway reported on a beaver dam located on Owassa Road which is causing flooding to the neighboring properties. A property owner has applied to Fish and Wildlife to have the beavers trapped.

New Business

Mr. Szabo briefly reviewed the following NJH articles dated 9/12/11:

- 1) "New Challenges to Gas Drilling"
- 2) "In Fracking's Wake: Dirty Water"

Mr. Szabo stated Pennsylvania is in the process of passing regulations concerning fracking.

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 8:40 p.m.

Bill Steckowich, 907 Hardwick Road expressed the following concerns:

- One police vehicle remains on the DPW property.
 - A junk car is located at the rear of the Recycling Center.
 - Two old dumpsters are located on the Recycling Center property.
 - At least one dozen old propane tanks are located on the Recycling Center property and he was not sure if they are empty or not.
 - There are old truck trailers at the back of the Recycling Center, possibly with hazardous contents.
- He suggested cleaning up the Recycling Center property. Mr. Branagan will follow up on the matter and visit the site and he suggested Mr. Steckowich bring the items of concern to the attention of the Township Committee. Mrs. Straway was not sure but thought the junk car at the Recycling Center is used for fire and rescue drills.

There being no further members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed 8:44 p.m.

Planning Board Report:

Mr. Branagan reported the August Planning Board meeting was cancelled.

Township Liaison Report: Committeewoman Straway provided her report earlier in the meeting.

October EC Meeting Date: Mr. Nystrom stated that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 13, 2011 due to the Columbus Day holiday. Mrs. Wunder would confirm that adequate notice was provided for that date or she would provide it.

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Szabo made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Tracey. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Wunder, Secretary

Jack Branagan, Chairperson

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 13, 2011 (due to the Columbus Day holiday)

*The EC meeting for October was changed to Monday, October 17, 2011 at 7 p.m.