

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

November 13, 2023

Regular Meeting

In-Person/Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Coriston, Mrs. Emmetts, Dr. Mattes, Mr. Szabo, Mrs. Tracey, Ms. Wills, Mr. Dvorsky, Mr. Branagan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mrs. Tsadilas

Chairperson Branagan called the meeting to order at 7:00 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

Mrs. Tracey made a **motion** to approve the minutes of 10/12/23, seconded by Mr. Szabo.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Coriston, abstain, Mrs. Emmetts, abstain, Dr. Mattes, abstain, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes, Mr. Branagan, yes

Bills

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to approve the following bill, pending availability of funds, seconded by Mr. Szabo:

Secretary: \$255.00

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Coriston, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Dr. Mattes, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Branagan, yes

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:07 p.m.

There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:07 p.m.

Correspondence:

-Emailed 10/21/23: SC Agriculture Development Board Minutes – 9/18/23

-Emailed 10/30/23: Request to add “The Ultimate Guide on Water Conservation,” link to the EC webpage – Ms. Coriston felt this was a random email and the EC discussed updating their webpage in the near future.

-Resignation of Maureen Tsadilas effective 11/30/23 – Emily Wills (Alternate #1 to fill position): *Mrs. Emmetts made a motion to accept the resignation of Maureen Tsadilas with regret, seconded by Mr. Branagan.*

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Coriston, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Dr. Mattes, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Branagan, yes

Ms. Coriston suggested Elaine Makarevich to replace Mrs. Tsadilas and the EC agreed.

Old Business

TREX Program Update:

Ms. Coriston reported the program goal has been increased to 1,000 pounds. The official collection began on November 1st; however, a good amount of film was collected over the summer and has been stored by Mayor Chamings and Ms. Coriston. Drop-off day will be Thursday, students will sort and weigh the collection and parent volunteers will take it to Weis. The second receptacle will be placed at the Recycling Center beginning the weekend of November 18th. The town website will be updated with current information.

Ms. Coriston will be serving on the school Green Team as a community member for Sustainable Jersey.

Ms. Coriston spoke with Laura Ciccolella, STEM teacher, about programming around Mr. Branagan’s environmental book and she has requested a copy of the book which will be provided.

Stream Water Study Subcommittee: No report.

Fishing Line Collection:

All lines are to be cleaned of litter/leaves, hooks and lead sinkers. Lead sinkers are to be provided at the meeting for recycling.

New Business

Site Survey: Mr. Branagan/Mr. Szabo

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to accept the following site survey, seconded by Ms. Coriston:

Block 203, Lot 30 – Palmetto Trail

Mr. Branagan and Mr. Szabo noted the property was not marked and was difficult to locate. They reviewed the site survey form, noting a stream drains directly through the center of the property and the lot is extremely undersized. They documented their concerns and felt it was difficult to recommend the application be approved due to the size and environmental issues.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Coriston, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Dr. Mattes, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Ms Wills, yes, Mr. Branagan, yes

Volunteer/Member Recognition:

- Mr. Szabo/Mr. Branagan for conducting the site survey on the Palmetto Trail property.
- Ms. Coriston for her work on the TREX program and Sustainable Jersey Green Team
- Mrs. Emmetts for drafting the 2023 EC Annual Report
- Mrs. Tsadilas for all her work during her short time on the EC.

Endangered/Threatened Species Sightings: None noted.

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:33 p.m.

There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:33 p.m.

Planning Board (PB) Liaison Report: Ms. Wills – October 2023

- Bob Lippencott was appointed to the board.
- AF-EJF LLC was approved for completeness. Prior approval was granted for a subdivision however the applicant would now like to consolidate the lots to be acquired by the Nature Conservancy. Neighbors were present and in favor of the application.

Township Liaison Report: Mayor Chammings

- Dave Manser will be replacing Paul Barta on the Township Committee beginning November 21, 2023.
- Budget review will begin.
- Stormwater training will need to be completed. Mrs. Wunder will resend the link to the EC.
- New DPW employee will begin in December.
- Diamond Tower provided a presentation (cell tower @ Community Center) proposing a one-time buyout as opposed to leasing. Ms. Chammings asked for a flag to be placed on the tower; no firm answer was provided.
- The Deputy Clerk and receptionist are working on updating the township website.
- Mrs. Tsadilas is now active in the CERT program and has completed her training. Ms. Chammings wished her well.
- Community Center use fees will be discussed in 2024.
- Employees with any job requests were asked to submit letters to the CFO for the budget meeting in December.

Mr. Szabo noted that many people have complained about dilapidated properties in the township, and he asked if there were rules or regulations regarding unmaintained properties. Mrs. Wunder will email a copy of the Property Maintenance Code to Mr. Szabo. Mrs. Emmetts noted that addressing these properties was a priority last year. Ms. Chammings stated the township is still working on 992 Fairview Lake Road and a property on Route 521. Numerous letters and emails have been sent by the Zoning Officer. Abandoned/vacant fees cannot be earmarked for cleaning up or maintaining such properties and a Supreme Court case has stalled the in-rem foreclosures.

Mr. Dvorsky questioned if 992 Fairview Lake Road was considered a hazard. Ms. Chammings stated the township has done everything they can do at this point. ADR Environmental has been at the property and the

township has been in contact with the State seeking grant funding. There is a \$60,000 lien against the property by the NJDEP and they will not waive the fine until the property is cleaned. It is a catch-22 scenario. The building has to be demolished and no grant funding will be provided until ADR Environmental certifies the property is clean. The town has no idea if the material resulting from the demolition is contaminated and funding is needed to address that issue as well. Mr. Szabo found the matter very frustrating.

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Coriston at 7:55 p.m. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Wunder, Secretary