

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
May 14, 2012**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Klimek, Mrs. Tracey

Mr. 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

Mr. Szabo made a **motion** to approve the minutes of April 9, 2012, seconded by Mrs. Emmetts.

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

Bills

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to approve the following bill, pending availability of funds, seconded by Ms. Ramberg.
Secretary: \$ 180.25

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

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:10 p.m.

There being no public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:10 p.m.

Correspondence: Land Conservancy of New Jersey (LC) – dated May 10, 2012

Mr. Branagan reported that a letter was received from the LC including three options: 1)Contract Agreement - \$8,000; 2)Completion of the Open Space Map - \$1,500; 3)Completion of the Open Space Brochure - \$500.

Following a brief discussion, Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to forward a letter to the Township Committee asking them to provide authorization to the Land Conservancy to complete two projects: 1)Open Space Map \$1,500; 2)Open Space Brochure \$500, seconded by Mr. Szabo.

Ms. Fobes-Jacoby noted that both projects were in progress and are a value to the community.

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

Old Business

Trails: No report. This item will be added to the next agenda.

No Littering Signs/No Idling Signs: Mr. Branagan reported that he had been in contact with Mrs. Memmelaar, Superintendent, Stillwater School, regarding a “No Idling” poster contest. Mrs. Memmelaar liked the idea and agreed to discuss the possibility with the art teacher. The winning signs will be professionally reproduced and may be eligible for funding through the Clean Communities (CC) Grant. Ms. Chamings informed the EC the Township received \$11,717.19 in CC grant funding for 2012. “No Littering” signs may have to be purchased in the future to replace missing or damaged signs and they may also fall under the CC grant. The EC agreed to send a memo to the CC liaison, Timmy Fisher, to inquire if funding would be available for both signs and if purchasing of the signs would meet the guidelines of the grant. Ms. Chamings would report on the school poster contest and address the missing no littering signs to the Township Committee.

Tree Cutting Ordinance: Mr. Branagan

Mr. Branagan stated the current ordinance basically only addresses commercial tree cutting, not residential. Following review of tree ordinances from other municipalities, Mr. Branagan felt a section of the Fredon tree ordinance could supplement our ordinance and he would contact the Zoning Officer to discuss further as she currently has no ordinance support when trying to enforce clear cutting issues on residential properties. Mr. Branagan would provide a report at the next EC meeting.

Mr. Szabo agreed that the Stillwater tree ordinance focuses on commercial activity and noted it appears that on property less than three acres, cutting is permitted. He felt dead trees and trimming should also be addressed in the ordinance. Ms. Ramberg noted the Fire Warden does not want trees located within a certain distance of structures. Mr. Nystrom noted permits are required in wetland and buffer areas, however in uplands there are no requirements, and in watersheds, one must abide by the Best Management Practices Manual. Ms. Chamblings added that soil erosion issues caused by tree cutting can also be addressed through the Sussex County Soil Conservation District. The EC agreed clear cutting in residential areas was an issue that needed to be addressed in the ordinance.

Sustainable Jersey Update: Ms. Fobes-Jacoby reported she had a Sustainable Jersey information display during Clean Up Day at the Recycling Center. She offered surveys to participants and the results indicated residents would like to see focus placed on the following: municipal carbon footprint, food, and natural resources. Mr. Branagan has been in contact with an individual interested in starting a municipal orchard. Mr. Branagan will speak with the Planning Board on the requirements to do so and he will ask the individual to attend an EC meeting in the future to discuss the matter further. The EC agreed to pursue the PSE&G grant to use toward a compost machine to be used at the school. The EC expressed interest in purchasing the “Rocket” composting machine if the grant is awarded. The “Rocket” has a high volume capacity and 14-day turnaround period. Mrs. Emmetts and Ms. Fobes-Jacoby will work together on the grant application and Ms. Ramberg offered to help when she is available.

Mrs. Emmetts would also like to see a municipal orchard developed, possibly for next year. Mr. Branagan would review the list of township owned properties to see if any would be suitable for the project.

Mr. Szabo provided a list of 14 questions that he felt should be considered before endorsing the Sustainable Jersey Program. The questions will be provided to a State representative of Sustainable Jersey/NJDEP to review and provide answers. He expressed concern that no one has responded from Sustainable Jersey to provide a presentation on the program for the EC.

New Business

Veteran’s Memorial Park: Installation of a playground

Mr. Branagan, Mr. Nystrom and Ms. Chamblings attended a meeting held to discuss installation of a playground at VMP. The playground will be located in the area to the right after you cross over the bridge. Funding will be obtained through donations and fundraising. The equipment will not be brightly colored so as not to clash with the park surroundings.

Zoning Board of Adjustment: Site Survey Form Acceptance - Lee, Block 1501, Lot 14.01, Pole Barn

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to accept the site survey, seconded by Ms. Fobes-Jacoby. Mr. Szabo noted a letter was submitted by Wade Wander, Wander Ecological Consultants, indicating there were no concerns.

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

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 8:13 p.m.

Amy Schwartz, 915 Duck Pond Road asked if the compost machine would be able to process meat or will items have to be separated. Ms. Chamblings indicated the “Rocket” can consume meat and eggs, as well as other proteins.

Bill Steckowich, 907 Hardwick Road felt collection and storage of food prior to composting may be an issue with respect to bears, rats, etc. Mr. Branagan stated that would be taken into consideration, noting he was unsure if the machine would run continuously.

Abby Schwartz, 915 Duck Pond Road indicated the dumpster at the school is enclosed by fencing to protect against animals.

Mr. Steckowich agreed idling is an issue at the bank, the three post offices and the Recycling Center, but he felt preventing it could be a problem. The EC indicated the signs were for awareness purposes only and the violation is only enforced by the State.

Mr. Steckowich referred to mushrooms that grew on his property resulting from Oak tree wood chips. He suggested the DPW use such wood chips to grow

There being no further members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 8:25 p.m.

Swartwood Lake – Lotus: Mr. Szabo discussed an issue the Swartwood Lake Watershed Association is currently facing with the Lotus plant which is increasingly invading the lake and he also spoke about another invasive the Water Chestnut which is affecting Musconetcong Lake. Approval has been received for treatment of the Lotus at the lake using an herbicide, with the exception of a small area of the lake that is not permitted to be treated.

Mr. Szabo discussed the new licensing requirement for using fertilizer, which Ms. Ramberg noted maybe necessary for homeland security reasons.

Mr. Szabo announced the Paradise Fishing Club will hold a contest on Saturday, Memorial Day weekend for trout and walleye. He noted the club has stocked 3,000 trout in the lake between 2.5 and 10 pounds.

Amphibian Crossing: Mr. Branagan emailed the EC members a video of an amphibian crossing taking place.

Planning Board Liaison Report:

Mr. Branagan was unable to attend the last PB meeting. Ms. Chamblings reported the following:
The PB is continuing work on the Master Plan, government-owned property ordinance, and solar energy ordinance.

Township Liaison Report: Committeewoman Chamblings

Ms. Chamblings reported the following:

- The EC members may want to attend a Planning Board meeting (PB) for review of the Master Plan.
- Block 3805, Lot 4.01: Township Committee preliminary approval is needed for the farmland preservation application to move forward at the County level. This item will be placed on the 5/15/12 TC agenda.
- Mayor Scott attended a Pilot Funding discussion and the Township Committee passed a resolution in support of maintaining the program. A copy will be provided to the EC.
- Ms. Chamblings attended a Water Quality Management meeting where the Paulinskill River was discussed with reference to the study conducted by Nathaniel Sadjak. Also discussed was a truck washing facility in Sparta and modifications near Wantage.
- Ms. Ramberg discussed the beaver dam issue near Crater Lake and the possible negative effects on Trout Brook and water quality. Mr. Szabo noted if the beaver problem is affecting local septic systems, trapping will be done immediately as it is a health and safety concern.
- Stillwater Day will be held on 6/16/12 at Veteran's Memorial Park
- A copy of the Sussex County Skylands Trail Map was distributed to the EC members. Ms. Chamblings recommended having Mr. Klimek mark potential trail connections as funding is available through the County and will be focused on this year.
- PSE&G is also offering \$51 million for mitigation and the Resolution is available on the County website, Sussex County Open Space link.
- Ms. Chamblings attended a presentation regarding General Swartout which was very interesting.

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m., seconded by Mr. Szabo. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Wunder, Secretary

Jack Branagan, Chairperson