

**TEWKSBURY TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES
December 10, 2018**

The Tewksbury Township Environmental Commission met at a regular meeting on the above date in the Municipal Meeting Hall, 60 Water Street, Mountainville, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m., roll call taken and a quorum established.

Present: Chris Teasdale, Chairman, Mario Colitti, Bruce Mackie, Glenn Likus, Mary Ace, Geoffrey Connor, Matt Grobert and Hope Kaufman, Alt. #1

Absent: Michael Schlaefel, Alt. #2.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Chris Teasdale announced that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided by posting a copy thereof on the Municipal Building bulletin board, mailing a copy to the Hunterdon Review and the Hunterdon County Democrat, and filing with the municipal clerk, all on January 25, 2018.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those present stood and pledged allegiance to the American flag.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Debra Dillon was present to provide an update on the ongoing stormwater issue. She met with the Deputy Mayor, Township Engineer and Township Administrator last week and believes that there is a better understanding of the issue and that a large amount of the stormwater needs to be subtracted from her area; the question remains how the issue will be resolved. She expressed concern that there is still a focus on traditional engineering and that the focus should be on how to slow and filter the water. A meeting is to be scheduled in January with Hunterdon County to discuss drainage along the County roadway. She went on to say that she recommended to the Township Committee and Land Use Board that another set of eyes look at the issue, such as an engineer that is familiar with green infrastructure.

Mrs. Dillon asked the Commission if they could participate in the review of tree cutting and driveway permits so environmental ramifications are considered. She noted that both permits are currently reviewed without any consideration of the impact on stormwater. Mr. Teasdale explained that all applications to the Land Use Board are forwarded to the Environmental Commission for review and comment; the Land Use Board requires dry wells and other measures when approving applications. He noted that the Commission does not have authority over other applications. Mrs. Dillon opined that those applications that don't require Land Use Board approval are slipping through the cracks and should be reviewed. Mr. Teasdale explained that the Township Committee would have to amend the driveway and tree ordinances to require Environmental Commission review as part of the approval process. Mrs. Dillon opined that property owners are not

being required to adhere to the ordinances, one (1) in particular being the Platt driveway; the Township is requiring it to be paved however no stormwater measures are proposed. When asked why the driveway in question has not been paved, Mrs. Dillon explained that the project started in 2014 and is still ongoing. When asked by Mr. Teasdale if the driveway in question is across the street from her property, Mrs. Dillon responded in the positive and noted that it is a shared driveway between the Platt family and the Township. When asked by Mr. Mackie if there is paperwork on file regarding the driveway, Mrs. Dillon noted that she reviewed the file in 2014 and she did not see any stormwater consideration in the design on file. Mrs. Dillon noted that she made a request to the Land Use Board that the Environmental Commission review the Platt driveway application. She opined that the Township has not engaged the right people to review the project; the Township Engineer will just approve the paving. Mr. Mackie encouraged Mrs. Dillon to bring her concerns about paving the Platt driveway to the attention of those that she's meeting with in January. Mr. Teasdale offered to write a letter to the Township Committee with a copy to the Land Use Board expressing the Commission's belief that the plans for paving the Platt driveway should be presented to the Land Use Board and Environmental Commission for review and comment. When asked by Mr. Likus the status of the work on the other side of the road, Mrs. Dillon explained that the NJ Conservation Foundation wrote a letter to the Township indicating that, based on their investigation, the site is functioning as it should and is not causing the flooding. She noted that the flooding is from the tremendous volume of stormwater. When asked by Mrs. Dillon if the Parks Committee would be interested in turning the Oldwick Park into a natural park that would help absorb some of the water, Mrs. Kaufman opined that it was a conversation to have at a Parks Committee meeting. Mr. Teasdale opined that work at the Oldwick Park would likely only happen through grant opportunities and that the Commission would support a grant application furthering that goal. Mrs. Kaufman provided Mrs. Dillon with some names of green infrastructure professionals such as Amy Greene. Mrs. Ace discussed various other flooding issues in Oldwick and opined that grant money should be sought to help with the issue.

There being no additional public comments, Mr. Teasdale closed the public participation portion of the meeting

MINUTES

- September 10, 2018

The minutes of September 10, 2018 were approved by motion of Ms. Ace and seconded by Mr. Grobert. All were in favor. Mr. Mackie, Mrs. Kaufman and Mr. Likus abstained.

- October 15, 2018

The minutes of October 15, 2018 were approved by motion of Mr. Colitti and seconded by Mr. Likus. All were in favor. Mr. Grobert abstained.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Grobert made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the following items of correspondence. Mr. Mackie seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- a) A postcard from Raritan Headwaters regarding the 15th Annual State of Our Watershed Conference & Data Reveal on December 1, 2018.
- b) A letter dated November 30, 2018 from Shana Goodchild re: Appl. No. 18-08, Block 39, Lot 18, Certification of Pre-existing Non-conforming Use and Impervious Coverage Variance.
- c) A letter dated November 30, 2018 from Shana Goodchild re: Appl. No. 18-11, Block 6.04, Lot 12, Impervious Coverage Variance.

Ms. Ace recused herself from the discussion. The Commission reviewed and discussed item b) above for an impervious coverage variance and certificate of pre-existing, non-conforming use. It was the consensus of the Commission that a condition of any approval should be the requirement of drywells. Mr. Teasdale offered to draft a letter with the recommendation of dry wells and the need for a perc test.

Ms. Ace returned to the meeting at this time.

The Commission reviewed and discussed item c) above for an addition to the existing horse barn and indoor riding arena. The Commission opined that the applicant has requested a significant increase on a property that has already received a variance for impervious coverage under a prior owner. The Commission also opined that the number of horses is excessive. The general consensus was that it is an overuse of the property. Mr. Colitti offered to draft a letter with a strong recommendation from the Commission regarding the excessive coverage, number of horses and intensity of the use of the property.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

➤ Updates – Land Use Board

Mr. Mackie noted that recent variance applications have been the result of zoning violations discovered when property owners have applied for generator permits.

Mr. Mackie reported on the informal presentation by the Tewksbury Land Trust regarding the possible purchase of land along Route 517 south of the municipal office to connect the trail network.

➤ Pascale Pond – Water Chestnuts

There was nothing new to report on the water chestnut issue. Mr. Grobert noted that a friend of his caught several 4 lb. channel catfish in the pond.

➤ 2019 Budget

The Commission noted the budget will remain flat for 2019.

Mr. Connor spoke about his attendance at the watershed conference on December 1st and that Professor Van Abs from Rutgers reported that in 50 years New Jersey will have the

same climate that Georgia has today.

Mrs. Kaufman noted that the Parks Committee was approached by a group to do something for Earth Day and the Committee has chosen to do something at Whittemore. Mr. Teasdale suggested that adult volunteers provide maintenance in the small grove of trees at Whittemore. He noted that it is a beautiful ecosystem that could use some care. Mrs. Kaufman noted that the Parks Committee purchased shovels, gloves, tools, etc. that are available to any Township resident and encouraged others to participate in the day. She noted that the Parks Committee is also partnering with the NJ Conservation Foundation for a New Years hike after the first of year.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mrs. Kaufman made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Mr. Grobert seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Shana L. Goodchild
Land Use Administrator