

**Mendham Township Environmental Commission
Minutes March 20, 2017**

Attending: Acting Chair Jamie Kinsel
Brian Boden, Janet DeMeo, Ralph Rhodes, Susan Schmerler

Jamie distributed the agenda and agreed to take the minutes. Minutes for the February, 2017 meeting were accepted. These minutes are posted on the Township Hall bulletin board and Township website.

Members presented Sarah Dean Link with the Township's award for her 26 years of public service on March 4th.

Treasurer's Report: The Twp. CFO advises there is a further \$120 available to the EC in their Grant Trust account.

Open Space: Jamie, Susan and John Mallon attended the Recreation Commission's meeting led by Township Committee members on February 24th. The focus was on active recreation with Ralston Playground repairs and a request from Twin Boro Bears football to permanently use lighted Mosle fields dominating the discussion. This Commission reminded the Township Committee of the accepted Mosle 5-Year Plan which outlines the trails to be cleared through the wooded portion of the property avoiding steep slopes and considering conservation easements in place.

Planning Board, Board of Adj & TRC: Jamie will attend a TRC meeting later this month to review a submitted application to adjust a lot line between 2 Stoney Hill and Brookside Community Church's Ward Drive. The Commission reviewed the plans and noted no environmental issues requiring comment. Planning Board approval for a 2016 minor subdivision of Block 130 – Lot 8, Tax Map Sheet No. 2, 5 Buddy Lane required conservation easement deeds to be filed with the Township. Susan will check to see that these are included in our files.

Recycling: Janet DeMeo reported on the January and February presentations she attended in Morristown. A very interesting hands-on quiz on what should/should not be put into recycling was given to EC members. The amount of recycling funds given to the Township is reduced when inappropriate materials have to be pulled back out. Janet plans to give her presentation to the Washington Valley Association. The Commission will think of the best way to bring the material to our residents. The Winter 2017 ANJEC Report included an article on the Styrofoam recycling event held jointly last December with the Borough's EC.

NJ Freshwater Wetland Protection Program: Rich Cotter was finally copied on the plans for a general permit #8 application. The proposed 750 SF addition at 60 Lowery Lane will result in encroachment into the 150 foot wetlands buffer zone. No comment to be submitted.

EC Documents: Ralph plans to inventory and catalog the EC documents stored at India Brook Park. Then we will work on a plan for letting residents know what is available and a method for how materials can be accessed and returned.

Eagle Scout Projects: Ralph has turned the lead over to Janet. She has leader contacts for the Boy and Girl Scouts, a history on past projects and some ideas for potential future projects.

Assessing Forest Health in NJ: Jamie, Brian Boden and Debbi Appel attended this presentation in Harding Twp. on March 8th. Brian Hays, Chair of the Tree Preservation Committee attended as well. Brian Boden summarized the Raritan Valley Community College study which documented the wide ranging detrimental effect on the ecosystem resulting from deer overpopulation. The GSWA may invite local groups to tour their deer fenced natural area in Harding Twp. to see the difference. Harding Twp. intends to use Open Space Funds to contract with a forester to inventory mature ash trees along roadsides and well used trail areas. This inventory will be the basis for further discussion about treating the trees to protect them from the Emerald Ash Borer vs taking them down when they are dead. April-May is the treatment window and treatment funds would also appropriately come out of Open Space funds.

Spring Well Testing: Teri is working with Mara Tippet at RHA. Water sample kits can be purchased at Town Hall Saturday April 1st and returned Monday April 3rd. Information is on the Township website and social media outlets including the Mayor's new "Greeting from Town Hall" newsletter. Flyers have been posted and Mendham TV is running a slide. Promotion handouts for the stream clean up and tree seedling events will be available along with trail maps for Dismal Harmony and IBP/Buttermilk Falls. Educational materials for the Emerald Ash Borer will be given out as well.

2017 Stream Clean Up: Rich Cotter reports the \$300 RHA participation fee was paid out of Township Clean Communities funds. The meeting location for the Earth Day April 22nd event will be at the Town Hall parking lot. Volunteers will register, receive supplies and be assigned a litter clean-up location near the Raritan headwaters. Information is on the Township website and social media outlets. The event is on NJ DEP's Earth Day calendar as well.

2017 NJ Tree Recovery Campaign: This campaign helps communities replace trees destroyed by Superstorm Sandy. Jamie requested 500 native bare root seedlings this year. These free seedlings will be handed out in bundles of five on a first come, first served basis on April 29th from 10 AM – noon in the Town Hall parking lot along with planting instructions. Information is on the Township website and posted on social media outlets. The event is on NJ DEP's Earth Day Calendar. Cynthia Dour, a MTMS teacher, leads a group of students on a weekly trip to Dismal Harmony where they work on controlling Oriental Bittersweet and have noticed the absence of young native trees. They are interested in planting seedlings there.

Next meeting: April 17, 2017 7:30 PM

April EC events:

Well Water Testing – pick up test materials **April 1**, drop off samples **April 3** Town Hall

Stream Clean Up – Earth Day April 22 – meet at Town Hall parking lot (Teri)

Tree Seedling Give Away - April 29 Town Hall (Jamie)

Future 2017 EC events:

National Trails Day at Mendham Twp. Parks - June 3rd (Teri)

Styrofoam Recycling in December (Rich)

India Park tree planting – Spring (John M)