

**Mendham Township Environmental Commission  
Minutes January 18, 2016**

**Attending:** Chair Rich Cotter  
Teri Cosentino, Jamie Kinsel, John Mallon, Ralph Rhodes, Susan Schmerler

Rich distributed the agenda. Jamie agreed to take the minutes. Minutes for the November 2015 meeting were accepted; there was no December meeting. Rich reviewed the Township Committee recent appointments and welcomed John Mallon to the Commission. John and Teri were copied with ANJEC's resource paper on Environmental Commissions in NJ and encouraged to attend one of the ANJEC seminars for new Commissioners being held in March.

Laurie Felber, Chair of the Mendham Borough Environmental Commission, joined the meeting to discuss possible joint ventures including:

1. 2016 E-Recycling Event. We have co-hosted this in May for many years and it is very popular with residents with a significant amount collected. In the past the vendors collecting the waste made their profit from the materials. Prices are down and for the first time all vendors contacted will now charge for the collection. Laurie will continue to research the most cost effective vendor, but the Twp. EC will need to determine a source for our share of the cost. It was noted that the Twp. just received \$3,800 through a State DEP recycling grant. The press release states: **"The grant program is designed to reward local governments for good performance and to enhance recycling efforts across the state, according to the DEP. Each award is based on materials collected and recycled and can be used in various ways to improved recycling results, such as producing educational materials and paying salaries for recycling coordinators."** This would seem to be a source of funds for this event as it improves recycling results.
2. Laurie floated the idea of a joint Three River Festival (Raritan, Whippany, and Passaic). A likely central gathering spot would be at the Borough mud hole. Schools, Scouts would be contacted to solicit interest. This led to discussion of:
3. April 16<sup>th</sup> is the date set for Raritan Headwaters Association's Clean Up Day. The Borough already plans to participate. Rich will see if our donation of \$300 to RHA can come out of Twp. designated clean communities funds so we can participate as well. Teri suggests the Combs Hollow area around India Brook is badly in need of litter collection.

**Schiff Nature Preserve:** Ralph reported on Schiff's deer management and praised their trail maintenance.

**Planning Board, Board of Adj & TRC:** Jamie reported that the Planning Board will meet this month to vote on a resolution approving the Hillandale application for age restricted housing. EC comments requested by the Board of Adjustment for the Gentile front yard tennis court variance were submitted. No TRC meeting is scheduled for January.

**NJ Freshwater Wetland Protection Program:** Ralph received one notice for a septic replacement at 186 South Road.

**Open Space:** John Mallon volunteered to join Ralph and John Schmerler in their efforts to maintain trails at open space properties. Rich led a discussion about how trails are currently maintained in the Twp. and asked for thoughts on improvement. Trail stewards, a day to meet and then head out to work on trails

were ideas mentioned. Ralph & Rich plan to investigate the Buck Hill property using the gated entrance along Tempe Wick. Ralph is working with a Scout on a potential Eagle Scout project in Meadowood.

**Twp. Deer Management:** John Mallon gave an update to the Commission on the status of deer management in the Twp. Over 2,000 deer have been culled over the 15 years the program has been in effect. Nature has also contributed to the decline in population with disease a factor in 2007 and 2011. Current wildlife complaints involve coyote and bear. John stressed the positive of leaving some open space in its natural state for wildlife to inhabit without having to interact with people and/or pets.

**Monitoring Conservation Easements:** Susan is working with Sarah Dean to re-establish EC notification to new homeowners who purchase properties with easements on their property.

**2016 ANJEC Grants for Open Space Stewardship:** Teri will look into the \$1,500 grant opportunities (applications due April 1st). Possible projects include the invasive issue raised by the Moores on Kennaday (Oriental Photinia) and/or updated information on Twp. trails.

**Re-establishment of Conservation Fund:** The Twp. Committee has the second reading and public hearing on Ordinance 2016-2 scheduled for their February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. This ordinance “provides funds for various capital improvements by the Environmental Commission and appropriates \$16,000 therefore”.

**Twp. Open Space Committee:** This committee is being re-activated and plans to meet on an as needed basis, probably four times a year. The EC is allowed representation if a member is interested. Jamie has agreed to be the Planning Board’s representative.

**EC Records:** Both Sarah Dean and Ralph are going through records they have accumulated over the years. Conservation Easement files are in a cabinet in the back of the Twp. meeting room. Other file cabinets were moved to India Brook Park. Rich will find out how these are accessed so he, Jamie & Susan can inventory what is in these cabinets.

**NJ Open Space Bills A4197/S2769:** Jamie reported that Governor Christie needs to sign the bills to implement the disbursement of voter approved open space funds that are accruing after the passage of Public Question 2 in November of 2014. With bipartisan support both the NJ Assembly and Senate have passed these bills but the Governor needs to sign them into law. Phone calls or emails to the Governor are encouraged by ANJEC.

**Next meeting: February 15, 2016**