

**Mendham Township Environmental Commission
Minutes February 29, 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 January 2016 meeting were accepted. Township resident Debbi Appel attended the meeting.

Schiff Nature Preserve: Ralph reported on Schiff's ongoing programs.

Planning Board, Board of Adj & TRC: Jamie reported that the Planning Board met to review a proposed ordinance on numbers of allowed dogs. The February TRC reviewed a concept plan for a subdivision at 10 Old Brookside Road. The EC noted not one of the proposed lots was variance free. The Commission reviewed two applications to the Board of Adjustment for comments. The Levitan Lane project has a 48" heritage tree that should be protected. There were no comments on the Horizon Drive built in barbeque.

NJ Freshwater Wetland Protection Program: Ralph had no notices.

Open Space: Ralph, Rich and John Mallon plan to investigate the Buck Hill property using the gated entrance along Tempe Wick. Ralph gave some ideas to a Troop 150 Scout on a potential Eagle Scout project but has not heard back from him. Ralph reported that Jon Wagar agreed to update the Hike Mendham website when provided with the current information.

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 looked into the \$1,500 grant opportunities (applications due April 1st). She distributed a comprehensive recycling information brochure as an example of a grant project to submit for funds next year. Jamie will look into the Township's current recycling coordinator.

2016 Finances: The Twp. Committee had the second reading and public hearing on Ordinance 2016-2 at their February 1st meeting. This ordinance passed and "provides funds for various capital improvements by the Environmental Commission and appropriates \$16,000 therefore". Rich met with Karen Fornaro, the Twp. Finance Officer, who explained this fund is appropriate for capital projects with a 5-year life. Clean Community Funds will be the source for the requested \$300 for RHA support in 2016. Ralph will submit a 2016 grant application to Somerset Hills Garden Club. Funds are still unspent from the 2015 grant received.

Twp. Open Space Committee: This committee is being re-activated and plans to meet on an as needed basis, probably four times a year. Brian Boden agreed to represent the EC. Jamie previously agreed to be the Planning Board's representative.

EC Records: Conservation Easement files are in a cabinet in the back of the Twp. meeting room. Jamie & Rich went through the EC file cabinet that was moved to India Brook Park. These files seem to stop at around 2007.

2015 Annual Report: Ralph agreed to draft the 2015 EC Annual Report.

2016 Electronic Recycling: Rich and Laurie Felber, Mendham Borough EC Chair, agreed that this popular joint event will not be possible this year. In the past there was no charge from the vendor for collecting and hauling away the e-waste. This year substantial sums would be charged. The EC has posted Morris County waste collection information on the Township website and will look into other collection possibilities for residents at a much lower cost. A possible source of funds would be the \$3,800 the Township received for recycling which should be used to promote and improve future efforts.

Three Rivers Festival: Teri reported that this joint event with the Mendham Borough EC will be held on Saturday, April 16th. The event begins at 9 AM at the Borough Mud Hole. Volunteers split off at 10 to do stream/litter clean-up. The Township site is along Combs Hollow into Buttermilk Falls. RHA publicizes and has a website sign up for the event. www.RaritanHeadwaters.org/StreamCleanUp

2016 NJ Tree Recovery Campaign: The Twp. joined 141 municipalities participating in the 2016 campaign. The program is sponsored by NJ DEP State Forestry Services. Free native bare root seedlings together with planting directions will be given away to residents in an effort to replant the trees lost in the storm events over the last several years. The Twp. DPW will pick up our 250 trees on Friday, May 6. These will need to be divided into groups of five and distributed to the first 50 families on Saturday, May 7 in the Town Hall parking lot from 10 AM – 12 noon. Outreach materials and sample press releases are provided. Our Twp. Administrator, Deborah Bonanno, facilitated the application and Dave Read at DPW was notified of all details. Publicity efforts will be directed to the local newspaper, library, post office, elementary schools, Scouts, Schiff, Township website and Tree Committee.

Next meeting: March 21, 2016