

Mendham Township Environmental Commission Minutes April 18, 2016

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

The meeting opened with a presentation from Raritan Headwaters Association. Kristi MacDonald, Director of Science, and Lauren Theis, Director of Education, presented the background of this conservation organization and information on programs available to the schools and community in Mendham Township. RHA currently tests and reports to NJDEP on water quality at three stream sites in the Boro/Twp. A fourth site will be added this coming year. Teri will reach out to the Twp. schools to let them know about the RiverFest (1-3 hrs. of activity stations brought to school, \$500 up to 200 kids) and WaterWays (\$150 per class covers two days of classroom science then field work) programs available in the schools. The Commission was interested in the Community Well Testing program given the number of private wells in the township and in light of the recent publicity about lead in drinking water.

<https://www.raritanheadwaters.org/home/learn/youth-programs/programs-for-school-groups/waterways-stewardship-project/>

<https://www.raritanheadwaters.org/protect/well-testing/community-well-testing/>

Rich distributed the agenda and Jamie agreed to take the minutes. Minutes for the March 2016 meeting were accepted.

Planning Board, Board of Adj & TRC: Jamie reported that the April Planning Board and TRC meetings were cancelled. No Board of Adjustment applications were received for comment.

NJ Freshwater Wetland Protection Program: none

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

2016 Finances: The EC received \$300 from the 2016 Somerset Hills Garden Club grants. Funds of \$300 remain unspent from the 2015 grant in hand. This \$600 will be used to plant around the India Brook Park sign. Ralph will send a letter of thanks to the Garden Club.

2015 Annual Report: Rich will forward Ralph's report to the Twp. Clerk to copy the Twp. Committee.

3Rivers Festival: Teri, Rich, John Mallon and Jamie attended this RHA coordinated event held jointly with the Mendham Borough EC on April 16th. Teri led a very successful litter clean up along Combs Hollow. The Commission had a table at the event with open space brochures and information on the upcoming May 7th free seedling give a way event. Photos from the day were posted on the Twp. Facebook page and website.

2016 NJ Tree Recovery Campaign: 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. Jamie distributed a publicity poster which has been posted or emailed to the local newspaper, library, post office, elementary and middle school, Cub Scout Pack 133, Schiff, and Township website/FB page. Jamie also emailed Brian Hays, Tree Committee Chair, to welcome their participation.

Monarchs & Milkweed: Brian's report held over to the next meeting.

Next meeting: May 16, 2016