



# TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

**Approved Minutes**  
For the regular meeting of  
Tuesday, February 18, 2020

\* The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm by Nora Sirbaugh.

### **Statement of Compliance & Roll Call**

Members present: Ray Nichols, Jim Gambino, Paul Kinney, Andrew Plunkett, Vanessa Sandom, Nora Sirbaugh and Mike Aucott (7:15 pm)

Members absent: George Kerr, Rex Parker

Also present: Mark Kataryniak - Twp Administrative Officer (7:10 pm)

Members of the Public present: Mike Kiernan

### **Minutes for Approval**

The January 21, 2020 draft minutes were approved – Motion Ray; 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul; Abstentions – none; all in favor.

**Action:** Jim will forward these minutes to Jaimie Laird for posting on the Township website.

**Public Comment** – Mike Kiernan told us he learned that e.coli bacteria was found in the well(s) on property previously owned by HV Golf Club, and believes the bacteria may be coming from the site's septic system. He said NJDEP is monitoring the site, but does not provide notice to property owners beyond 1000 feet. Mike was unsuccessful trying to contact NJDEP for more information. He lives nearby the site and is concerned that his and/or his neighbor's wells may be or become contaminated.

**Action:** Mike will continue to contact NJDEP for updates.

### **Zoning Board Application Reviews**

Case No. 2020-1: **Glenmoore Farm, LLC**

Block 34, Lot 19; 105 Pennington-Hopewell Road; VRC Zoning District  
Preliminary & Final Site Plan with Bulk Variance

We reviewed and discussed the application together with Mark Kataryniak. We understand the existing property has 13.07% impervious coverage, which is already greater than the maximum allowable coverage of 10%. The proposed project would increase impervious coverage to 16.43%. We do not recommend approving the project described in the application unless the applicant provides sufficient mitigation so there is no net gain of impervious cover for this property.

Case No. 2020-2: **Wimmer Garage**

Block 43.08, Lot 2; 3 East Shore Drive; R-150 Zoning District

Proposed residential garage addition with setback variance

We reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Mark Kataryniak, and have no environmental concerns for the proposed project as described in the application.

Case No. 2020-3: **Wilkes**

Block 8, Lot 23; 204 Reservoir Road; MRC Zoning District

Proposed residential addition and detached garage with setback variance

We reviewed and discussed the application together with Mark Kataryniak. We understand this one acre lot is undersized for the MRC zone, and has a maximum allowable lot coverage area of 10%. The property also slopes to a nearby tributary stream. The proposed project will increase the impervious coverage to 16%. We do not recommend approving the project described in the application unless the applicant provides sufficient mitigation so there is no net gain of impervious cover for this property.

**Actions:** Jim will prepare and send our review comments via memo to Jaimie Laird to post with the appropriate applications on the Township website.

**Planning Board Application Review**

**Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing**

Block 95, Lot 32, 268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road

VRC Zoning District

Site Plan Amendment for Building Expansion & Site Improvements

We reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Mark Kataryniak, and have no environmental concerns for the proposed project as described in the application.

**Action:** Jim will prepare and send our review comments via memo to Linda Barbieri to post with the appropriate application on the Township website.

**Subcommittee Reports / Discussions / Updates for on-going projects**

**A. Twp Committee Liaison Report**

Courtney Peters-Manning could not attend tonight's meeting but provided the following updates via e-mail that:

The Woody Plant Ordinance is with our attorney for review. I have an email in to him to get a more concrete status update and will let you know as soon as I hear from him.

The Woolsey Park Advisory Committee ordinance was passed last year. Michael Ruger is the Township Committee liaison to it, and he is working with Elaine to get it officially formed. It will be very soon, and I will let you know as soon as I hear more.

Community Energy Aggregation is up for a public hearing and second reading on Tuesday night, February 18th (the first reading passed on February 3rd and included a presentation by Concord Energy). If it passes, we will move to the phase where Concord starts the process for an auction. We will know if we can get a good price and what price we can get for the renewable option after the auction. It would be wonderful if any EC members would be willing to pop out of your meeting to come testify at the public hearing in favor the renewable option. I've attached the

resolution you passed last year. Perhaps someone would be willing to come read it. I did read it into the record at the last January HTC meeting as well.

Senate Bill 2776 died at the end of the last legislative session, so the resolution is moot at this point. I understand that there may have been new bills introduced, and perhaps the EC would want to look at those. The Township Committee also is looking into ways to reduce single-use plastic consumption at the local level.

On the Solterra/MCIA discrepancy, I spoke with Dan Napoleon at MCIA. He said that while some communities do *collect* plastics other than #1s and #2s, there really is no market to recycle them, so they are not really recycled. He said there is a small market for #5s, like they collect at Whole Foods and other places, but there is not enough of a market to sustain a county-wide collection of #5s. It's very disappointing to hear, but without a market for those items, it's very difficult to recycle them.

**B. Planning Board Liaison Report – none**

**C. Zoning Board Report – none**

**D. Woody Plant Ordinance (a.k.a. Landscaping Ordinance)**

The Twp attorney completed his review of our draft ordinance. We reviewed and approved his proposed changes to the draft - Motion Jim; 2<sup>nd</sup> Mike; Abstentions – none; all in favor.

One change in the document changed the word “Board” to “Planning Board” in multiple locations as the reviewing authority. We question if “Planning Board” should be the reviewing authority if the application is for a use variance.

**Action:** Nora will ask Courtney to check with the attorney about our concern.

**E. Arbor Day Events**

**Tree seedling giveaway**

The township was approved to participate in the 2020 Tree Recovery Program and receive seedlings. We plan to have the giveaway on April 4 at the Twp. Municipal Bldg.

**Action:** We need to plan logistics to have a successful event.

**Salem Oak**

No update since Mark informed us that all NJ municipalities will be receiving a Salem Oak tree seedling this year. We plan to plant ours in Woolsey Park; spot to be determined.

**Action:** Nora will try and secure a few seedlings from the Mercer Oak which we may also plant in Woolsey Park.

**F. Grants Coordinator**

Nora created and shared a “grant Google document” in order for us to track grant deadlines and amounts to help with planning future EC projects. This is an active document where members may add to the list of available grants (populate it) anytime they learn of them.

**Action:** members are encouraged to review the document and add new grant opportunities throughout the year.

## **New Business**

### **A. Public Speakers**

This item was not on our agenda, but we had a discussion to possibly invite speakers to help educate residents on various environmental topics. One example would be to improve habitat on individual properties to help pollinators, birds, etc.

**Action:** Vanessa will discuss this idea with members of the Twp. Committee.

### **B. FoHVOS Bee Abode Project**

Jim mentioned that the Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space has offered the opportunity to construct a small bee hotel adjacent to our naturalized detention basin near the municipal bldg. The project would provide habitat for struggling native bee populations.

**Action:** Nora said she would talk to her “bee expert” before deciding.

## **Announcements & Correspondence**

- A. Montgomery Twp. meeting announcement – Natural Resources Inventory Update;  
March 3 at 6:30 pm at their Twp Municipal Bldg.
- B. NJDEP Protecting Against Climate Threats – announcement of stakeholders meeting.
- C. NJ American Water Resources Association – meeting announcement – USGS study on microplastics in the environment; March 13 from 12-2pm at the USGA Water Science Center in Lawrenceville, NJ.
- D. Paul gave members a handout on how to reduce your junk mail footprint.
- E. Ray gave members an info card about the NJ Green Infrastructure Municipal Toolkit.

\* The meeting adjourned at 9:16 pm: Motion – Ray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul; all in favor.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Gambino  
Secretary