



TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Approved Minutes

For the regular meeting of
Tuesday, March 15, 2016

- * The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Nora Sirbaugh.

Statement of Compliance & Roll Call

Members present: Jim Gambino, Tim Wilson (until 10:20), George Kerr, Bill Washburn, Ray Nichols, Rex Parker, Nora Sirbaugh

Members absent: Mike Aucott

Also present: Bob Miller – Twp Administrative Officer

Members of the Public present: Bob Ridolfi, Henry Kent Smith, Joe Stanley, Gary Brown,
Mike Pisauro, Ed DiFiglia, Mike Kiernan, Richard Yeager

Minutes for Approval

The February 16, 2016 minutes were discussed, amended and approved. Motion –Rex, 2nd Jim.

Action: Jim will forward the approved minutes to Bob for distribution and filing.

Planning & Zoning Application Reviews – EC Concerns

1. **Pennwell Holdings, LLC** and the Gadbey organization (Kooltronics); VRC-HLI Zone

Block 37, Lots 17.03 and 17.011; 30 Pennington Road; **continued** Interpretation of the Ordinance.

- * Review of this application was tabled pending receipt of additional information requested by the zoning board's attorney.

Note: before moving to table, the EC recognized that several members of the public came specifically to comment on this application and were allowed to voice their concerns, including Mike Pisauro and Ed DiFiglia of the Stony Brook- Millstone Watershed Association, and Marshall's Corner residents Mike Kiernan and Richard Yeager.

2. **Chad Goerner d/b/a Mount Rose Distillery**; MRC Zone

Block 16, Lot 51; 3 Aunt Molly Rd; **Amended** Use Variance and Site Plan Waiver to convert existing barn into a craft distillery.

- * Mr. Goerner attended the EC meeting and spoke about his concepts to address the EC's concerns about water supply and waste disposal from the proposed distillery operation.

He plans to install a rain water harvesting system that will adequately offset any adverse effects on local wells which may occur from the proposed business. His existing well will be used for his home

and business and, harvested rainwater will be partially used for his business and partially infiltrated to ground water.

* Also, he is planning for waste from the business operations to be composted or properly disposed of.

3. **Diversatech, Inc.;** SI Zone

Block 88, Lot 33.02; 1584 Reed Road; Use Variance and Site plan to construct addition to existing warehouse manufacturing building.

* We see that approximately one half of this lot should be considered as unbuildable due to the presence of wetlands, detention basin and conservation easement areas. We have no objection to the floor area ratio or building coverage area, and agree to have reduced parking spaces to that which is required.

* We recommend that the Township Engineer review the existing detention basin design since it is unclear if this basin, which serves three contiguous properties, is adequately designed to handle the additional runoff from the proposed addition. In addition, the basin should be inspected to ascertain its current condition, before any additional impervious development is approved.

* Also, the new building foundation will be very close to the basin's edge; will this have an adverse effect on the basin or building?

4. **First Hartford Corporation;** R-100 Zone

Block 68, Lot 8; 105 Route 31; Use Variance, Preliminary and Final Site Plan, with Variances to permit construction of a 14,600 sq. ft. CVS Pharmacy.

* First Hartford's representative, Henry Smith, made a presentation indicating their application was for the "standard CVS store" and suggested that they were possibly willing to negotiate regarding various facets of the proposal, e.g. 24/7 operating hours. The existing Sunoco Gas Station on this "unregulated site" has been operating there since 1953, thus pre-dating the municipal land use laws.

* The EC members voiced some serious reservations with this building application as presented, for the following reasons:

- i. The lot coverage area will be more than double that of the existing grandfathered facility, and almost triple the 20% maximum which is permitted on this residential lot.
- ii. Concerns with the proposed stormwater management system, which would include subsurface storage, because of the excessive land disturbance and impervious footprint (> 1 acre) they wish to create.
- iii. Construction plans show removal of at least 30 trees with diameters greater than or equal to ten inches. This violates the Township Woodlands Ordinance and requires obtaining a special permit from the township plus tree mitigation.

Note: Most of the large trees to be removed were specifically planted as a courtesy buffer for the rear neighbors.

- iv. The proposed building and drive-thru service road will significantly reduce the setback to the rear neighbors.

Note: EC members recommended the creation of landscaped berms to buffer the site from adjacent neighbors.

- v. Most of the proposed landscape plantings are not on the township's recommended native species planting list and could exacerbate deer problems by attracting deer to a high traffic area. Advise them to choose plants from the recommended list.
 - vi. The proposed landscape buffer along Ingleside Avenue is half of what is required.
 - vii. Adverse quality-of-life issues for the community and adjacent neighbors include: proposed 24/7 hours of operation with the potential for continuous traffic, noise, litter, and light pollution. The plans also include more than the allowable number of business signs, some of which will not conform to the township's size, height and setback requirements.
 - viii. It was not clear if the exterior lighting will be energy efficient and conform to the Township's Lighting Ordinance.
- * First Hartford's environmental expert, Gary Brown, stated this is a "moderately contaminated" site, according to NJDEP criteria, that there are 17 ground water monitoring wells at or near this site and, any contaminated soil or groundwater resulting from the existing fuel service station operation will be remediated by Sunoco. He said that the existing shallow, subsurface plume is moving in a northerly direction.
- Note: The EC members have not had an opportunity to review any of the documents regarding the history of contamination at this site, nor seen any reports from any independent Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP).
- * The applicant's proposal to replace the existing blinking light with a NJDOT approved traffic signal at the intersection of Route 31 and Ingleside Avenue would be a significant benefit to the community.

5. **Mid- State Equipment Co, Inc.;** IC Zone

Block 46, Lot 55; 63 Route 31 North; Preliminary and Final Site Plan, with Variances to convert existing pole barn structure for landscape equipment showroom, sales area, office, and repair facility.

- * The proposed, converted rear building on this lot will construct a waste water line that will tie in to the existing septic system currently servicing the buildings on the front portion of the lot, and has been approved by the Township's Health Department.
- * Construction plans show the removal of significant trees near Route 31 to create an equipment display area. This removal should be mitigated with an equivalent number of native tree species planted elsewhere on the property.

Note: the property owner should also consider planting additional native species along the Route 31 frontage.

- * Most of the proposed landscape plantings shown on the plans are not on the township's recommended native species planting list. Advise them to choose plants from the recommended list.
- * The plans show there will be a net loss of paved area, but will require significant soil removal in order to construct the proposed gravel loop roadway in order to accommodate large trucks.

Suggest that there is adequate room for these trucks to negotiate k-turns between the rear service area of the building and the existing gravel driveway, which will require significantly less soil disturbance on the property.

* It was not clear if the exterior lighting will be energy efficient and conform to the Township's Lighting Ordinance.

Bob Ridolfi represented Mid State, listened to our concerns and accepted our comments.

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**Actions:**

- a. Jim will prepare and send a memo from the EC to the Zoning Board members regarding the above application review comments.
- b. Bob will send EC member's updated information related to application # 1, Pennwell Holding, for further review.

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

**A. Municipal Environmental Ordinance Review – Stream Corridor Protection**

Members discussed ways to help strengthen the wording in the existing ordinance.

**Actions:**

Nora will incorporate our agreed changes into a proposed draft and forward the same to Vanessa, Bob and Paul Pogorzelski.

The Twp health department should review this ordinance and incorporate wording to allow rebuilding of existing septic systems within the stream corridor.

Note: The Twp Attorney is currently reviewing the suggested wording changes we made last month to the Woodlands Ordinance.

**B. ANJEC Conservation Easement Grant**

Ray reported we have received 2/3's of the grant money. Due to project delays, we will not receive additional grant money and will scale back the proposed GIS mapping work.

**Actions:** The Twp will mail letters to all owners who have a conservation easement on their property.

Paul will help coordinate production of a GIS file map showing general locations of all conservation easement within the township.

**C. Community Forestry Management Plan**

Bob reported our 5-year plan was approved by the state. Our 2015 annual report is due.

**Action:** Nora and Bob will prepare the 2015 report.

**D. Water Resources Monitoring**

We still did not receive word back from the Twp regarding our proposal to have USGS monitor our Scotch Rd well.

**Action:** Nora will check with Vanessa to see if this item is included in the Twp budget.

**E. Municipal Street Lights**

Bob reported the school is not willing to send out our street light survey & letter to the parents.

Plan B - it was suggested to host the street light survey on the Twp web site. Public notice to the web link will be given through an HV News article.

**Actions:** Paul Pogorzelski is reviewing our proposed letter.

Nora will ask Mike to prepare a press release for HV News.

#### F. Arbor Day - Tree Seedling Giveaway

We are planning to conduct a tree seedling giveaway on Saturday, April 30. Bob created signs and business card-sized handouts.

**Actions:** The state provided us a sign-in sheet to be returned to them after the event. They also provided a pre-worded public notice to be used for advertising.

Further logistical planning is needed for this event, including a timely news/web release.

#### G. Ash Borer Seminar

We plan to hold this landowner's seminar at 7pm, March 30 at the Twp Municipal Bldg. Jason Grabosky, from Rutgers University, will be our presenter.

**Actions:** We need to prepare an event flyer.

Nora will prepare a press release and forward to Bob and Paul for approval.

#### H. Ash Tree Inventory

**Action:** We plan to further discuss this item next month.

#### New Business

A. Come Outside and Play – Jim suggested our activity could be to hike the Woolsey Brook Trail in Alliger Park.

**Action:** Jim will pick a date and time for the hike.

B. Community Clean-ups – Clean up day is Saturday, April 16. 8 AM – noon clean up with the Twp and FoHVOS meets at the Twp Public Works Bldg; 1-3 PM clean up with the SBMWA meets at Pennytown parking lot.

**Action:** Join the clean up effort.

#### Old Business

- A. Electricity Aggregation
- B. Community Compost Facility

**Actions:** We plan to discuss both items next month.

#### Correspondence

We briefly discussed the items sent to us below.

- A. Living Local Expo March 19th
- B. Memo, Township Engineer, March 9, 2016, Hutchinson
- C. Notice, Site Remediation Program, Hopewell Veterinary Group, Bk 18 Lt 66
- D. Notice, Township of Kingwood, Ordinance to Ban Fracking

**Action:** We plan to further discuss this item next month, especially as it relates to fracking waste water.

- E. ANJEC, Membership Benefits

\* The meeting adjourned at 10:42 p.m. Motion –Ray, 2<sup>nd</sup> Nora.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Gambino  
Secretary