



TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Approved Minutes

For the regular meeting of
Tuesday, July 19, 2022

Note: this meeting was held in person in the Municipal Building Auditorium and was recorded.

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 pm by Nora Sirbaugh.

Statement of Compliance & Roll Call

Members present: Nora Sirbaugh, Jim Gambino, Mark Bean, Mike Aucott, Rex Parker,
and Andrew Plunkett

Members absent: Paul Kinney, Vanessa Sandom, George Kerr

Also present: Jim Hutzelmann - Twp Engineer

Members of the Public present: Susan Michniewski, Ryan Kennedy

Minutes for Approval

The June 21, 2022 draft minutes were approved – Motion-Rex, 2nd Mike; all in favor.

Action: Jim G. will forward these minutes to Amanda Bregenzer for posting on the Township website

Zoning Board Application Review

Case No. 22-06: **Riley Residence**

Block 7, Lot 10; 259 Pennington-Hopewell Road;
R-100 Zoning District
Bulk variance – lot size and front yard setback

We reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Jim Hutzelmann.

We understand the proposed location of the new house and septic system is within the 150 foot stream corridor buffer. Locating the house farther from the road in order to satisfy the front yard setback requirement will exacerbate this issue. We recommend approving the house in the proposed location.

We also applaud the proposed bio-retention basin to help manage stormwater runoff from the planned impervious surfaces, which will satisfy the requirements for a minor development from our stormwater ordinance.

Action: Jim G. will prepare and send our review comments via memo to Amanda Bregenzer to post with this application on the Township website.

Stream Corridor Application Review

Stream Corridor Permit Application – Jacobs Creek Tributary
Cerra/Duran-Sanchez Pool
Block 92, Lot 10.14; 19 Independence Way;
VRC/R200 Zoning District

We reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Jim Hutzelmann.

We do not approve granting a waiver to permit this project to proceed as proposed, since it encroaches into the 150 foot stream corridor buffer.

We understand the owner will redesign the project so it remains outside of the buffer area and will also address the issue of lot coverage overage.

We anticipate reviewing the redesigned project in the future.

Action: Jim G. will prepare and send our review comments via memo to Jim Hutzelmann to file with this application.

Subcommittee Reports / Discussions / Updates for on-going projects

1. **Twp Committee Liaison Report** – see No Mow Zones below.
2. **Planning Board Liaison Report** – none
3. **Zoning Board Report** – none.
4. **Native Plant Demonstration Garden**

No update. Andrew will notify us when the new plants arrive.

Actions: members should be ready to help with planting efforts.

5. **Salem Oak Signage**

No update.

6. **Wildlife Crossings and the Infrastructure Act**

Mike and Nora reported on recent site visits – culverts appear ok.

Actions: Nora will send a Doodle Poll for us to choose a time/date to visit and evaluate remaining sites.

Contact the Sourland Conservancy and Mercer County to indentify new sites in known problem areas.

Susan Michniewski suggested that we make & place temporary signs along roadways with known amphibian crossing between February 15 & March 15. We need to determine how many signs we need and where to place them.

7. **No-mow Zones**

Mark suggested that areas along roadways where native wildflowers are growing should not get mowed by the Twp.

Twp Committee Liaison, Uma Purandare, reported via e-mail to EC members on July 18 that she spoke with Public Works Director, George Snyder, about designating certain roads as “No mow zone” to preserve native plants and beauty. It is possible. The public works department needs the details of the road/area and the duration of “No Mow Zone” order.

Actions: Mark will identify no-mow areas and provide this information to Public Works.

New Business (note: all items below were added to the agenda at the start of our meeting)

1. Assumpink Roundtable

The Watershed Institute has asked for one elected official and one EC member to participate in this roundtable on Sep 24 to discuss collaborative efforts to help reduce flooding.

Action: Jim G. volunteered to represent the EC at this event.

2. Lennar Tree Offer

Lennar, the developer for Hopewell Parc on Scotch Road, has indicated they may have extra trees from their tree replacement plan that they could plant on Twp property.

Action: Jim H. will contact Lennar to determine what species we could select and how many total trees we could receive.

3. Arboretum

Jim G. discussed his recent conversation with the Twp Fire Marshall regarding our proposed location to plant our arboretum at Woolsey Park. The Fire Marshall indicated this area is off limits since it is a fall-out safety zone for the annual fireworks. We need to choose a different location. Members were upset with this decision.

Action: Nora will contact the Fire Marshall and ask him to attend our next meeting to further discuss this issue.

4. Community Tree Maintenance

Jim G. discussed the need to involve Public Works in regular maintenance of the trees planted on Twp property. EC volunteers can not do all the work needed. Quantities of mulch and water are needed each year, which Public Works has access to.

Action: Nora will write to Public Works about this issue.

5. Drought

We discussed the current drought situation in NJ and here in Hopewell. Mike reminded us that the Twp's drought ordinance is triggered when NJ issues a drought emergency.

Action: refer to the US Drought Monitor for updated conditions.

Announcements & Correspondence

B93 L5.01, 5.02, 6.02; Scotch Road; Hopewell Parc – Application for Treatment Works Approval

- * The meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm: Motion – Rex, 2nd Mike; all in favor.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 20, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Gambino
Secretary