

## MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Manchester Township Municipal Building  
1 Colonial Drive, Manchester Township, NJ

### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Wells called the Regular Meeting of the Manchester Township Environmental Commission to order with the following statement: "Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with Open Public Meetings Act. Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was advertised in the Asbury Park Press and the Star Ledger."

Time: 5:00 PM

This was followed with the Salute to the Flag.

#### **ROLL CALL:**

Rory Wells	Present
William Cook	Present
William Foor	Present
Peggy Middaugh	Present
Genevieve Stavallo	Present
Gabrielle Fox	Present
Kristy Henry	Present

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

##### **March 23, 2021 Regular Meeting**

Ms. Middaugh made a motion to approve the March 23, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by Ms. Stavallo.

**Roll call vote:** Mr. Cook, Mr. Foor, Ms. Middaugh, Ms. Stavallo, Mr. Wells; yes. Motion carried.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **Rain Garden Project**

Mr. Wells: At the last meeting, Chris Obropta of Rutgers joined us to discuss some potential green infrastructure projects in Manchester, one of which is a rain garden at the Ocean County Library. Michael Hudak of Troop 350 is interested in taking this on as his Eagle Scout project if the library agrees to it. We will need to talk to Chris Obropta, the Mayor and Council.

Ms. Middaugh: Another partner in this is Save Barnegat Bay. It would be a good idea to get in touch with them as well.

Mr. Wells asked Michael Hudak what his timeline for completing this project is and Michael responded that it would need to be completed before March 2022.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

##### **Crossley Preserve / Brooksbrae Cleanup**

Ms. Fox: Barnegat Bay Watershed Ambassador Emily McGuckin joins us tonight and she and I are planning to visit the cleanup site. Since it is such a large area, we would need to pin trash locations and come up with a plan of action.

Emily McGuckin: This is my second year as ambassador and I have worked on many cleanup initiatives, as well as rain barrel workshops and tree planting projects. We work very closely with Chris Obropta. I can help get volunteers from NJDEP.

Mr. Wells: How long is a typical cleanup?

Emily McGuckin: Four hours is typical. Sometimes eight hours for a virtual cleanup. I can reach out to the community for donations of water and possibly breakfast/snack items. I can also get gloves and garbage bags from the county.

Ms. Middaugh: Michael Nixt, chair of the Professional Development Group (PDG) at Joint Base-MDL, reached out about getting his team involved.

Mr. Wells: Maybe we can put him in touch with Emily.

Ms. Fox will reach out to Pinelands Preservation Alliance to find out if the State's permission is needed since Brooksbrae is part of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest.

The Commissioners tentatively scheduled the Brooksbrae cleanup for June 18<sup>th</sup> with a backup date June 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Wells thanked Emily for her willingness to help with this project.

### **2065 Highway 37 – Block 15.01 Lot 44**

Mr. Wells: We previously sent an interoffice memo to the Planning Board with our recommendations on the Redevelopment Plan for this property.

Mr. Cook: This project will be phased construction. One of my concerns is the silt control near the stormwater basins. What they should do is build the basin first and then provide silt control during construction. There was an issue in another development where the basin was constructed but proper silt control hadn't been in place. The silt got on top of the basin and now there are flooding issues.

Ms. Middaugh: The property is 45 acres and the project area is 25% of that. With all of the parking lots and roadways, I wonder if they would consider permeable pavement, as suggested by Chris Obropta at the presentation last meeting. Also, Electric Vehicle charging stations. General Note #21 references Toms River instead of Manchester. My other concern is the endangered species – pine snakes, rattle snakes and corn snakes. They have approval from the NJDEP, but I would like to request that the Environmental Commission be informed when they put up the fence to trap endangered species, so we may inspect if we so desire.

Mr. Foor: I don't think this application is on the Planning Board's agenda yet.

### **Electric Vehicle / Charging Station Pilot Program**

Mr. Wells: We are working on a timeline for township electric vehicles and charging stations. It would be great if we could get a grant. If we can't find a grant writer, we can do it ourselves since we have the skill to do it. This is not in the budget for 2021 and the state said they are out of grant money for 2021. I made initial phone calls to the Manchester department heads and many of them pointed me in the direction of Township EMS. I believe township ordinances need to be passed before we can proceed. We can review other townships' ordinances and pass on to the Council.

### **MEMBER REPORT:**

Mr. Foor: I am disappointed to see the Brentwood Estates property was clear cut. It was my understanding that the approval from two years ago had been vacated and they were planning to pursue a new plan. The applicant never vacated and is building to the original approved plan. From a lessons learned standpoint, in the future a resolution needs to be adopted by the Council when an application is vacated.

Mr. Wells: I saw a lot of activity about this on Facebook; people are angry. I don't think they went about this the right way.

Ms. Middaugh: Last week I attended an Earth Day Webinar on the benefits of clean energy – how people can save money and be healthier. For more information, visit [www.NJCleanEnergy.com](http://www.NJCleanEnergy.com).

Ms. Middaugh asked the secretary to post the NJ Clean Energy link on our website.

Ms. Middaugh: I also would like to say thank you to reporter Bob Vosseller for showing interest in the Commission by attending our meetings and publishing articles about topics we have discussed. This is a big help to us.

Mr. Wells: Last month I mentioned the Murphy Administration is pushing for these offshore wind projects. I had conversations with assemblymen and commissioners. I have some concerns. I'd like to bring in speakers on this topic and I encourage you all to read up on this.

Ms. Middaugh: The NJ Clean Energy website has a whole section on this.

## **PUBLIC FORUM:**

Rhyan Grech, Pinelands Preservation Alliance: First, kudos on the rain garden and cleanup projects. I have reviewed some of the documents for 2065 Route 37. There was significant contamination on this site in the past. There are old remediation plans for this site, not sure what the current status is. It's my understanding that the new stormwater regulations will apply to this site. There are threatened, near threatened and endangered species onsite including the Pine Barren Tree Frog. They are planning off-site pine snake mitigation which has never been tested. Somebody we work with, Dr. Joanna Burger at Rutgers, completed an in-depth analysis on such mitigation. She has been with Rutgers since 1973 and has been studying pine snakes since 1985. Her opinion is that destroying pine snake habitat and creating another – in this case in Woodland Township, 25 miles away – is completely ineffective and unacceptable. These pine snakes would effectively have to travel 25 miles, across Route 539 and Route 72 to get to their new habitat.

Regarding the proposed Jaylin/Grunin Retail Development, Pinelands Preservation Alliance appealed that application and it was remanded back to the NJDEP. There is a new public comment period which ends May 20. We will be submitting additional comments focused around the tree frog habitat on site, wetlands and impervious surface miscalculations. I'd be happy to send over our comments for your reference.

Jeff Heilbrun, resident: I am very familiar with Brooksbrae and the area as I lead hikes there on a weekly basis. I have put up signs to respect the art and pick up trash and leave trash bags and it seems to be helping. I have a cleanup location suggestion – Colonial Drive South. There is an incredible amount of trash along the roadway. Signs could be put up to bring awareness and cans could be put out on the road. Perhaps Lowes would donate garbage bags.

Mr. Wells: I'll reach out to Public Works to find out what may be going on there.

Ms. Henry: I agree. If you are talking about behind Lowes and the elementary school, maybe we could get the school and kids involved.

Jeff Heilbrun: If anyone is interested, I would be happy to take you on a tour of the Brooksbrae area.

Ms. Middaugh, Ms. Henry and Mr. Wells expressed interest and will get in touch with Mr. Heilbrun.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Cook and seconded by Ms. Stavallo, the meeting was adjourned. All in favor, motion carried.

Time: 6:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Frazee  
Commission Secretary