

January 12, 2017

The January 12, 2017 meeting of the Mansfield Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Ruth Pante, held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1976 and was followed by a pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Present: Ruth Pante, Mitch Courtright, Robert Jewell, Glenn Todd, Dawn Smith, James McMekin
and Township Committeeman Michael Misertino

Newly-appointed member Mitch Courtright was introduced to the Commission. Elaine Drazek has resigned from the Environmental Commission, a replacement for her is needed.

Minutes

Ms. Smith noted the December 8, 2016 minutes indicate “all in favor” to approve the November 10, 2016 minutes when in fact she abstained from a vote on that motion because she was absent. Ms. Smith further noted that the second paragraph notes “The Morris Canal is probably 30 percent” owned by Mansfield when that 30 percent more likely includes County land. The next paragraph should be corrected to read the botanical signs are not part of the 2017 budget, and remove “However” from the following sentence. Ms. Smith MOVED to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2016 with corrections, seconded by Mr. Todd. Mr. Jewell and Mr. Courtright abstained.

Ms. Smith introduced the guest speaker, Taran Sayal, who is the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador for the area. Ms. Sayal said she is fulfilling the requirements of her project; planned activities are a rain barrel workshop, rain garden and water festival. Ms. Fascenelli noted Coca Cola is offering kits for the rain barrels. The NJ Tree Foundation has available 40,000 free trees and shrubs. Efforts can be coordinated with Trout Unlimited. Ms. Sayal can lead a stormwater and the community workshop March 15. Another event is the watershed and how to care for it which targets early elementary grades.

Budget

The 2017 budget was discussed but not voted on at the December 8, 2016 meeting. Members present agreed the request should be \$350 for a memorial sign for Cafferata Park, \$125 for a moth night event, and \$300 for ANJEC dues, for a total of \$775.00. It was MOVED by Mr. Todd to request \$775.00 for the Environmental Commission budget, seconded by Mr. Jewell; all in favor. It was later MOVED by Mr. Todd to amend the requested amount to include \$7,000.00 for an ERI update, seconded by Mr. McMekin. All in favor.

Environmental Resource Inventory

Mr. Jewell said a full year is projected to complete an ERI update, estimates are needed, funds must be encumbered before the end of the year. He suggested re-applying for a grant, discussion followed. The grant deadline is February 28; Ms. Smith will redraft the grant request. The census data is from 1990, and the tax maps were updated about 2011.

Year-End Report

Ms. Fascenelli will draft a report for the Green Team and Ms. Pante will prepare an Environmental Commission report; to be discussed at the February 9, 2017 meeting.

Cafferata Park

There is nothing to report at this time.

Photo Contest

John General has agreed to be a judge; also Mr. Jewell, Mr. Misertino, Dena Hrebenak and Terry Johnson (retired art teacher). Judging to be in March; Ms. Smith would like to announce the winners at the first meeting in April. There are approximately 35 photos at this time.

Game Farm

A rumor has spread that the property could be sold; members questioned whether this is Green Acres property.

Environmental Issues

Mr. Jewell contacted Wayne Jarvis who said tax maps are electronic, he said Drew DeSessa has them. Why these were not updated is unclear; that should be done every two years. Also, Mr. Jewell reported Santa Monica has passed an ordinance that all new buildings be net zero energy users. As much as 30 percent of solar energy is drawn from parking lot car ports. He also reported 200 to 300 ft. deep wells are needed for geo thermal heating but the state did not allow fearing of salt water invasion; he suggested horizontal pipes for a heat loop. Geothermal has variable frequencies. This is self-Insulating with air barrier systems at the doors. Daylight lighting from the sun, shading devices for summer. No expense was given.

Mr. McMekin asked about the use of water in municipal buildings, suggested hour meters on the well pumps. This includes the municipal building, the old municipal building, and two DPW buildings.

Mr. Todd reported experimental bluebird boxes are about 85 percent better, he is now in production.

Ms. Smith reported attending the Warren County EDAC meeting where Art Charleton announced a June 10 music fest; they are looking for authors and illustrators. The Golden Rule Karate is working to be carbon neutral.

ANJEC is offering grants for upwards of \$15,000; the deadline is April 1.

Ms. Pante reported an article indicating an aquifer testing law is being considered in Bernardsville. Members discussed the possibility of such protection in Mansfield, especially near the fish hatchery.

It was MOVED by Mr. Todd to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Pante