**MANSFIELD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**MINUTES – MAY 12, 2022**

The May 12, 2022 meeting of the Mansfield Township Environmental Commission was conducted via Zoom and was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by Chair Paul Tarlowe. Participating were Paul Tarlowe, Ann Bemis, Jim McMekin, Robert Jewell, Kathy Todd and Ruth Pante; Amanda Kilyk and Glenn Todd did not respond to the invitation.

MINUTES

The Environmental Commission did not meet in March and April; the minutes of the January and February meetings were reviewed. It was MOVED by Ms. Bemis to accept and approve the minutes of the January 13 and February 10, 2022 meetings, seconded by Mr. Tarlowe; there were no corrections to the minutes and the motion carried.

Bluebird Trail Update

Mr. Tarlowe reported he and Jim Mershon inspected the bluebird boxes yesterday and found 22 eggs collectively in the boxes, so the birds are active. Two new boxes were donated by Mr. Jewell; one was mounted but the other was not suitable for bluebirds.

Salem Oak Tree

Mr. Tarlowe and Ms. Bemis visited the park and determined an abandoned pile of landscaping blocks could be used around the seedling; Mr. Tarlowe met with John Snyder who agreed. Mr. Tarlowe offered to send photos to Ms. Orlando, the Township Clerk, to be placed on the town website. Ms. Bemis asked about the sign that had been proposed for the site, and Mr. Tarlowe explained that one could be purchased, but Mr. McMekin has offered to rout one out of wood he already has. Provided the seedling thrives this spring and summer, a sign will be developed.

Morris Canal Greenway

The Morris Canal operated from the 1820s to the 1920s; it went from Phillipsburg to Jersey City. Warren County is home to 80 percent of remaining features of the canal, many of them in Mansfield Township. A Morris Canal Greenway path goes down to the canal from Hoffman Road, but there are issues with nearby homeowners which must be settled. An inclined plane existed in Mansfield Township; the site is within a county open space purchase known as the Port Murray Preserve. The remains of the turbine chamber survive, but access to the public is not yet available. Breadlock Park and Plane 9-W are points of interest in the County. On Saturday, June 11, Warren County ParkFest will be held at Breadlock Park on Rt. 57 in Stewartsville. The following day the Warren Heritage Museum will be open; Mr. Tarlowe is a member of the Warren County Parks Foundation and will be demonstrating a model lock. Mr. Jewel pointed out places of interest; Mr. Tarlowe noted Warren County has no parks department but the Planning Department works closely with the foundation. Mr. Tarlowe urged visits to Stewartsville to learn more about the locks and the canal.

Airport Road Estates

Mr. Tarlowe reported that just this week the first basement was dug for this Airport Road development; wells and septics are required; there are no apparent environmental issues of concern to the commission.

Proposed Blau Road Recycling Facility

Township residents opposed to this facility held a gathering; there has been no further movement by the owners. Mr. Jewell has heard nothing via the Land Use Board, and he suggested this will probably go through the DEP and the County, circumventing Township approval.

Land Use Board

An application has been received from Luna Farms on Hazen Road which now requests postponement; the application seeks approval for 3 illegal, and currently rented apartments in a hay barn. Construction began without permits which must be requested.

An application has been received from a Grandview Estates homeowner for the addition of a pool and patio which made the site at 7 percent impervious coverage. The 3 percent ordinance that was passed last year was meant for accessory structures, not total impervious coverage.

A third case was for a pad site in the Riverside strip mall. It is a narrow lot that had been previously approved for a bank and later for a Roy Roger’s restaurant. Because it is narrow, it needs bulk variances for side yard setbacks, front yard setback, parking, and signage.

Dunkin Donuts is taking over what was Tony’s Luncheonette on Rt. 57; approvals to construct will be needed.

It was MOVED by Ms. Panté to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

 Respectfully submitted,

 Ruth A. Panté

**Next meeting date:**

**July 14, 2022**