**MINUTES OF THE**

**CRANBURY TOWNSHIP**

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**November 18, 2019**

**TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Cranbury Township Environmental Commission was held in Town Hall, 23A North Main Street, Cranbury, N.J., on Monday, November 18, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

 Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) was provided on December 20, 2018, of this meeting's date, time and place, and the agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, mailed to those requesting personal notice, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

**CALL TO ORDER**

With a quorum present, Mr. Mullen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and Jean Golisano acted as Recording Secretary of the meeting.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Josh Kohut, Becky Lowery, Jason Mildenberg, Paul Mullen, Michele Till and Theresa Vaccaro were present. Barbara Rogers was excused. Mona Bhatia and Jim Gallagher were absent.

**NON-MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Sally O’Grady – Parks Commission member

**MINUTES**

The Minutes of the October 21, 2019 meeting were reviewed and a minor revision was made. On a motion by Dr. Kohut, seconded by Mr. Mildenberg, the minutes as amended were approved by all members present.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Preserve Management – Trail Maintenance

Village Park - Ms. O’Grady reported at the last meeting that a resident asked the Parks Commission about the height of the tall grasses along the edge of Brainerd Lake in Village Park. The grasses were planted as part of the remediation of the Lake’s edge. After conversations with the Township Administrator and Mr. Jerry Thorne, Public Works Manager, Mr. Thorne stated Public Works could cut the grass if given direction on the height to cut. Mr. Mullen stated the EC prefers the grasses not be cut and to have the vegetation in the riparian zone. Ms. O’Grady stated the comment about the tall grasses was brought up at a Parks meeting by a former Parks Commissioner who had been assured when the grasses were planted that they would be kept short. Ms. O’Grady stated no action is need by EC, but she wanted the members to be aware of the issue.

Unami Woods – It was reported the hanging branch was taken down by Sav-A-Tree in Unami Woods. Mr. Jerry Thorne, Public Works Manager, stated he was concerned about the signs posted in Unami Woods that Public Works was responsible for the trail maintenance. “This area is maintained by the Cranbury Department of Public Works, the Cranbury Parks Commission and the Cranbury Environmental Commission.”  It was agreed the wording on the signs be changed to “If you encounter a problem in this area, please call 395-0900 ext. \*222,” as suggested by Ms. Marabello, Township Administrator.

Pin Oaks Trail – Ms. Lowery reported there are low-hanging branches on the trail that need to be trimmed.

Deer Management Plan – Mr. Mullen stated he thought if there were not hunters assigned to a property, the hunting signs could come down. Ms. Golisano reported a hunter has been assigned to each of the six sites. Ms. Lowery reported that a tree stand has been in the trees across from Pin Oaks on the Fischer Property for more than a week. The rule in the new Deer Hunting Ordinance is deer stands are to be removed every day. Ms. Golisano stated she will notify the Cranbury Police to follow up on the tree stand.

Rain Garden Maintenance – Mr. Mullen inquired why this item was on the agenda, and Ms. Golisano stated it was on the last agenda and additional discussion was needed to organize maintenance of the rain garden. Dr. Rogers wanted to enlist the help of Boy Scouts and volunteers to work on the garden.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1713 Historical Home – Steven Golisano and Bobbie Marlowe were present on behalf of the Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society to obtain guideline for a rain garden at the Historic Home site at Millstone Park. Mr. Golisano explained that the property is in stormwater review because of a 1980 requirement imposed by the Delaware Raritan Canal Commission that more than ¼ acre of impervious surface must have stormwater review. The driveway to Millstone Park was extended in 2009 and puts the impervious surface over the ¼ acre amount. There were many questions about the rain garden and locations to put it. Mr. Mildenberg offered suggestions on other possible solutions that could satisfy the Commission’s requirements. Ms. O’Grady inquired why the current driveway was not impervious, and it was explained the gravel compacts over time making it impervious.

Mr. Mildenberg stated the Canal is looking at the area as a whole and not just the house, and Mr. Golisano agreed that it is unfortunate that the area now needs the stormwater review. Ms. O’Grady voiced concern that the rain garden would look unmanicured. Mr. Golisano suggested putting the rain garden in an area that would actually benefit the Park’s runoff. Guidelines and plants were briefly discussed.

Mr. Mildenberg confirmed that CHPS is only responsible for the 500 square feet of runoff from the house roof. Mr. Golisano stated CHPS wanted EC’s approval and guidance before starting the planning. He stated the main reason for a rain garden is for stormwater recharge. He reported there are volunteers who are interested in planting a period garden. Mr. Mullen stated typically rain gardens are low maintenance. Dr. Kohut suggested plants be selected that may be more aesthetically pleasing. Ms. Till stated plants are selected based on their ability to survive in the water. Mr. Mullen stated he was in support of the rain garden.

Mr. Golisano stated there is a push to provide the Commission with the plan. Mr. Mildenberg stated the Commission probably suggested the rain garden because it is probably the most cost-effective solution. Mr. Golisano reported Dr. Rogers stated there may be grants available. Mr. Golisano stated CHPS is planning on reaching out as a nonprofit to obtain supplies and use volunteers for the work. Ms. O’Grady suggested Mr. Golisano attend the next Parks Commission to present the information to the members. Mr. Mullen stated the Environmental Commission supports the rain garden. Mr. Golisano stated the Commission has been extremely helpful. He stated he will reach out to them to let them know he is in the process of obtaining Township approvals. Mr. Golisano thanked the EC for their support.

Sustainable Jersey Recertification – Mr. Mullen reported Dr. Rogers would be attending the Sustainable Jersey Luncheon in Atlantic City to receive Cranbury’s Bronze Sustainable Jersey Re-Certification.

Cranbury School Sustainable Jersey – Ms. Vaccaro and Ms. Lowery reported attending a meeting at the School and stated there is a new catering company and they met with the new food manager. She stated every month a locally-grown fruit and vegetable will be introduced. Ms. Lowery reported there was discussion about having an organic lunch once a week. She reported they are now using compostable trays, transitioning to compostable flatware, instead of plastic; looking into having a harvest festival in the spring and looking into the food waste in the cafeteria. There was also discussion about the food that is thrown away and doing a waste audit. Composting the food requires huge effort. Ms. Till offered to look at companies that may pick up food waste. Ms. Vaccaro stated there are not facilities in New Jersey that can compost and food has to be carted away. Dr. Kohut offered to inquire at Rutgers how food waste is handled. Ms. Lowery reported she contacted three pig farmers, but because the meat is sold, the diets are very regulated.

Charging Stations- Mr. Mullen reported there is a big push at the State level for including charging stations in Master Plans.

Dredging of Brainerd Lake – Dr. Kohut reported there is nothing new to report except that the Township is preparing to go out to bid. The Lake will be drained according to DEP requirements between mid-September and mid-November. A company will be selected and additional testing of the soil will be done to determine how and where the soil will be disposed. Dr. Kohut reported there may be ways to border the boundary of the Lake with native non-invasive plants versus hardscape. He stated he was surprised that the bottom of the Lake was flat; he thought it would have been more channeled. Dr. Kohut stated more meetings will be scheduled on an “as-needed” basis.

Master Plan - The adopted Master Plan is adopted and is posted on the website. Many EC-suggested revisions were included.

Protinick Farms Application - Mr. Mullen provided a summary of the Protinick Farms application that was presented at the November DRC meeting. While most issues relating to this application are outside the realm of the EC, Mr. Mullen noted that new sewer lines will be installed and Petty Road will be repaved. Since Petty Road routinely floods due to poor and insufficient storm drains, Mr. Mullen suggested at the DRC meeting that the Township work with the applicant to remedy this problem as part of the repaving effort.

**APPLICATIONS**

There were no applications for review this evening.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment this evening.

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

With no further business, Mr. Mullen requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion by Ms. Lowery, seconded by Ms. Vaccaro, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

**CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY**

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed Secretary of the Cranbury Township Environmental Commission, and that this document, consisting of four (4) pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the monthly meeting held on November 18, 2019.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 17th day of December, 2019.

Jean Golisano

   Jean Golisano

Environmental Commission Secretary