

**MINUTES OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

January 21, 2020

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 Tuesday, January 21, 2020 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 16, 2019 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.

OATHS OF OFFICE

Ms. Golisano, Deputy Clerk, issued the oath of office to Mr. Paul Mullen, Chair, and new Member, Ms. Lynn Slavin.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

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

Mr. Mullen welcomed new member, Ms. Slavin, who provided to the members her education, background, interests and experience.

NON-MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Ferrante, Township Committeeman and EC Liaison
Mike Pisauro, Watershed Institute
Sally O'Grady, Parks Commission Member
Jackie Johnson, Shade Tree Member
Michael Vitiello, Esq., Attorney for Cranbury Station, LLC
Joseph Hanrahan, Hammer Engineering
Clinton Miller, Hammer Engineering
John Visceglia
Edward A. Kuc, Eastern States Environmental Associates
Members of the Public

MINUTES

The Minutes of the December 16, 2019 meeting were reviewed and on a motion by Mr. Gallagher, seconded by Mr. Mildenberg, the minutes were approved by all members present, with the exception of Ms. Till, who abstained due to absence.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Mullen announced the order of the Agenda was being changed to accommodate the Cranbury Station, LLC representatives and the members of the public.

Cranbury Station, LLC Application to the Planning Board

Mr. Mullen informed the public that the Cranbury Station, LLC's application had been reviewed by the DRC but had not yet been ruled upon by the Planning Board. Mr. Mullen reminded the public that the EC has no jurisdiction on that ruling, but can make recommendations to the Planning Board. In that capacity, the attorney for Cranbury Station, LLC, Mr. Michael Vitiello, Esq., was invited to attend tonight's meeting to address four specific environmental concerns:

1. Habit and Utilization Potential: The applicant's Impact Assessment Report concluded that wildlife utilization of the property was low. Mr. Mullen inquired as to the "field evaluation" methodology used, noting that it failed to detect any bats, mice, rats, frogs, salamanders or turtles. Mr. Edward Kuc, Eastern States Environmental Associates, stated that the 43-acre property has a small-forested area with the majority of remaining agricultural area being actively cultivated with soybean and corn. His assessment of habitat and utilization potential was conducted by walking the property in the July/August timeframe between the hours of 8am and 5pm.
2. Threatened/Endangered Species Support Potential. The applicant's Impact Assessment Report concluded that the property does not possess any suitable habitat or utilization potential for threatened/endangered species. Mr. Mullen pointed out the wood turtle is considered a threatened species in NJ and the DEP's databases state that occupied wood turtle habitat was found on the applicant's property in 1991. Mr. Kuc stated that there was no attempt to specifically look for wood turtle habitat and that this assessment was performed during the Habitat and Utilization Potential assessment. No endangered or threatened species were found during the assessment.
3. Wetlands Disturbance: Mr. Mullen stated that the applicant has applied to the DEP for a number of General Wetlands Permits. The total amount of wetlands to be disturbed by these permits exceeds 1 acre. Mr. Mullen noted that, per the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act (N.J.A.C. 7:7A-5.4) the total combined area of wetland and transition areas disturbed or modified under General Wetlands Permits cannot exceed one acre. Mr. Vitiello stated they will go back and check the numbers again, stating it is not their intention to violate any DEP regulations.
4. Wetlands Mitigation Bank: Mr. Mullen stated that an area of this property contains a Wetlands Mitigation Bank that was created many years ago. He stated that it was hard to see the boundaries to this bank on the applicant's map. Mr. Vitiello assured the EC that the plans will be clearly marked and that the wetlands mitigation bank will not be disturbed in any way.

Mr. Mullen opened the discussion for public comment.

Mr. Lorraine Morris of Halsey Reed Road read a statement addressing the many concerns of how the development of that property will affect Cranbury and Monroe residents. She also expressed concerns that the lot line change was never filed and the DEP did not approve the lot combination. She stated the development is not in the interests of residents, only the property owner.

Of additional concern is that the development is in a historic area of the Township and includes the Camden Amboy train station. Residents and the HPC are working to have the hamlet recognized as a historic district. Traffic, noise and pollution concerns were also expressed. Mr. Vitiello stated he could not address all of Ms. Morris's concerns this evening. However, he requested a copy of the statement be sent to him and assured the public the applicant willfully comply with all wetland requirements, mitigation bank or conservation issues.

Mr. Nick Moraldo, Halsey Reed Road, expressed his concerns about the mismanagement of the Planning Board application. He stated a large facility is being proposed in an environmentally-sensitive area in a residential area, which will be impacted 24 hours a day with traffic. He requested that the EC ask the Planning Board to deny the application.

Ms. Janice Mondoker, Halsey Reed Road, spoke about a colony of brown bats making their home at her house in the past. She stated bats are still very active in the area.

Mr. Bob Dillon, Hightstown-Cranbury Station Road, stated on the south corner of the property to the Cranbury Circle there is a vernal pool, which contains spotted salamanders. He stated the wetlands were recently put there by the Turnpike and recommended letting the area grow and not touch. He said the bats in the area control mosquitos and consideration should be given to how reducing the wetlands will affect the area.

A resident from North Main Street, reported on the number of trucks driving down Main Street now, and how they ruin the quality of life and the environment.

Mr. Mike Pisauero, representing The Watershed in Pennington, inquired about the inspection of the property for endangered species. Mr. Kuc stated he did not specifically look for the wood turtle.

Ms. Anne Dennehy, Prospect Street, voiced concern over the number of trucks in town and how the truck vibrations shake the walls of her historic home. She reported the retaining wall in front of her home was damaged by a truck.

Mr. Vitiello stated he will gather data to address the specific comments made by the public.

NEW BUSINESS

Zoning Committee – Mr. Mullen reported the Township Committee would be appointing members to the Zoning Committee. He stated in the past the Zoning Committee was instrumental to the creation of the Riparian Zone Ordinance. Mr. Mullen stated he was interested in being part of the Zoning Committee.

Sustainable Jersey Initiative – Ms. Till will take the lead and work with Mr. Mullen on EV in Cranbury.

Update to Stormwater Ordinance – Cranbury’s Stormwater Ordinance, completely revised in 2006, needs to be enhanced to go beyond the State’s minimum stormwater management requirements and to actively promote the use of green infrastructure. The EC will work with the Zoning Committee to revise the Ordinance and recommend updates to the Township Committee.

Single-Use Plastic Bag Ordinance - The single-use plastic bag ban bill passed in the NJ Senate but died in the Assembly. There is now a state-wide initiative to have municipalities adopt a local ordinance as a statement of support. Over 100 townships have passed their own single-use plastic bag ordinances. Members discussed that the State Ordinance was too daunting. Mr. Mullen stated at the next meeting more information will be provided for further discussion on single-use plastic bags.

Sustainable Jersey -There was discussion about assisting Dr. Rogers of the Township Committee with her Complete Streets Initiative. Members also discussed doing an updated energy audit, and moving the Township up to Silver Status. Members stated there is money in the budget to work on initiatives and reaching out to the community for input.

Stream Clean Up – Ms. Golisano reported the Stream Clean Up is scheduled for April 16 in the morning.

APPLICATIONS

Toll Brothers/Petty Road Application – The EC is not advising the Planning Board to take any specific course of action regarding this application. There are pre-existing drainage and flooding issues that impact the Petty Road area, but it is not the responsibility of this application to correct them.

Preserve Management – Trail Maintenance

Mr. Mullen stated maintenance of the trails will commence again in the spring. Ms. Golisano will include on the March 2020 Agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional comment.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

With no further business, Mr. Mullen requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion by Ms. Lowery, seconded by Mr. Mildenberg, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 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 January 21, 2020.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 19th day of February, 2020.

Jean Golisano

Jean Golisano

Environmental Commission Secretary