

**MINUTES OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

February 18, 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, February 18, 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.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

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

NON-MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Ferrante, Township Committeeman and EC Liaison
Brendan Hanson, Parks Commission Member
Jackie Johnson, Shade Tree Member
Anna Drago, Cranbury Resident

MINUTES

The Minutes of the January 21, 2020 meeting were reviewed and a typo corrected. On a motion by Mr. Gallagher, seconded by Mr. Mildenberg, the minutes as amended were approved by all members present.

REPORTS

Township Committee Member

Township Committee member and EC liaison, Michael Ferrante, reported at the last Township Committee meeting he gave a presentation, "De-mystifying Cranbury Municipal Government," which covered such topics as Open Public Records Act, Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), Township Committee members, employees and township operations. Mr. Ferrante reminded the members that the Township e-mail should be used. He reported 15 boy scouts attended the meeting to fulfill a requirement for their Citizenship in the Nation badge.

Mr. Ferrante stated a new Zoning Committee has been formed, which will act as an advisory board to the Township Committee. Mr. Mullen inquired what role the TC plays in approving

Planning and Zoning Board applications. Mr. Ferrante explained that the TC has no role in the approval process but is empowered to hear appeals to Planning and Zoning Board decisions.

Planning Board Member

Mr. Gallagher, the EC's representative on the Planning Board, reported there were two items on the Planning Board Agenda. The first, Alfieri Cranbury South Brunswick Park was granted a design waiver regarding tree caliper deviation. The second was the Toll Brothers application, and Mr. Gallagher reported there was discussion on whether the application was properly advertised and also that Cranbury's 150-foot riparian zone was not shown on the plan. The applicant decided to withdraw the application rather than proceed. Mr. Gallagher stated the applicant may need to ask for a variance or revise the plan to not encroach on the stream.

Members agreed that the riparian ordinance must be represented on any plans from applicants whose property has a riparian zone or the application should not be accepted.

Mr. Gallagher left the meeting room, while the EC members further discussed the riparian zone.

Mr. Mullen stated that the applicant agreed to submit new plans that will clearly show Cranbury's 150-foot riparian zone. If the applicant also requests a variance to Cranbury's Riparian Zone Ordinance, Mr. Mullen stated his opinion that the EC should advise the Planning Board to deny the variance request. The applicant was advised of Cranbury's Riparian Zone Ordinance at a November DRC meeting and chose to ignore it. The applicant had ample time to create a design that respected this ordinance but did not. Granting the applicant a variance will set a precedent that will undermine the very existence of Cranbury's Riparian Zone Ordinance.

Mr. Mullen made a motion, seconded by Ms. Till, that if the applicant requests such a variance that the EC immediately issue a memo to the Planning Board advising them to deny the variance for the reasons just discussed. All members present, with the exception of Mr. Gallagher who had recused himself, agreed to the motion, and the motion passed.

Mr. Mullen stated he will draft a memo for the members to review. *Mr. Gallagher returned to the meeting.*

Cranbury Station, LLC

At the January EC Meeting, Mr. Michael Vitiello, Esq., stated he would prepare responses to questions asked by Mr. Mullen and the public. No response has yet been received. Mr. Mullen stated that, following the January EC Meeting, he informed Mr. Vitiello that there may be a certified vernal pool on that site that was not mentioned in the Applicant's Environmental Impact Assessment. Mr. Mullen requested the Applicant to check to see if there is a vernal pool on the property. To date, the applicant has not responded to any questions. Ms. Till inquired about following up, and Mr. Gallagher stated there is no application submitted to the Planning Board yet.

Brainerd Lake Dredging

Mr. Gallagher reported there are no Dredging Subcommittee meetings currently scheduled, and Mr. Ferrante confirmed nothing is happening at present. The dredging project will commence in September. The Township engineer is currently preparing the bid specs for the project. He suggested it would be beneficial for someone to contact a township with a similar project to better

understand pitfalls, problems and any recommendations. Mr. Ferrante reported the survey shows the baseline of the lake, and stated the project will be messy.

Preserve Management

Mr. Mullen stated no work is being done at the preserves during the winter months. He reported Mrs. Barbara Adams, Cranbury School teacher, is working with Dr. Rogers to plant perennials around the West Property Drive kiosk. Mrs. Adams will provide info for the kiosk, and the EC will pay to have it printed on special paper. Ms. Mathers-Lowery offered to work with Mrs. Adams.

Sustainable Jersey

Ms. Till reported she reviewed the Sustainable Jersey guidelines and reported there are activities already being worked on that could be completed. She stated there are many energy initiatives, including an energy audit and how the Township is using its electric resources. Opportunities also include electric vehicle, stormwater and single-use plastic bag initiatives. Ms. Till suggested working with a consultant and bringing the community into the discussion to determine residents' goals and objectives. A presentation of new sustainable goals and objectives will be given to the Township Committee on March 9th. Ms. Till stated the Township currently holds Bronze status and has done a lot already to achieve Silver. She encouraged the EC's efforts focus on how to reach Silver status. Mr. Mullen thanked Ms. Till and requested opportunities for EC members to work on.

NEW BUSINESS

Zoning Committee – Mr. Mullen reported he was appointed to the Zoning Committee. He stated the Zoning Committee was instrumental in the past in getting the Riparian Zone Ordinance passed.

Update to Stormwater Ordinance –Mr. Mullen reported that Mr. Mike Pisauro of the Watershed Institute has volunteered to give a presentation on the Stormwater management ordinance at the March 16th EC Meeting. The EC will also work with the Zoning Committee to review the ordinance and recommend updates to the Township Committee.

Single-Use Plastic Bag Ordinance – Mr. Mullen reported Mr. Mike Pisauro, of the Watershed Institute, was not able to attend this evening's meeting; however, he had provided a copy of Hopewell's single-use plastic bag ordinance for discussion purposes. Mr Mullen reported over 30 municipalities in New Jersey have this ordinance, including Hopewell, Trenton and West Windsor. Members discussed the impact on businesses, and stated, while Cranbury is small and the impact may be small, passing the ordinance would be symbolic and show its support to the State initiative. After additional discussion, members agreed education about the bags is vital, as well as raising consciousness to make better decisions. Ms. Mathers-Lowery suggested giving out reusable bags at the Health & Wellness Fair. Ms. Till stated Sustainable Jersey might have some suggestions, and offered to informally discuss with restaurant and business owners. Members will further discuss the best way to proceed with an ordinance and educate the public.

Health and Wellness Fair

The Health and Wellness Fair will be held on May 16th. Members discussed possibly having the map for children to guess geocache locations and to educate about single-use plastic bags.

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

APPLICATIONS

There were no applications this evening.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jackie Johnson, Shade Tree member, agreed that people need education to start using reusable/washable bags. She also commented that people are not aware of the problems of storm water management. She reported the retention basin in Four Seasons needs the sediment cleaned. Mr. Gallagher stated retention basins should have a maintenance plan and advised Ms. Johnson the maintenance plan should be part of the Homeowners agreement or in Township records.

Mr. Brendan Hanson introduced himself and stated he was attending the meeting on behalf of the Parks Commission.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

With no further business, Mr. Mullen requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion by Ms. Mathers-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 February 18, 2020.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name this xxx day of May, 2020.

Jean Golisano

Jean Golisano

Environmental Commission Secretary