



Bernards Township Environmental Commission



BERNARDS TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES – November 22, 2021 – 7pm

CALL TO ORDER

called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm via Zoom conference call in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act of 1975.

FLAG SALUTE

All those assembled saluted the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: John Crane, Nancy Cook, Debra DeWitt, James LaMaire, Jason Roberts, Alice Smyk, Sarah Wolfson

Absent: Joan Bannan, Jane Conklin, Corey Fischer

Also Present: Kaitlin Cartoccio – Recording Secretary, Sydney Abraham – Americorps Watershed Ambassador.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve EC regular meeting minutes – October 25, 2021 by Nancy Cook, second by James LaMaire . All in favor, motion carried.

REPORTS & MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

- a. **Application for NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands General Permit 17 – Fellowship Senior Living**

No comment.

- b. **TWA Application – Braemar**

No comment.

DISCUSSION

- a. **Intro/Americorps Watershed Ambassador – Sydney Abraham**

Sydney is the Americorp Watershed Ambassador. 10-month term of service, assigned to a watershed region, 20 in NJ. Area #6 – mostly Morris County area – Rockaway river, Whippany, Upper Passaic. Water quality monitoring, water assessment, presentations for local groups. Projects that help communities implement best practices for water management. Rain barrel, stream assessments, etc. Nancy Cook asked – how the program is funded. EC would be responsible for materials cost but not the workshop leading. 50% Americorps, 50% NJDEP. Deb DeWitt mentioned issues with Harrison Brook flooding. The Watershed program could help with tree planting or educational awareness campaign for homeowners. Nancy Cook inquired about composting – Sydney replied that if there was link to water quality it could work. Rain barrels – rainwater harvesting barrel. Put it under your downspout and collect water to help mediate flooding. Conversations



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surrounding a rain barrel workshop for the spring or advertising at Charter Day.

b. 2022 EC Meeting Dates

Deb asked for people to put the EC meetings for 2022 on your calendar. There was also discussion for the December 2021 meeting. The discussion was made to cancel the December 2021 meeting. The EC will discuss in January 2022 about in-person meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

c. Status on Current Projects

i. Public Outreach

Nancy Cook created a one-page flyer on how to recycle batteries. That will be sent out for distribution. Alice Smyk suggested a post on how to properly dispose of Christmas trees.

ii. Pumpkin Smash

Over 150 people and over 80 pumpkins smashed. Nancy Cook, Debra DeWitt, Rachel Talbert from the BT Library and Gabe Troconis from REACH volunteering. Lots of happy pigs at English Farm. Make a note at the Pumpkin Smash location that there will be a Pumpkin Smash there after Halloween.

iii. Farmers Meeting

Deb hosted the meeting. Farmers from all over town attended and spoke on topics like deer and other wildlife management.

iv. Guerilla Gardening

Update on cold sowing seeds.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Applications

i. Faizan – ZB 21-030 62 Wisteria Way – Variance for steep slope disturbance to construct new single-family dwelling.

Jim LaMaire left at 7:58 pm. Sarah Wolfson left 8:03 pm.

For this property, the required improvable lot coverage is a minimum of 25,000 sf. On the form for Dimensional Statistics for Zoning, next to the required improvable lot coverage of 25,000 sf, the existing is listed as 12,866 sf and proposed 20,658 sf. Yet on the Steep Slope map, next to the required 25,000 sf improvable lot coverage, the



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proposed lists 41,659 sf. The applicant should provide clarity with respect to the two different numbers proposed.

The Environmental Commission notes that due to the site and surrounding topography storm water best management practices should be given extra consideration during site work and as part of final site grading and restoration. In addition, implementation of best management practices to preserve and protect trees during the site work should be considered.

The Commission would ask the Board to remind the applicants that they are virtually at capacity on lot coverage and that any future additions such as patios, sheds, pools or any other impervious surface coverage items would put them over the limit. The Commission suggests they discuss this with the applicant and perhaps the applicant may want to consider reducing the amount of impervious surface coverage.

Regarding this application, the Environmental Commission would like to see a tree removal and replacement plan. Long-term tree survivability should be the goal of any tree replacement plan and native hardwood species should be selected whenever practical.

Regarding this application, pool water discharge may result from backwashing of filters, or from the draining of swimming pools at the end of season, or during maintenance. This water often contains pool treatment chemicals that can cause damage to the receiving environment in the form of non-point source pollution. Therefore, the Environmental Commission wants township residents to use the best management practices available when discharging pool water.

Motion by Alice Smyk, seconded by Nancy Cook.

All in favor, motion carried.

- ii. **Finley Real Estate LLC – ZB 21-031** – Prelim/final site plan/ “C” variances to make temporary outside dining area & associated structures permanent.

No comment.

Motion by John Crane , seconded by Alice Smyk .

All in favor, motion carried.

- iii. **Liason – Regional Native Pollinator Working Group – next meeting 12/9 at 4 pm via Zoom**

Tabled until January 2022.



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PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments.

COMMENTS BY MEMBERS

Alice Smyk commented that the EC should consider doing a project with the Watershed Ambassador, especially the rain barrel. Debra DeWitt thanked Jason Roberts for his time on the Environmental Commission. Leave the Leaves project for the future– don't blow the leaves off your yard and haul them off to the landfill. Mulcher. Parks and Rec is doing a Trex Challenge.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:26 pm. Motion by Jason Roberts, seconded by Debra DeWitt . All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Kaitlin Cartoccio, Meeting Secretary



Bernards Township Environmental Commission

TO: Zoning Board Chairperson and Members

FROM: Deb Dewitt, Chairperson
Bernards Township Environmental Commission

DATE: December 1, 2021

RE: Applications review

The Environmental Commission reviewed these applications at their November 22, 2021 meeting and forwards the following comments:

Faizan – ZB21-030, 62 Wisteria Way

For this property, the required improvable lot coverage is a minimum of 25,000 sf. On Form F, Dimensional Statistics for Zoning, next to the required improvable lot area of 25,000 sf, the existing is listed as 12,866 sf and proposed **20,658 sf**. Yet on the Steep Slope map, next to the required 25,000 sf improvable lot area, the proposed lists **41,659 sf**. The Board may want to have the applicant provide clarity with respect to the two different numbers proposed.

The Commission notes that due to the site and surrounding topology, storm water best management practices should be given extra consideration during site work and as part of final site grading and restoration.

We ask the Board to remind the applicants that they are virtually at capacity on lot coverage and that any future additions of impervious surface coverage would likely put them over the limit.

The applicant may want to consider reducing the amount of coverage to provide relief for future plans.

The Commission notes the lack of a tree removal plan and asks that the applicant discuss with the Zoning Board what trees, if any, will be removed and if any will be replaced. The Commission recommends native hardwood species should be planted whenever practical.

Implementation of best practices to preserve and protect existing trees during site work should be considered.

We note from this application an existing pool. Pool water discharge may result from backwashing of filters, or from the draining of swimming pools at the end of season or during maintenance. This water often contains pool treatment chemicals that can cause damage to the receiving environment. Therefore, the Environmental Commission wants township residents to use the best management practices available when discharging pool water.

Finley Real Estate LLC - ZB21-031

The Environmental Commission has no comments on this application.

Cc: David Schley, Township Planner
Cyndi Kiefer, Secretary; for distribution to BOA members