

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

March 2, 2016 – 7 pm Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order. He read the notice satisfying the Open Public Meeting Act. All stood for the pledge of allegiance. All were reminded to turn off their cell phones or put them in silent mode.

Members Present: Jerry Bowers, Henry Gore, Ted Harwick, Chairman Michael Keady, Dwight Pederson, Richard Schrack and Secretary Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Guest: Robert Thurgarland (The resignation of Robert Thurgarland dated March 1, 2016 was accepted by the Township Committee. At the March 1, 2016 Township Committee meeting Robert Thurgarland took the Oath of Office to fill the vacancy of the unexpired term of Anthony Roselle as Committeeman.) and Laura Wilson.

Township Committee Liaison Present: Ray Krov

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: After reading the minutes, a motion was made by Jerry Bowers and seconded by Ted Harwick to approve the minutes of February 3, 2016. All present were in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Robert Thurgarland thanked everyone for his time as an Environmental Commission member but looks forward to his new role as the Environmental Commission Alternate liaison. He will continue to assist with the seedling distribution project as well as with community day. He is very interested in helping whenever he can. His is involved with County Shared Services Committee and is happy to work with anyone who is interested in exploring the options with Holland Township. At this time Robert Thurgarland departed.

2016 NJ Tree Recovery Campaign – a way to promote Arbor Day. Everyone present decided that a Holland Township proclamation should be done and Secretary Kozak will forward the models submitted by Henry Gore to Clerk Miller for the Township Committee to approve. The goal for us will be to tie Arbor Day with the Seedling Distribution Day so all agreed our proclamation should be for April 23, 2016. Liaison Krov will also reach out to Clerk Miller. Dwight Pederson will work on the press release and Mike Keady has some pictures from last year to use in the press release. Dwight Pederson will work with the Scouts for service hours for the seedling distribution and maybe a dedication service for Arbor day. Secretary Kozak will print flyers once we have the ok that they are ready for distribution. She will also have them put on the web site.

Community Day – ongoing development process nothing new to report. Mayor Krov will work with Jessica Neglia to expand the space needed for participation of the Environmental Commission and Green Team as well as the off shoot groups that want to participate and have Environmental concerns in nature

PennEast Pipeline Update: Laura Wilson is present for an updated discussion. A new route has been proposed. FERC had requested questions be answered by PennEast and as they answered they also proposed a new route. The new route is down by the narrows. The first route was going thru Gravel Hill which was not favorable. The DEP proposed a second route that put the pipeline on Crab Apple Hill Road, onto Church Road, and then onto Route 519. PennEast rejected that route and suggested a third alternative. The proposed change is from the Gilbert Plant bearing left onto Route 627 following the utility right of way to the public road (discussions have included using the railroad) with the pipe going thru Spring Garden and straight up the cliff to meet the hay field and follow the right of way up there. There are environmental concerns at the bluffs which include: the prickly pear cactus, the caves of the Indian dwellings, c1 streams, the birds, and the natural habitat etc.

The Mayor Krov has been invited to a meeting with the DEP. Chairman Keady will also participate in this meeting. Mike Keady will work with secretary Kozak on handouts for the meeting. Kingwood had a meeting and information was distributed from the meeting.

Some top concerns expressed against the Proposed PennEast Pipeline include: The lack of demonstrated need or public benefit, Violations of the Clean Water Act and other Federal Regulations, Impacts to ground water, wells and septic systems, Violation of public funds to convert preserved farms and open space to Commercial/Industrial use, and Violation of the Constitution to use eminent domain for corporate gain (when there is NO public benefit).

Information about the recent changes will be shared with Rick Schrack who will try to update the map showing the proposed old route and proposed new route. Additional discussions took place about the environmental concerns that face Holland Township and how unique the township is. Water still appears to be the best topic of discussion. The C1 Streams in Holland are also important and FERC needs to know how many times the streams could be crossed with the proposed routes thru Holland.

Mayors are being contacted to see if they are interested in participating in a meeting in Washington DC. More information to follow.

A new group called HALT (Homeowners Against Land Taking) has evolved with Laura Wilson sitting on the board.

Laura Wilson was thanked for her update and involvement. Henry Gore stated that no one should give up and Laura Wilson declared that the groups opposed to the Pipeline are not going away. More information to follow.

Sub-Committees:

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Rick Schrack and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as Secretary Kozak. nothing new to report.

Trails – Ted Harwick, Jerry Bowers and Richard Schrack.

DEP grant – Holland Township won the grant. Rick Schrack and Robert Thurgarland discussed some ideas. The Township needs to address the issue if we really want to move forward with the grant. Matching gift conversation needs to be discussed as well as what really needs to be done and how to go about accomplishing this. Maser Consulting is to do an overview of the property. Secretary Kozak will send Mayor Krov the information about the DEP grant for TC consideration. Henry Gore is in favor of getting professionals involvement. We need to develop a timeline with the grant if the Township Committee decides to move forward. Discussion also took place on who should be responsible for this project as it is a huge undertaking.

ANJEC Environmental Stewardship Grant 2016 was discussed. The deadline is April 1, 2016. Discussion took place about who is interested in following up with the project. Rick Schrack said he can work on filling in the grant paperwork. All agreed that would be fantastic and that Rick Schrack can forward to Secretary Kozak for distribution and follow up. Once the application is acceptable, Secretary Kozak will file with ANJEC.

Community Education and Outreach – Jerry Bowers, Dwight Pederson, and Ted Harwick – If you see additional corrections that are needed please send them to Secretary Kozak. The link is as follows:
<http://www.hollandtownshipnj.gov/14-ec/46-environmental-commission.html>

Highlands Conformance – Jerry Bowers (chair), Mike Keady and Henry Gore. Chairman Keady will work with Secretary Kozak and Group Melvin. More information to follow.

Shade Tree and Community Forestry Plan Sub-Committee – Henry Gore, Dwight Pederson and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as secretary. Secretary Kozak is working on processing payment for Consultant Farr. That is part of the requirement for the State to reimburse Holland Township. Volunteer Hours are being received and

will be part of the package sent to the state. Secretary Kozak will submit the Forestry Plan to the Web for posting and is working with Henry Gore on a letter of introduction.

Public Comment: No comments were expressed.

Board Members: Nothing to comment.

Planning Board Application update:

“Block 2 Lot 1.02 & Block 4 Lot 1– Miller Road Solar Project LLC – 10 Mill Road – Preliminary and Final Site Plan – Solar Project – Received into our office January 18, 2016 – 45-day completeness deadline March 3, 2016. Board Action needed.”

At the Planning Board meeting of February 8, 2016 the application was deemed incomplete. One item of interest was the discussion of the EIS (Environmental Impact Statement). Although the applicant did not see the need to submit an EIS and requested a waiver, the board and professionals did agree that it was required and would be helpful for the public hearing. Henry Gore did state that he was trying to see if there were any violations filed and he could not find anything for this property at the DEP. Many of the locals are talking about some kind of chemical issue with the property but since the application was deemed incomplete and no public hearing has been scheduled these conversations are not before the board. All are encouraged to attend the public hearing when scheduled and to ask questions then. As a reminder, Chairman Keady did suggest that a solar field is favored in the Industrial Zone and that the owner of the land has filed a tax appeal because of compromised property. Henry Gore suggested that a formal resolution be made telling the Planning Board that they need to include the Environmental Commission in the review of the Environmental Impact Statement but all agreed that a resolution is not necessary. Chairman Keady as a member of the Planning Board does receive applications and agreed with Secretary Kozak that distributing the information prior to the completeness determination of the Planning Board was not needed. Secretary Kozak will forward the information. With that being said, everyone is always encouraged to come to the office at any time to look at any files in question. Secretary Kozak also reminded everyone that an EIS has not been received hence why it was not distributed!

At 9:10 pm Ted Harwick made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary