

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

December 4, 2019 7 PM Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order. I call to order the December 4, 2019 Regular Meeting of the Holland Township Environmental Commission. Adequate notice of this meeting was given pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act Law by the Environmental Commission Secretary by:

1. Posting such notice on the bulletin board at the Municipal Building.
2. Publishing the notice in the December 13, 2018 edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat
3. And faxing to the Express-Times for informational purposes only.

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, David Harrison, Mike Keady, Susan Meacham, Ray Note, Dwight Pederson, Township Committee Liaison: Robert Thurgarland and Secretary Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Absent: Ted Harwick

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: A motion was made by Susan Meacham and seconded by David Harrison to approve the minutes of November 5, 2019 as presented. All present were in favor of the motion with exception of Jerry Bowers who abstained. Motion carried.

PennEast Pipeline update: Susan Meacham and Mike Keady – Susan Meacham reported that The Third Circuit (comprised of New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania) ruled that PennEast cannot use eminent domain to seize state lands, and this could go to the Supreme Court. Remedies could include revising the Natural Gas Act, which could take years, and that FERC could restructure. Various conversations continued to take place regarding Natural Gas, Preserved Farmland, Rights of the People, who is using the product and the fracking procedure. PennEast did file at FERC asking FERC to explain their view on the Constitutional questions that have evolved. If PennEast does not go to the Supreme Court then they can go back to FERC and start the process over with a new route and a new EIS. Some people are thinking that PennEast will remain in PA and use the Adelpia line. Renewable Energy is cheaper and more available so natural gas is not a priority.

Route 519 Widening Project –The road is open and the detour is abandoned. Questions have come up about the speed limit and if the prior posted speed will resume. Questions also came up about the 2020 project and if the road will still be closed at times. Nothing new to report at this time as the Township Committee is waiting on the County for an update.

Musconetcong River Management Council – Dwight Pederson – nothing to report.

DEP initiative to help towns pass ordinance on Soil Dumping. This evolved from problems in Sussex County with someone bringing in truckloads of dirt onto his property. A mountain of dirt evolved and no one could do anything to stop this from happening. It has been suggested that towns look into putting an ordinance into place so if something like that happens then you would be able to correct the situation. A model ordinance is available on the DEP website. After more discussion, all agreed to table this for a future discussion. It might be beneficial to have our Planner look at our current ordinance to see if we can alter the existing ordinance to incorporate illegal soil dumping.

Public Hearing of November 6, 2019 regarding Holland Township Ordinance requiring Developers to post a bond to cover costs of Decommissioning Major Solar Facilities. Liaison Thurgarland thanked the subcommittee comprised of Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady and Susan Meacham for all their help. Secretary Kozak will verify proof of publication and process clarification.

Phoenix Energy – Western Land Services has been approaching homeowners regarding easement availability to join power lines. This is the same company that PennEast used.

NJ Tree Recovery Campaign May 2020 – Holland Township submitted their application requesting free trees. The event will have distribution on Saturday May 2, 2020 with a pick up date before at the Warren County Soil Conservation District in Hackettstown. Mr. Harwick and Mr. Pederson have been picking up trees the last few years we were involved with the program. April 24, 2020 is Arbor Day. Secretary Kozak will work with Clerk Miller on the yearly proclamation. Secretary Kozak will work with liaison Thurgarland with the Township Committee supporting our yearly tree planting and plaque dedications. Secretary Kozak will distribute the giveaway flyers once received from the state as they have specific forms to be used. Chairman Keady will do the annual newspaper announcement. We need to work with the local Brownies or Boy Scouts with this event and we will need to establish contact in January.

The 2020 EC schedule is as follows:

Township of Holland
Environmental Commission

2020 Meetings

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Environmental Commission, Township of Holland, County of Hunterdon, New Jersey, will hold their regular meetings on the following dates in 2020 at 7:00 P.M. at the Holland Township Municipal Building, 61 Church Road, Milford, NJ. Meetings are open to the public.

Meeting Dates

January 8, 2020 (Reorganization Meeting)
February 5, 2020
March 4, 2020
April 1, 2020
May 6, 2020
June 2, 2020 * (Tuesday)
July 1, 2020
August 5, 2020
September 2, 2020
October 7, 2020
November 3, 2020 *(Tuesday)
December 2 2020
January 6, 2021 (Reorganization Meeting)

Sub-Committees:

Trails – Ted Harwick, Jerry Bowers and Ray Note. Secretary Kozak reported that DPW Supervisor Colaluca is aware that the second trail head kiosk needs cork but there is a problem with obtaining the proper cork for the kiosk. There is a cork shortage. He will stay on top of this. We need to continue spreading the word about the trail. There is a parking area on Cyphers that serves as a starting point for hiking the Gorge. Secretary Kozak will touch base with Mayor Bush about the availability of the county map and making it accessible on our website.

Community Forestry Plan – Ray Note, David Harrison, Ted Harwick, Henry Gore (emeritus) and Secretary Kozak

Community Forestry Plan Grant - The Holland Township Community Forestry Plan 2020-2024 was submitted and we are awaiting a response from the DEP after December 12, 2019. Consultant Farr will be paid for his work with the plan from the DEP Green Communities Grant and will be involved with any revisions needed.

For 2019 Secretary Kozak reported that Holland Township had 4 participants in the Continuing Education requirement of the CFP with over 20 credits.

Tree Inventory Update – The subcommittee is still working on this project with Arborist Farr. Dwight Pederson needs to tweak the system for us to enter the data being collected into an Excel spreadsheet that could then be inputted into iTree. Ron Farr figures he has used about \$7,500 of the grant. We will have grant money left over for the continuance of the project in the spring. Volunteer sheets are needed so that Secretary Kozak can work with Ron Farr and the subcommittee on an interim report. Discussions took place about continuing the project in 2020 with the understanding that we need to finish the project as outlined in the grant. We covered the high priority roads and are working on the secondary roads. The third tier roads are really not important since there are not many trees on them. Once we complete this project we can try for a Hazardous Tree grant which piggy backs this project. We have identified trees of concern and once the data is in the system we can generate reports to work with the Township. The Hazardous Tree grant will be more involved. The Township will have to determine how to deal with trees ranked high on concern. It could be working with DPW on a plan that could involve additional help from JCP&L.

Girl Scout Silver Award - - Elizabeth Tammaro. Nothing new to report.

Highlands Conformance – Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady and Dwight Pederson.

Highlands Council Environmental and Economic Sustainability Grant Awards Program update:

No news to update other than Secretary Kozak is still working with Maser and the Highlands Council.

The Retention/Detention basin inventory is still an important project but the priority projects are the Wastewater Management Plan, The Water Use and Conservation Plan, The Master Plan Reexamination and the Affordable Housing/Fair Share Housing Plan. Subcommittees of the Planning Board for the Reexamination Plan and Affordable Housing/Fair Share Housing have been created to work with Planner Green. Plans will be available for review once created. The process for public comment will be through the Planning Board.

Dwight Pederson spoke with MWA and Nancy Lawler expressed an area of concern being with bacteria leakage into the streams from leaking septic systems. Ms. Lawler has ideas regarding stream monitoring with a focus on the need for stronger septic ordinances. The Musconnetcong River has been monitored for about the last 10 years but not for chemical or bacteria. Lab testing is used for that testing. Dwight Pederson suggested a meeting for better clarification of the Highlands Council Grant. This ties into existing grant money available for Task 10 – quality of water discussion. Dwight Pederson also questioned the action we can take with any findings. A subcommittee meeting is needed.

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Jerry Bowers, Susan Meacham and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as Secretary – Nothing new to report Secretary Kozak will have to look at who signed up for classes and where we stand with our yearly requirements.

Community Education and Outreach – Jerry Bowers, Dwight Pederson, and Susan Meacham – Nothing new to report.

The EC webpage is: <http://www.hollandtownshipnj.gov/14-ec/46-environmental-commission.html>. Please send any additions or corrections to Secretary Kozak for posting

Inventory on Fauna and Flora subcommittee - David Harrison, Dwight Pederson, Ray Note and Henry Gore (emeritus) – As mentioned above, David Harrison has looked at the Tree Inventory sheets and approximately 55 species have been identified. He is working on species identification. Based on the 864 trees identified, he

found 10 to be most common with 5 trees being subject to disease and pest issues. Some trees identified include: Sugar Maple, White Ash, Hemlock and Red Cedar. Secretary Kozak will make sure the rest of the inventory sheets are distributed. More information to follow.

Public Comment: No one is present in the public.

Liaison Thurgarland thanked everyone for a wonderful year and hoped to see everyone at the Township Holiday Luncheon on December 17th. The Holland Township Fire Company tree lighting is for December 15th which kicks off Santa visiting Holland Township tour. Happy Holidays to all.

At 8:35 pm David Harrison made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary