

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

October 7, 2020 7 PM Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order. I call to order the October 7, 2020 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 12, 2019 edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat
3. And faxing to the Express-Times for informational purposes only.

HOLLAND TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION PUBLIC NOTICE TOWNSHIP OF HOLLAND

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF FORMAT OF REGULAR TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR THE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 7:00 PM WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2020

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE.

THE MEETING FORMAT HAS BEEN CHANGED FROM IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 61 CHURCH ROAD, TO TELECONFERENCE DUE TO COVID-19 OUTBRESK AND THE STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED BY GOVERNOR MURPHY.

IN LIEU OF IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE, THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCING AND COMMENT DURING THE DESIGNATED PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT.

OFFICIAL ACTION TO BE TAKEN

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92616972144?pwd=RXVjUVRmZkhmbzJkZFZLdENIM0o1Zz09>

Phone: 1 646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 926 1697 2144

Passcode: 147818

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, Mike Keady, David Harrison, Dwight Pederson, Susan Meacham, and Secretary Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Absent: Ted Harwick, Ray Note, and Township Committee Liaison: Robert Thurgarland.

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: A motion was made by Mike Keady and seconded by Dwight Pederson to dispense with the reading of the September 2, 2020 minutes and to approve as presented. All present were in favor of the motion with the exception of Dave Harrison and Susan Meacham who abstained. Motion carried.

PennEast Pipeline update: Susan Meacham and Mike Keady – Susan Meacham stated that a letter was released by FERC regarding the Adelphia line saying that Phase I which is a gasoline line can be converted to carry natural gas. There is a different docket number for this two-phase project. Phase I would be in Pennsylvania and Phase II is to be in New Jersey. There are over 600 comments to FERC for this. The general belief is that the project will not work without the New Jersey side so PennEast could be dead in the water.

Sub-Committees:

Trails – Ted Harwick, Jerry Bowers and Ray Note. It was noted that the trail off Cyphers is all overgrown. Since this is a County Trail, Jerry Bowers offered to speak with Mayor Bush about the upkeep. David Harrison stated that the Holland Trail is being well cared for. The lower trail kiosk needs information. A thank you is extended to the DPW for a job well done.

Community Forestry Plan – Ray Note, David Harrison, Ted Harwick, and Secretary Kozak

Community Forestry Plan Grant - The Holland Township Community Forestry Plan 2020-2024 was approved. Secretary Kozak has been working on the volunteer hours for submittal for grant reimbursement.

Tree Inventory – Dwight Pederson and David Harrison continue to work on integrating the data collected with emphasis on dead trees. Additional information was needed but they were able to convert the data collected and the iTree program is being populated. A final report will be provided when we are all done collecting information. Consultant Farr is working with Ray Note and Jerry Bowers to conduct the last tree inventory. Susan Meacham volunteered to enter the data collected. Secretary Kozak will have the sheets ready for pickup next week. Secretary Kozak will email everyone with the sheets and have a hard copy available for David Harrison to pick up.

Secretary Kozak to follow up with the Arbor Day label project. More details to follow.

Highlands Conformance – Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady and Dwight Pederson. – The Holland Township Highlands Council subcommittee has been busy as several tasks were completed and adopted.

The Planning Board hosted Public Hearings for the Re-examination Report, The Stormwater Management and Mitigation Plan, and the Water Use and Conservation Plan. Planner Green and Secretary Kozak are working on gathering data for the Fair Share Housing Plan which will need subcommittee review prior to submission to the Planning Board for a Public Hearing. All reports are available to the public. All are reminded that everyone is welcome to comment during the public portion of any public hearing and that is the way to get opinions, comments, questions and concerns into the record!

Highlands Council Environmental and Economic Sustainability Grant Awards Program update:

Secretary Kozak continues to work with Maser and the Highlands Council but distribution of funds is on hold. The Retention/Detention basin inventory is still an important project. Shifting of monies from previously approved tasks is being considered but the council is thinking that everything is on hold per the Governor.

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Jerry Bowers, Susan Meacham and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as Secretary – Nothing new to report. Secretary Kozak will start working on 2020.

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 – Nothing new to report.

Holland Happenings – Chairman Keady worked on the article. With no comment from the members, the article was submitted to the Township for inclusion on the next addition of Holland Happenings.

Wild and Scenic – Liaison Pederson had nothing new to report.

Planning Board Hearing - - Solar Project at the Hughesville Mill Property on Cyphers Road. Dwight Pederson stated that the public would like to continue parking on the mill property for access to the Musky. The public, mostly fisherman, have been using the mill property since the mill closed down. Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) director Alan Hunt is hopeful that IPPE will grant access with the solar project being before the Planning Board. MWA is looking for an easement for permanent access to the river bank with some parking near the old mill. A meeting took place with Dwight Pederson, Alan Hunt, Gary Pohorly and Larry LaFevre. Gary Pohorly has also reached out to Hunterdon County Parks and Recreation. More discussions took place regarding this and how to approach this. Mike Keady presented the board with the history of the Fine Farmhouse and what has transpired with that project which relates to the other solar project on Cyphers Road. Discussion of the Planning Board Process. Chairman Keady stated that the Environmental Commission needs to do a better job of discussing the projects. Jerry Bowers reviewed the Decommissioning Plan and made comments which were sent to the Secretary who submitted them to the Planning Board Attorney. The board requested the proposed decommissioning plan be sent to them for review. Concerns arose regarding the plans for the cap when the project is decommissioned. Who will be monitoring the areas of concern? The Environmental Commission talked about having its own LSRP to analyze data submitted. During the Public Hearing of the Solar Application, buffering to hide the panels was a major discussion. Wild and Scenic was contacted. More buffering than what was proposed is being requested. Mike Keady, Jerry Bowers and Dwight Pederson will meet and discuss sending a formal memo to Secretary Kozak for the next scheduled Planning Board Meeting.

The MWA also asked Holland as well as other surrounding municipalities to write a letter of support regarding the MWA working with the Highlands Council on seeking a grant to study the river regarding fecal coliform. Technically the letters go to the Hunterdon County Freeholders for endorsement of the grant. More information to follow.

Board of Adjustment Application – cell tower off Riegelsville Road – Board Member Jerry Bowers had to recuse himself and left the meeting at 8:25 pm. Chairman Keady explained that the application is on the property owned by the Holland Township Volunteer Fire Company and Board of Adjustment members with the Fire Company have to recuse themselves and Planning Board members are helping out with the application. Chairman Keady is one of the Planning Board members participating in the cell tower application. He explained that Limestone was a topic of concern. Dwight Pederson asked if this proposed pole is going to be similar to the one over by the old Perrine’s Nursery which is on land owned by a fire company. Mike Keady discussed the comments made at the BOA Hearing about the proposed pole being used for First Responders which is something that evolved from 9/11 and is proprietary to AT&T. More discussions about the application took place.

Public Comment: No one is present in the public.

At 8:40 pm Dave Harrison made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary