

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

May 4, 2022 7 PM Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order. I call to order the May 4, 2022 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 9, 2021 edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat
3. And faxing to the Express-Times for informational purposes only.

All recited the pledge of allegiance.

All were reminded to turn off their cell phones or put them in silent mode.

Members Present: Regina Barna, Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady, Ray Note, Dwight Pederson, Township Committee Liaison Dan Bush and Land Use Administrator (LUA) Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Absent: David Harrison, Susan Meacham, Dwight Pederson, and Township Committee Alternate Liaison Thurgarland

Guest: n/a

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: The review and adoption of the April 6, 2022 minutes was tabled.

Ban on single-use plastic which begins May 4, 2022.

The Environmental Commission does not have anything really to do with this as it is a state project. We can still provide links on our website. Some sites with good information include: ANJEC and BagUpNJ. We are not the leader with this program but should share information that is available. Chairman Keady and Member Bowers will work on providing LUA Kozak with information that should be shared.

Susan Meacham was working on a bag to hand out which would also tie to our Stormwater Education so we can help meet our yearly point requirements. LUA Kozak had an example of a bag available as well as pricing. Liaison Bush asked LUA Kozak to work with the County to see what they just ordered. Maybe we can piggy back.

ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grant. Deadline is May 2, 2022 with a grant award of \$1500.00. The subcommittee of Jerry Bowers, Regina Barna and Mike Keady worked on the grant application for benches along the O'sakame Preserve. The grant was submitted by LUA Kozak as required. Updates to follow when received. Future grant funding to be explored as well as partnerships with other community groups.

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

David Harrison explained that the state only asks for 4 highlights from the year basically asking “what did you work on that was most important?” We picked different CSIPs which included saying we have more people core trained, working on public trails, labeling is a big project and of course we talked about the Holland Happenings. We are also using hazardous tree listing to work with our DPW in being proactive and not always reactive with tree issues. We were also recipients of a Georgia Pacific donation for more trees and Arbor Day plantings. Suggestions were made requesting that grants be action orientated vs planning orientated. We also want state to recognize that rural communities have different needs from other communities in the state.

These are the 2022 Community Forestry Management Plan goals to which we are committed:

- 1) Plant a tree for Arbor Day
- 2) Track hours and expenditures for the Community Forestry Program

- 3) Identify and label individual trees on township properties
- 4) Continue and improve outreach efforts at community events
- 5) Complete annual training requirements (8 Continuing Education Units, AKA CEUs)
- 6) If funding is available apply for a Township Seedling Giveaway
- 7) Submit 2 tree or forest related articles to local and regional newspapers and to the township website
- 8) Begin implementing the Riparian Planting Project
- 9) Apply for a CSIP grant to implement a Green Stormwater Management System
- 10) Complete a Forest Inventory if CSIP funding has been received (this must be here in error since we already did the inventory)
- 11) Apply for CSIP funding to remove invasive species on township owned land
- 12) Adopt the Model Highlands Shade Tree Ordinance

Arbor Day 2022 celebration being Saturday April 30, 2022. The event will be at O'sakame Park with an 11:00 am start time. The day was a success. The Environmental Commission along with three members of the Township Committee celebrated the event. The weather was beautiful and a press release including a picture was well received. Robert Thurgarland printed the article and had it available at the Township Committee meeting. The announcement was on our Holland Township Website as well as our official Facebook page. The release and photo were picked up by NJ.com and the story also ran in the print edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat.

Biggest Tree competition will be in the Holland Happenings Newsletter Spring 2022 edition. Regina Barna talked about the DEP NJ Big Tree Program or Heritage Tree Program Right of Access Form. We can tie our Biggest Tree competition to the state registry. As of now there is one tree on the registry for Holland Township and that is for 141 Little York Mt Pleasant Road which is across from the cemetery. Mayor Bush offered some interesting trivia regarding Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree. In 2002 a Norway Spruce measuring 76' (23 m) came from Bloomsbury, NJ. In a google search, LUA Kozak found an article:

Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree Is Lit

By The Associated Press

- Dec. 4, 2002

Thousands of people gathered Wednesday in Rockefeller Center to witness the first glow of 30,000 holiday lights upon a 76-foot Norway spruce.

The 70th tree-lighting ceremony in the famed plaza in midtown Manhattan was preceded by nearly two hours of entertainment, featuring singers Sheryl Crow, Michelle Branch and Barry Manilow.

To the cheers of a shivering crowd that danced and celebrated throughout the holiday program, the tree was lighted just before 9 p.m.

Christina Beaty, 16, and six of her friends arrived five hours early to stake out a good spot, wearing multiple layers of clothing to ward off the bone-chilling cold. The wait, she said, was worth it "to see the tree, to see the lighting and to bring in the spirit of Christmas."

She said the holiday revelers appeared more at ease than they were last year, when the ceremony came less than three months after the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. Last year, first lady Laura Bush and then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani turned on the lights together.

This year, Mayor Michael Bloomberg flipped on the multicolored lights with Santa Claus, former astronaut Buzz Aldrin and Jerry Speyer, a co-owner of Rockefeller Center, where the tree overlooks the ice-skating rink and Prometheus sculpture.

The spruce hails from the front yard of Carmine and Mary Rizzo in Bloomsbury, N.J., where it grew so big it blocked the walkway to their house.

Mary Rizzo said it was a "big thrill" for all the people in Bloomsbury.

"Most people have never heard of Bloomsbury, but there it is," she said, pointing at the tree during the ceremony.

For the first time ever, the 7-ton, 43-foot-wide tree was chosen based on a photograph sent in by the owners. The Rockefeller Center gardener usually chooses the trees by helicopter search.

The tree, which is estimated to be 75 years old, will remain on display through Jan. 7.

The tradition began in 1931, when workers building Rockefeller Center placed a small unadorned evergreen on the muddy construction site.

Except for 1932, a tree has been erected in the plaza every year since. The first formal tree-lighting ceremony was held in 1933. The largest tree in Rockefeller Center history was a 100-footer, erected in 1999.

And if there is any doubt about the tree's popularity, Quinnipiac University released a poll Wednesday in which it asked 1,322 New York City residents, "What is your favorite thing to see or do in New York City during the holiday season?"

The top response, with 15 percent, was "the tree," followed by 13 percent who answered, "Rockefeller Center."

Discussion about the residents responding to our contest should also register with the state. More discussion will take place on how to move forward with the project.

Tree Map update – Secretary Kozak is working with Dwight Pederson. The Google account has been created.

Trees of Holland changes to the website. A redesign is in the works. Chairman Keady asked for a count of how many people look at the website. This would give us a measure of what people are looking for on our website.

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Jerry Bowers, Susan Meacham and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak – nothing new at this time. Secretary Kozak worked on an update of the 2021 Stormwater breakdown and will share the criteria.

Highlands Conformance – Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady and Dwight Pederson. – Nothing new to report regarding grant updates. Director Plevin is to retire soon and there is a job posting:

Executive Director

The Highlands Council is currently seeking an Executive Director to oversee the administration of the state agency, its policies, and the work of its 23-person staff. Applications are being accepted through Friday, June 3, 2022.

Community Education and Outreach – Jerry Bowers, Dwight Pederson, and Susan Meacham – The EC webpage is: <http://www.hollandtownshipnj.gov/bds-committees/environmental-commission>.

Everything will first go to Susan Meacham for review and then to Secretary Kozak for distribution to the website or Facebook.

Inventory of Fauna and Flora subcommittee - David Harrison, Dwight Pederson, Ray Note – David Harrison is working on a list of birds and trees etc.

Musconetcong River Management Council – Dwight Pederson

Wild and Scenic – MWA Director Hunt is hopeful that an announcement will be forthcoming in the near future. More news to be shared as received.

Public Comment: There were no comments made from the public.

Board Comment:

- Mayor Bush mentioned that the Park House (5 acres) sold for \$540,000.00 and that the Township will be using some of the money to purchase 44 acres on Church Road. The remaining money will go into our Green Acres account.
- Mayor Bush mentioned that the Girl Scouts will be putting in a pollinator garden at the O'sakame park. This collaborative project will have the Girl Scouts developing the garden from seed while Holland Township will also purchase mature greens for the garden. The location will be between the sign and the road. Duane Young will till the ground. The Girl Scouts had sent a letter to the Township Committee asking for this project, and the Township Committee requested that the Girl Scouts work with the Environmental Commission on the project. Our DPW will also be on hand to help. It will be a team project. A do not mow sign will need to be installed.
- Guest Speaker – Regina Barna has been working on this project. The goal would be to have a lecture at Riegel Ridge open to the public. Monarch Butterflies was a topic of interest. Everyone agrees early evening is best. The goal would be to have an event in June and July. Regina Barna will talk with her contact about bringing nature into the garden. She will send me the cost and I will work with the Township Committee for authorization. Another topic of interest would be about bees and Mayor Bush mentioned he has contact information that can be shared.

At 8:25 pm Dan Bush made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary