

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

February 7, 2024 7 PM Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order, “I call to order the February 7, 2024 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 21, 2023 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, David Harrison, Mike Keady, Davina Lapczynski, Dwight Pederson, Tony Rizzello, Township Committee Liaison Duane Young, and Land Use Administrator (LUA) Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Excused Absent: Township Committee Alternate Liaison Bush

Guest: Wes Aber

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: A motion was made by David Harrison and seconded by Regina Barna to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the minutes of the November 1, 2023, December 6, 2023 and January 3, 2024 and to approve as recorded. All present were in favor of the motion.

Old Business:

- List EC members’ Accomplishments supporting 2023 EC Goals

Holland Township Environmental Commission Achievements of 2023 Goals – presented for review as prepared by Mike Keady, Dwight Pederson and Regina Barna.

Mission

As stewards of the natural habitat of our community, the Environmental Commission seeks to protect and enhance the Township’s natural resources and to educate the community about their care and recreational use.

Achievements

Waterways



- We developed Stormwater Goals to be in conformance with new Tier A designation from the State of New Jersey. We also created a new Webpage to inform and promote understanding of best practices.
- Our Musconetcong River (MWA) liaison, through attendance and participation in their programs, brought awareness of the “Wild and Scenic” designation and acquired a speaker, Alan Hunt, to explain the importance of the river and its history.
- New roadside signs were acquired to acknowledge the river section as “Wild and Scenic Musconetcong.”

Wildlife and Plants



- We presented two programs regarding the wildlife in our area.
- In “Coexisting with Coyotes” we learned about the myths and history of the coyote in NJ and how it compared to other predator species.
- In “Creating a Backyard Habitat for Backyard Pollinators and Birds” we were taught how to attract beneficial wildlife like birds and bees to our properties.

Trails



- We had a speaker discuss the portion of the Highlands Trail that runs through the township and its relationship to the longer, four-state Highlands Trail system.
- We offered a program by a naturalist from the Hunterdon County Parks system who conducted a walk around the Holland Trail at Riegel Ridge.
- We acquired a grant to develop an interpretive sign on the O'sakame Preserve.
- We acquired two benches and had a map developed for the trail.
- We continue to monitor and provide access to brochures of Common Birds and Common Trees at the trailheads and online of Holland Trail and O'sakame Trail, and we maintain the kiosks at the two trails.

Trees



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- An Arbor Day seedling give-away was conducted during which we distributed 200 native trees with the help of a Boy Scout troop #187. An article was written about the event for Holland Happenings.
- We offered "Walk and Talk about Trees," during which we pointed out the different species of trees around the Holland Trail and considered the threat of invasive species.
- Additional trees along the Holland Trail were marked and designated with a QR code. The same was done at the O'sakame Trail. This is an ongoing project where plaques are placed on trees with the name and a QR Code. The QR Code brings people to the Holland Township Website for a video and fuller description of the tree.

Community Education and Outreach



- We were proud to present a successful Speaker Program for the second year.

- We offered five programs in 2023 that were attended by 15-40 people of a variety of ages and interests.
 - **Highlands Trail Highlights** - January 2023 – Zac Cole from the NY/NJ Trails Conference - Presentation raised awareness of the work of the Highlands Conference and of this long-distance trail with portions in Holland Township.
 - **Wild and Scenic Musconetcong River** – March 2023 – Alan Hunt MWA Community was updated on the importance of the river for recreation, tourism and quality of life.
 - **Walk and Talk about Trees** – June 2023 - Hunterdon County Naturalist, Debra Reed – Guided trip around the Holland Trail.
 - **Coexisting with Coyotes** – July 2023 - Debra Reed - There was an animated discussion of the history, habits, facts and safety measures regarding this wild creature.
 - **Creating a Backyard Habitat for Backyard Pollinators and Birds** - September 2023 - Kathleen Kerwin - Rutgers Extension Service — We learned how to attract beneficial wildlife like birds and bees to our properties.
- We provided six articles for Holland Happenings in spring and fall of 2023:
 - “Holland Township Speaker Series”
 - “Hiking the Highlands”
 - “Spotlight on O’sakame Trail”
 - “What Happened to the Trees?”
 - “Speaker Series” Review and Discussion of ‘Coexisting with Coyotes’”
 - “New and Stronger Stormwater Management Rules for Holland”
 - “Annual Tree Give-Away”
- Through our website, we collected and developed a mailing list for our programs which is being utilized to inform and encourage attendance. Attendees are offered the opportunity to provide topics for future programming.

The final version will be put on our website. EC members were asked to forward comments to LUB Kozak so she can forward to Regina Barna for accomplishment updating. Once LUB Kozak has a clean version then it will be forwarded to Liaison Young and the clerk for the Township Committee to review.

New Business:

- Proposed Goals for EC in 2024. To be finalized by the next meeting. Water and Waterways to include Musconetcong and Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic. Tony Rizzello will participate in council meetings for LDWS like Dwight Pederson does for MWA. Tributaries is something that will be explored with LDWS. Discussion of the draft Tree Ordinance came up with LUB Kozak mentioning that the township is working on this with Planner Green and Engineer Wisniewski. This is a requirement of stormwater and is associated with the reassignment of Tier B to Tier A. Chapter 101 f our ordinance does already have a tree component in the ordinance. Once the draft ordinance is introduced then it will filer to the Land Use Board for consistency review and to the Environmental Commission. Work on the goals of the Community Forestry Plan is ongoing. See below for the outline.
- Discussion of feasibility of using volunteers to help with the EC projects – it’s a great idea. Regina Barna wants to discuss with one of the people who reached out to us with the lecture series sign up. Liaison Young reminded everyone that the lecture series email list belongs to the township and is only be used for the lecture series. LUA Kozak is the person with the access to the email list. Web Abner offered to work with Regina Barna as a volunteer. He may have additional volunteers to help as well as participate in the lecture series. Wes Abner said he and his friends are very project driven and they want to help.
- Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Council update. Tony Rizzello reported that the grant was submitted and we got approval. There are some tweaks with the funding terms that need to be discussed. There was never mention of the requirement to have the sign translated to Spanish. LDW&S also wants the signage to acknowledge their support. Tony Rizzello is working with LDW&S to discuss a few ideas.

LUA Kozak is working with Liaison Young and Liaison Bush with a translator for the sign. More updates to follow.

- Sale of Warren Glen Mill – IPPE is no longer the owner of the mill. Dwight Pederson stated that there are miles of this company owned land along the river and he spoke with Mayor Bush about the potential for solar on this land. Dwight Pederson is asking how can we get someone to purchase it like maybe Hunterdon County to stop a potential solar application? MWA member Alan Hunt did remind Dwight Pederson that there are ordinances in the Industrial zone however Mr. Hunt believes that if a project has been abandoned for year that the people would not need to come in with an application to do something on the property. Dwight Pederson asked what is Holland’s take on the abandoned buildings and stated that he will contact Alan Hunt to explore options.

Subcommittee:

Trails – Regina Barns and Tony Rizzello – The DPW is cleaning up Holland Park trail. j

Community Forestry Management Plan – Tony Rizzello, David Harrison, and Secretary Kozak
CFP 2024 Goals (as outlined by Member Harrison)

1. Arbor Day Tree Planting
2. Submit 2 tree or forest related articles to local and regional newspapers and Township website
3. If feasible, apply for Tree City USA re-certification
4. Track hours and expenditures for CFMP
5. Complete annual training requirements - 8 CEUs
6. Identify and Label individual trees on Township properties
7. Continue and improve outreach efforts at community events
8. Reevaluate hazard trees and update the list
9. If funding available, apply for and execute a township seedling giveaway
10. Begin Strategic planning and goal development for third CFMP and evaluate the successes and failures of the second CFMP
11. Apply for Green Communities funding for the creation of the third five-year CFMP
- 12 Map and complete baseline surveys on properties with conservation easements
13. Implement removal of invasive species on township owned land if CSIP (Community Stewardship Incentive Program) funding is received to implement the program.

LUA Kozak requests everyone to keep track of their hours pertaining to trees for the whole year. LUA Kozak will resend everyone the tracking sheets which are also available upon request. This is important for our annual report. Please keep track. Also, LUA Kozak reminded everyone that if they participate in a CEU program to please send her any confirmation of attendance so she can work with the state to make sure we receive the proper credits.

Tree Labels – Dwight Pederson will continue to work with LUA Kozak to see if revisions are needed for the website.

Member Harrison and LUA Kozak worked together to submit the 2023 annual report of the Community Forestry Plan which is due to the state by February 12, 2024. A final copy will be sent to everyone as FYI.

2024 New Jersey Tree Recovery program – free seedling giveaway

The application was submitted to the state for consideration. The pickup date will be April 11, 2024 at the Morris County facility between 9am and noon with the giveaway being April 13, 2024 usually 9am till noon with the Boy Scouts helping for distribution. Arbor Day is April 26, 2024 and Earth Day is April 22, 2024. More details to follow regarding the Holland Township Arbor day celebration.

Duke Farm seminar – Regina Barna and David Harrison are interested in attending.

Spring Dendrology Workshop

In this course, we will explore the trees of Duke Farms through the lens of biology, ecology, and biodiversity....

About This Event

In this course, we will explore the trees of Duke Farms through the lens of biology, ecology, and biodiversity.

Course Overview

Lecture material on how trees fit into our local ecosystems—both today and into the future—will contextualize the strong focus on tree identification necessary to understand these complex organisms. Some background in basic tree identification is recommended, but not required. This course will be geared toward educators, land managers, ecologists, conservationists, shade tree commission members, and other professionals.

Featured Topics

- Tree biology, structure, and reproduction
- Biodiversity and tree ID through the lens of biology

Continuing Education Credits

The Spring Dendrology Workshop is approved for credits from the following organizations.

New Jersey Board of Tree Experts: TBD

New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry (NJUCF): 4 CEUs

International Society for Arboriculture: TBD

American Society for Landscape Architects: 4 hours

Prerequisites

This program assumes participants have a basic knowledge of native species identification and understand general ecology concepts. Please note that classes will take place partially outdoors and will require travelling several miles on various trail types (paved and unpaved) and uneven terrain for up to 3 hours.

Program Guidelines

Pre-registration is required, walk-ins are not be accepted. Please let us know if you are no longer able to attend so your space can be offered to someone else. Cancellations received at least 48 hours in advance are eligible for a refund, if applicable. Programs at Duke Farms are RAIN or SHINE, but in the event of severe weather, classes may be canceled. Email notice will be given as early as possible via email and refunds will be issued in the case of cancellations.

We provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. If a reasonable accommodation is needed to participate, please contact us at registrations@dukefarms.org.

DATE AND TIME

Sat, May 04, 2024
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

LOCATION

Duke Farms
1112 Dukes Parkway West
Hillsborough Township, NJ 08844 United States

[Buy Tickets](#)

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Davina Lapczynski and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak – Tier B reassignment to Tier A is the focus of the Township. There is nothing new to report as progress is being made with seeking funding. The retention/detention basin list will fall into the stormwater project. This project is engineer driven at this time. More details to follow.

Highlands Conformance – Mike Keady and Dwight Pederson. –More information will follow as updates are available.

Community Education and Outreach – Jerry Bowers, Dwight Pederson, and Regina Barna – The EC webpage is: <http://www.hollandtownshipnj.gov/bds-committees/environmental-commission>. Everything will first go to someone on Community Education and Outreach for review and then to Secretary Kozak for distribution to the website or Facebook.

Guest Lecture Series is under Community Education and Outreach

As a reminder please share with the public that an area to sign up for the lecture series email list is on our website. To be informed about upcoming talks or with speaker ideas, sign-up here [Speaker Series Email List \(https://cities.formstack.com/forms/holland_ec_cont\)](https://cities.formstack.com/forms/holland_ec_cont)

The 2024 series is:

January 10 2024 – Know the Bear Facts.

April 24, 2023 – Trees how to plant and care for them

July 17, 2024 – Birds of Holland Township

Conversations took place about various topics to explore with Guest Aber expressing interest in helping with this topic as he may even have someone interested in being a guest speaker. Regina Barna will work with Wes Aber to discuss options.

Inventory of Fauna and Flora (Bio-Diversity)subcommittee - David Harrison, Dwight Pederson, – Nothing new to report. Discussion took place with the EC subcommittee and guest Aber.

Waterway Subcommittee –

Musconetcong River Management Council – Dwight Pederson –.Nothing new to report

Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic – Tony Rizzello – Nothing new to report.

Holland Township Sustainable Jersey Green Team – Davina, Mr Keady, Liaison Young –Nothing new to report.

Public Comment: Wes Aber did not have any comments during public comment.

Board Comment: There were no board comments at this time

At 8:50pm David Harrison made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary