

COMMERCIAL TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF

FEBRUARY 10, 2015

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Nardone. He announced that the meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Present: Ken McGill, Pat Smith, John Nardone and Julie Gandy. Absent: Jim D'Ambrosio, Walt Birbeck, and Amy Wright.

Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of January 13, 2015 by Ken seconded by Pat. Minutes approved. John Nardone abstained

OLD BUSINESS

ANJEC: Julie reported that there is a course, "How to be an Effective Environmental Commission" on Saturday, March 7 in Haddon Township.

Sustainable Jersey: Pat reported she there is a webinar on February 21, 2015 at 10am on Community Gardens.

Plastic Bag Recycling: Pat reported she is concerned the program needs additional publication. John said he will send letter to surrounding commissions about our program and will write letter to ANJEC for the *ANJEC Report*.

Bamboo Ordinance: John reported that the Mayor will let us know what the next step is.

Milk Weed Planting: Report postponed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Lake Audrey Signs: John reported he has 20 vegetation identification signs to send to Barry Fisher as the next phase of our ANJEC \$1500 grant. He used the book, *Trees of New Jersey*, published by DEP Division of Parks and Forestry, but will eliminate wetlands designation, bark and twig indicators. The signs could cost \$15-20 each. Julie made a motion to move forward with the signs seconded by Ken. Motion approved.

John reported we spent \$750 to date on the signs. We will receive the remainder of the grant when the project is complete.

Fishing Line Project: John reported that he spoke with a representative from Alloway Township at the Eagle Fest who said that 4 inch PVC pipe is big enough. Walt and Ken originally looked at using 6 inch pipe that was too expensive. Ken made a motion seconded by Pat to re-evaluate the project, and to spend no more than \$250 on materials for 4 or 5 sites. Motion approved.

Julie recommended we use, with permission, *The Septic Tank Ten Commandments* we received from the Septic System 101 Workshop she, Walt and John attended. They could be put on our website, distributed at Bay Day and at the Green Fair.

CORRESPONDANCE: None

Public Comment: Motion by Ken seconded by Pat to open the public portion of the meeting. Motion approved. Seeing no one Pat made motion to close the public portion seconded by Ken. Motion approved.

Motion by Ken seconded by Pat to adjourn. Motion approved at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Gandy, Secretary

Minutes of January 13, 2015 approved on February 10, 2015.

cc: Twp. Committee
CTEC members

*Attachment for
Feb 10, 2015 Min*

Commercial Township Environmental Commission

178 Main Street

Port Norris, NJ 08349

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Green Acres Program

501 East State Street

Station Plaza Building 5, Ground Floor

Trenton, NJ

January 15, 2015

I am writing on behalf of the Commercial Township Environmental Commission to register our objections to the proposed diversion of 81 protected acres in Millville, known as the Durand Tract, to private commercial use.

While we understand why the diversion is under consideration, we do not find any of the reasons compelling. There are existing abandoned sites in Millville that would work just as well. This would have the added benefit of reclaiming what is now vacant and unused buildings. It would destroy forever a beautiful and ecologically rich piece of nature. While recognizing that diversions of preserved lands have occurred in the past, these diversions were mostly for roads and hospitals, arguably for the public good. This transaction would benefit only private industry. While we agree the community needs jobs these jobs should not come at the expense of the birthright of future generations.

There are however extremely compelling reasons to allow the property to remain as it is. These reasons include:

Pine Snake habitat – The only area in New Jersey, outside of the Pinelands that supports a population of endangered Pine Snakes.

Location – This tract is contiguous to the larger Menantico Wildlife Management Area and acts as a buffer between that property and a developed section of Millville.

Uniqueness – The flora and fauna species within this area are diverse and include endangered plants and animals.

Integrity – The funds to acquire this tract were provided under a Green Acres Bond, the interest paid for by the taxpayers. This bond fund was created under the promise to protect and preserve land in New Jersey for future generations. This promise should not be abandoned for the sake of private investment.

In closing we ask that the Department take the long range view and keep this area preserved forever. Our open spaces are shrinking fast enough without taking land out of the preservation program. Once developed these lands can never come back. It is our duty to pass this earth on to future generations as open and clean and green as we can. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John J Nardone, Chairman