

**Readington Township
Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2023**

OPEN MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hendrickson at 7:05 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

Members in Attendance

Neil Hendrickson - Chair
Robert Becker
Jeff Charney
Jerry Cook
Steve Foster
Jonathan Heller
Susan Masinda
Mario Orlandi
Cassandra Ward

Minutes

Mr. Cook moved and Mr. Becker seconded, to approve the minutes for January 10, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.

LOI/Freshwater Wetlands

None

AOC (Areas of Concern)

None

Correspondence

1. Potable Well Sampling - 547 Route 22 East

Mr. Becker reported that he wondered why they were sampling this area and did some research. The correspondence references the site as the location of a dry cleaner. The original problem was reported in 2012. Mr. Becker called CTM and spoke with someone regarding the testing but will be looking into this more thoroughly. The members discussed the involvement of the DEP and the communication, or lack thereof, water contamination issues.

2. NJDEP - 492 Route 22 W - B. 4 Lots 36 37

It was noted that the issue has been remediated.

3. Ground Water Amended RAP - Transfer of Property - Former Walmart

The site was sold to a new owner and the correspondence was to inform the new owner of the requirements of the remediation of the contaminated site.

4. Former Walmart #5069 - December 2022 PW Results

The members discussed the results. It was noted that the RAP (Remedial Action Permit) is usually found at the end of the remediation process. The member discussed who has the

responsibility to follow up on these issues and it was stated that it was the DEP's responsibility. Mr. Becker briefly reviewed some of the Brownfield sites he has been researching. Members discussed ways to get more information on known sites with contamination specific to sites deemed of concern.

A former resident, Ron Monaco, lived in one of the areas that experience contamination and was called on the phone. He explained that the contamination was found 25-30 years ago and the state put in POET systems with charcoal filters. The contamination found was primarily chemicals related to dry cleaning. A stipulation of this program is that it only covers the property owners at the time the system was installed. Once the house is sold, the new owners must take financial responsibility for maintenance of the water treatment systems. A member asked if there were deed restrictions placed on these properties and the answer was no. It was suggested that the township send letters to the property owners in the contaminated areas to ensure these homeowners have received communication from the state regarding any water contamination issues and ensure their well/water has been tested. Mr. Becker suggested that the issue be tabled until he could uncover more information. Mr. Heller will reach out to the township attorney to determine if there is any legal liability to sending out letters.

New Business

1. Environmental Grant Program

The application deadline is about a month away. One suggestion is to apply for money devoted to water testing, especially on the Rockaway where the E. coli was found. The Waterwatch Committee also has ideas on what to apply for. They will look into the possibility of both the Environmental Committee and the Waterwatch Committee submitting separate applications.

2. Community Forestry Annual Accomplishment Report - Submitted

It was noted that the report was submitted and it had been received.

3. \$250,000 Natural Climate Solutions Grant - Awarded

It was reported that there was a stewardship committee meeting to explore these grants.

Other Business:

1. Deer Management

It was noted that the harvest total is significantly more than in previous years. Deer hunting season ends the third week in February.

2. Textile Recycling/Clothing Donation Bins

Chair Hendrickson related a communication from Christina Schwartz outlining suggested actions including checking with the property owner to see if they would like the location of the donation bin advertised and ensuring the property owner has contact information for the owner of the donation bin. Mr. Becker stated that he will not look to advertise the bins until they have been approved by the township.

3. Road Salts Testing

A great deal of baseline testing has been done and now just waiting for the first snowfall. It was noted that DPW has started using brine on some of the township roads. The township received some donated equipment from Hillsborough through Ron Christy's connections. The township will review the data to see if they want to move forward with purchasing enough equipment so that brine can be used on all township roads. All members expressed their thanks to Ron Christy for being so active in getting to this point.

4. Environmental Commission Logo

Chair Hendrickson reached out to Betsy Freeman at the Readington Middle School to see if they would be interested in having the students design a logo. Ms. Freeman contacted the art teacher and all are excited about providing the township with an EC logo.

5. ERI Update

Chair Hendrickson reported that the updated version will be a storymap and be highly interactive. The presentation that Mr. Becker gave to the Township Committee at the February 6th meeting will be the a key component of this update. Just need to identify what the township wants to include. Princeton Hydro, who created the original ERI in 2002, is hoping to have something to provide to the township by the end of the summer. Chair Hendrickson is the point of contact for this project.

Site Plan Review and Comment

None

Public Comment

1. New Trex Challenge

Christina Albrecht, member of the public, reported that since 2020 she has been championing the Trex Challenge. She stated that there is something new that is being offered. Trex will purchase a baler for a community (municipality, county, etc.) which would be used to put together the blocks of recycled plastic. Ms. Albrecht provided other specifics of the program. She wanted to gauge the interest in such a program from the Environmental Commission. She also reported that she is planning on reaching out to Ron Christy as well as attending the next Hunterdon County Solid Waste Commission meeting. The member discussed the pros and cons of such a program.

2. Silver Bit NRCS

Ms. Masinda reported that the Silver Bit and Spur is entering the second phase of their NRCS.

3. Environmental Activities in April

Mr. Foster stated that April 22nd is Earth Day and asked about how it would be commemorated. Chair Hendrickson reported that the tree seedling giveaway is on the 22nd. Mr. Heller reported that the Stream Cleanup Day with RHA is April 15th. Furthermore, Mr. Heller stated that he and Chair Hendrickson will be speaking with Ron Christy about the Adopt-A-Road program and maybe they can get something going

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by April 22nd. Mr. Foster suggested that an article be written for the Readington News highlighting all the environmental activities scheduled for April.

Adjournment

It was the consensus of the commission members to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Radziewicz
Advisory Boards Secretary