

Readington Township

WaterWatch Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 20th, 2021

1) CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Orlandi called the meeting to order at 7:11 pm.

2) ATTENDENCE TAKEN

Chair Mario Orlandi (P)

Robert Becker (P)

Steven Foster (P)

Trish McGuire (A)

Agostino Pietrangelo (P)

Susan Masinda (P)

Rene Rao (P)

Jonathan Heller (P)

David Owen (P)

Members of the public were in attendance.

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Steve Foster and Robert Becker suggested a few small updates to the minutes from the June 15th 2021 meeting. Robert Becker moved, Rene Rao seconded, approval for the June 15th 2021 meeting with the updates included. All who were at the June 15th 2021 meeting unanimously approved.

David Owen agreed to keep minutes of this and upcoming Committee meetings.

4) HOUSEKEEPING ISSUES

None

5) GUEST SPEAKER INTRODUCTION

Juergen Huelsebusch, Deputy Mayor of Readington Township, discussed the overlap between Open Space and Water (streams, river, brooks, etc) in the Township. Focus on the South Branch of the Raritan River is a great example where synergies between the two Committees comes into focus.

6) COMMITTEE REPORTS

David Owen: RWW / OSAB Collaboration and News from the HC B of CC

David complimented the ANJAC presentation that he and many other members of the Committee attended. The mapping process that ANJAC provides is a great tool for the Water Watch and other committee members.

David updated the Committee regarding his visit to the Darts Mills property along with Juergen Huelsebusch, Neil Hendrickson, Bill Millette from Hunterdon County and Bill Kibbler from Raritan Headwaters. Focus of the meeting was the historic house, mill ruin and property at the end of the road and also the dam and island in the Raritan river at that location. Discussions will continue.

Robert Becker: Sustainable Jersey - Water Issues and Gold Star Standard in Water

Robert reported that recertification for 2022 was ramping up and that the Green Team was engaged to coordinate the organization to evaluate sustainable New Jersey criteria and report back to the Township Committee. .

Jonathan Heller: Stream Testing and News from the Township Committee

Jonathan advised that stream testing has shown some improvement of water quality. More volunteers are needed for 2022. Mario advised that five sites are scheduled to be tested in June 2022 and that more people have been trained to conduct the tests

Steve Foster: Well-testing and Community Education Programs

Steve updated the Committee on Well Testing. About 20% of Readington Township is on City Water and there needs to be continuing education to those citizens regarding the possibility of lead pipes on their property. Many of the homes on City Water are very old.

Well Testing in the Fall in the 3rd week of October. Desks in the lobby of the Municipal Building and the Three Bridges Library would be beneficial for team members to meet with and answer resident's questions. A PR process is required soon to explain drop-off and pick-up procedures to our residents.

Water Gardens will be installed at Hillcrest Park as part of the 319H Project. Signage will be installed at the Park to explain to visitors what they are experiencing – appreciation has been received from the Township schools and the Parks and Recreation team.

Steve suggested a butterfly release in the Spring of 2022. About 500 butterflies are released by local children – the butterflies are stored cold so are reluctant to immediately fly away to the delight of the kids

Susan Masinda: Small Stream Stewardship Program

The Rockaway Creek finances are being established. There may be three further projects on Town, Cushetunk and State properties.

Hionis – no update

Susan will attend the Cemetery project review that comes before the Planning Board on August 9th

Trish McGuire: Stream Clean-up and News from the Raritan Headwaters Association

Absent

Ago Pietrangelo: Chemical Impacts on Our Water Supply

Ago stated that he is willing to create a Facebook Site for Water Watch with an initial focus on Well Testing. Instagram and Twitter could also be utilized in the Social Media space.

Mario suggested that Social Media could be used as an umbrella program supporting efforts across various Committees, initially the synergy between Open Space and Water Watch

Rene Rao and Marlene Orlandi: Community Programs and Schools Programs

No new business as school is out, however, the Middle School garden is “beckoning”.

7) ONGOING & NEW BUSINESS

RHA Well Testing this Fall – See above

NJ Conservation Blueprint Mapping tools – see above

RHA Stream Monitoring – completed for 2021

Adding monitoring sites to the RHA annual list of more than 50 sites – ongoing

Proposed cemetery protest – see above

Hionis Agricultural Development Project Block 20 Lot 1 – no update

Sustainable Jersey – Water Story – The Building Block for the Newest Gold Star standard in Water.

Holland Brook Stream Restoration Project – The mailing has gone out and the project is on target for Fall 2021> The memo will serve as a packet of information for the Township Committee

Prescott Brook Stream Restoration Project – no update

Other:

The Penn State Extension project for Backyard Stream Repair starts in September

Mario reviewed current thinking on Mapping of the township – where streams interface with Trails and Open Space. Could we establish Community Resources to undertake this, maybe starting with something small such as Meadows. Could we engage other Committee members and Scouts. Let’s ask the question “what do we have that we want the Citizens of Readington to know about?” – Trail Heads, Parks , Museums, Stream Sampling sites, Hunting locations, bat houses etc.

8) GENERAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None heard

9) **GENERAL COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE**

None heard

10) **ADJOURN**

Robert Becker moved Rene Rao second, motion to adjourn at 8.51pm pm. The next scheduled WaterWatch Advisory meeting will be held on August 17th at 7:00pm.