

**Readington Township  
Waterwatch Advisory Meeting Minutes  
February 28, 2023**

**OPEN MEETING**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Orlandi at 7:10 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**

Mario Orlandi – Chair  
Steve Foster  
Jonathan Heller – joined at 7:50 am  
Lauren Huelsebusch  
Marlene Orlandi  
David Owen

**Absent**

Agostino Pietrangelo  
Rene Rao

**Minutes**

It was moved and seconded, a motion to approve the minutes for January 24, 2023, as corrected. The motion carried unanimously.

**Guest Speaker:**

Samantha LaRocca, Well Test Program Manager with Raritan Headwater Association (RHA), gave a presentation on the well/water testing program offered by RHA. This testing is available year-round as well as annually during the programs offered by various municipalities throughout the year. Ms. LaRocca shared some statistics from the well/water testing done in October 2022. The members asked many questions as to the type of data that can be obtained as well what is done when test results exceed the limits for a particular category. Chair Orlandi will provide a series of questions to RHA that they would like addressed.

Note: The recording was paused at 7:51 pm.

This was the first year that Ms. LaRocca acted as the Well Test Program Manager and she thanked the committee for their patience as she tackled her new responsibilities. The committee members expressed their appreciation for her efforts. She reported that RHA is looking into sending postcards to areas that had high positive results. She stated that they are also wanting to reinstate the postcards that were sent in communities to promote the well/water test program. It was suggested that town hall sessions be scheduled, as was done in the past, to educate the community on potential water issues. The members discussed the pros and cons of offering the well/water testing program more than once a year.

Note: The recording was paused at 8:03 pm.

Ms. LaRocca was asked about the laboratories that do the testing. She stated that they use a state certified lab but don't specify the labs used as they could change. She shared that she

has created a Well Water Design Guide to help people decide what test(s) they may want to do. She suggested that volunteers be offered a refresher training class to aid in the well/water testing running smoothly. It was also suggested to offer the residents a webinar the week before the test kits go on sale. The committee members discussed the pros and cons of having the test kits picked up/dropped off outside or should it be brought back inside. Mr. Heller suggested that the schools be used to get some education about water testing in the homes. The members stated they want to focus on an education campaign and commit to late May/early June for doing something education-wise.

### **Committee Member Updates**

Mr. Foster - Shared that the Environmental Commission chair feels confident in talking with DPW that the township can start an Adopt-A-Road this year. DPW has most of the equipment needed. There will be a short article in the March Readington News edition asking for volunteers. It was stated that the township will look to have t-shirts printed up.

Ms. Orlandi - Stated that some of the members and township committee members attended the science fair at the Whitehouse School earlier in the day. Mr. Heller suggested that committee could institute a type of rewards program to recognize students who have exceptional environmental projects. Another suggestion in a previous meeting spoke of a type of ambassadorship and Ms. Orlandi reported that the superintendent of schools has indicated that he is in favor of this idea. With respect to the Adopt-A-Road program, it was proposed that this could be promoted through the schools.

Mr. Owen - Reported that the RTA has put up a new trail for horses on the Lazy Brook Greenway. At the Silver Bit & Spur, work has been done on re-staking all the tubes that had fallen over. Because there have been complaints regarding someone who lets their dog loose on the trails (with the dog exhibiting aggression), the RTA will be putting up signs to remind everyone that dogs need to be kept on leashes at all times.

Regarding the Darts Mills property – a subcommittee has been formed called Friends of Darts Mills, of with Mr. Owen will be leading. He met with the Historic Preservation Commission chair, Pat Fisher-Olsen, to discuss what can be done. She stated that nothing structural can be altered or touched as well as there can be no “shovels in the ground”. The current work being done is all cosmetic. It has been requested that a preservation vision document be completed, of with the first cut has been finished. Mr. Owen shared plans for completing this document.

Mr. Heller - Reported that he is working with Susan Masinda on an ANJEC grant.

Ms. Huelsebusch – The members welcomed their newest committee member, Lauren Huelsebusch.

### **New/Other Business**

Annual Stream Cleanup – Chair. Orlandi reported that most of the sites typically designated during the stream cleanup effort are clean already. He stated that for Rockafellows Mills, instead of sending a full team, they will probably send just a few people. They will continue to look for alternate sites that need to be cleaned up and will use the Three Bridges Volunteer Fire Company parking lot to have volunteers meet and be assigned sites that have yet to be determined. Chair Orlandi requested that if anyone has a site that should be addressed, to let him know.

Riparian Zone Restoration: Chair Orlandi shared that he was approached last fall by RHA to assist in riparian zone restoration as RHA had received grants for this work. They have been cleared to work on one site – Chambers Brook. The member discussed other sites that could benefit from this work.

Adopt-a-Stream/Trails: Chair Orlandi introduced his desire to increase the residents' awareness regarding the stream they live closest to. RHA created a map showing the location of the streams super imposed over open space. He shared that he would like to create something showing which trails can be used to get to the streams. This project most likely will involve creating access points. Members discussed the data needed, the map project Mr. Becker has shared with the members and the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI).

### **Comments**

It was stated to the members the importance of communication. Mr. Geissler, a member of the public, shared that he is a relatively new member of the Readington community and is hoping to be approved as a new member of the Waterwatch Committee. He is looking forward to listening and learning in this group.

### **Adjournment**

It was moved and seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Radziewicz  
Advisory Boards Secretary