

# DENNIS TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

## Meeting Minutes: March 19, 2014

Initial meeting held at 7 p.m. at Dennis Township Municipal Building following reinstatement of Environmental Commission by Dennis Township Committee.

### ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: George, McManus, Penrose, Rebmann, Slotterback

ABSENT: Erwin, Hoff (both due to illness)

Officials attending: Mayor John Murphy, Committeeman Albert DiCicco

Two members of the public attended, including a member of local news media.

This being the first meeting of the Environmental Commission, there was no Old Business. There was no correspondence or pending applications from the Land Use Board.

NEW BUSINESS: Mayor John Murphy swore in member Sue Slotterback and welcomed the return of the commission. In brief remarks, he stressed the importance of respecting the right to participate of members of the public who choose to attend commission meetings.

Committeeman DiCicco suggested, and the commission will employ the protocol of submitting new agenda items to the commission's recording secretary (Rebmann) no later than 48 hours prior to date of a scheduled meeting.

Mr. Rebmann indicated that he is taping the meetings on a personal hand held recording device solely for his own use in developing accurate reports of minutes. There were no objections to this procedure. Mr. DiCicco added that he had asked township solicitor Jeff April about the procedure and was told that it is acceptable for the purpose stated.

The sole item of business on the meeting agenda was the meeting schedule for 2014. The commission unanimously agreed to meet the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30, not the original 7 p.m. time stated on the agenda. Mr. Rebmann will inform the township clerk as to this change.

Chairman Bob Penrose opened the meeting to general business. Board member Alma George raised the status of the ordinance concerning outdoor wood boilers. The ordinance had been developed by the former Natural Resources Committee in 2013. It

was submitted to township committee for consideration in November 2013. To date, no action has been taken.

Copies of the ordinance were distributed to commission members present. The matter will be listed as an agenda item for the next commission meeting scheduled for April 16.

Ms. George and Mr. Rebmann next raised the question of the commission joining ANJEC (Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions). After reviewing information about the organization and discussing costs, Ms. George made a motion to apply for membership, seconded by Ms. Slotterback. The commission voted unanimously in favor. Mr. Rebmann will complete the required application form and forward it to the township for further review and processing.

The next topic was the township's Natural Resources Inventory (or Index). In addition to ascertaining the two terms are interchangeable, the commission was able to satisfactorily confirm that the township committee, in adopting the Master Plan in 2012, also adopted the current Natural Resources Inventory.

This fact will facilitate the commission's participation in Land Use Board deliberations. The "crossover" member of the commission will be Mr. Rebmann.

Mr. McManus led a discussion of the garden at the municipal complex, indicating that he'd contacted several individuals about arranging to maintain the garden but, at this time, no group from the local school is available to do so.

Ms. Slotterback recited a history of the garden from its inception. She is familiar with the design having been involved in that process originally. She believes she may have a layout of the original garden.

Chairman Penrose asked if it is restorable. Ms. Slotterback said it would take time and stressed the need to use native plantings in any restoration.

Mr. McManus suggested certain improvements during the restoration including a Plexiglas encased map, brochures, and web site info. Mr. Rebmann expressed interest in helping with brochure and web site when appropriate.

Ms. Slotterback and Mr. McManus agreed to contact Jenny Carleo, County Agriculture Agent, about possibly enlisting the Master Gardeners program for help with the work.

DiCicco advised the commission to approach township committee once plans have been developed.

Chairman Penrose suggested approaching area youth groups to volunteer with the garden at the museum.

Mr. Rebmann and Ms. George will contact Linda Horner at 4H concerning this possibility.

Following discussion about the importance of using native plantings, led by Ms. Slotterback, Mr. Rebmann suggested developing a list of vendors who offer such plants with the idea of making the list available to the public.

Ms. George recommended that the commission become a member of the NJ Shade Tree Federation. She indicated that the township's current forestry plan, completed in 2009, expires in 2014. It needs to be updated by September of this year, as it expires at the end of the year.

Two certified Core individuals are required in each municipality to be in compliance with the NJ Shade Tree Act. One from the Environmental Commission and either an employee (preferably from Public Works) or an elected official. Ms. George fulfills the Environmental Commission responsibility. The commission will look to the Township Committee for the other.

Separate from the Core individuals, Ms. George noted that the township also needs to fulfill the yearly Continuing Education Units (CEU). The Township needs 8 CEUs split between two people. Ms. George agreed to help with that requirement.

The original plan cost \$2000 to complete but Ms. George suggests that a revision can be completed in house by a qualified commission member. She made the motion of joining the NJSTF, seconded by Mr. Rebmann and passed by the full commission. Chairman Penrose assigned Mr. Rebmann to complete the application form and forward it to township committee.

The commission added a second item to the agenda for its next meeting: electronics recycling.

A member of the public commented that the Cape May County MUA recently suggested increased costs posed by electronics recycling accruing to that body might be passed along to municipalities in the form of reduced rebates for recyclables.

The commission members agreed that this issue could become significant in the months ahead in New Jersey and they will examine into the possible repercussions for township residents.

That being all the business, Chairman Penrose adjourned the meeting.