

Dennis Township Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2015

All Commission members were present except for Bob Penrose and Chris Castor.

The minutes for July were approved by voice vote. There were no guest speakers. Dennis Township Commitment member Lisa Salimbene was in attendance. There was no correspondence or bills to pay.

Vice-Chairman Rebmann informed the commission about the Wawa (Ocean View) application before the Land Use Board. Wawa wants to add diesel pumps for small vehicles.

Members offered comments and suggested questions for Rebmann to ask at the hearing. Rebmann represents the commission on Land Use Board.

Concerns raised included the location of proposed diesel pumps and diesel storage tanks. Members also asked about potential disturbances to the existing septic field if changes are made. A specific question was raised about self pumping (allowed in NJ for diesel). Since Wawa's proposal calls for 3-1 gasoline/diesel pumping stations, would diesel users be able to pump their own? Would they be allowed to smoke in the pumping area? Members agreed that a general "No Smoking" sign and attendat only pumping would be appropriate. Better signage for traffic flow was also discussed with several members observing that traffic on the property becomes "chaotic" especially in the busy summer months.

Mr. Rebmann will bring these concerns to the Land Use Board hearing on the application.

Progress at the municipal garden was next on the agenda. Mr. McManus suggested another work date to complete applying wood chips to the path areas already created. Members agreed to meet August 25 at 5:30 to do this. Public Works has already delivered two cubic yards of wood chips to the site as directed by Mr. Rebmann.

Mr. McManus added that the recently added garden pond appears to be doing well. On a recent visit to the garden, he observed frogs and turtles enjoying the amenities.

Ms. Leatherwood updated the meeting on the continuing progress with communications, noting that Facebook has registered 116 "likes", meaning more people are checking out what the commission is doing.

She inquired about promoting Upper Township's Farmers Market, noting that Upper's Green Team has been asking about "working with the commission" on future projects.

Ms George, while agreeing with the merits of working with the Green Team, raised concerns about the farmer's market, based on her personal experiences as a vendor there. The commission decided to hold off becoming involved with promoting the market at this time.

Mr. Rebmann requested that Ms. George contact Ralph Cooper, active with Upper's Green Team, and invite him to the next commission meeting. Ms. George will do this.

Ms. Leatherwood shared information she's been researching about rumble strips. She described a technology called "mumble strips" as being less annoying sound than the rumble strips in use on Routes 9 and 47 and objected to by several residents along those roadways.

Commission members also discussed a petition supposedly circulating to have the rumble strips removed. No one has seen this petition.

Mr. Rosenthal asked if Middle Township residents or officials have reacted to the presence of the strips in that community. No one indicated awareness of any reaction.

Ms. George asked if NJ DOT was conducting a study about the effects of the strips on traffic activity. Mr. Rebmann will contact NJDOT to inquire.

Since Mr. Caster was absent, Mr. Rebmann moved the agenda item he requested to the September meeting.

The commission moved on to discuss developing a working relationship with the local school during the coming school year. Ms. Leatherwood indicated that her school's principal had approved a previously discussed proposal to include a liaison from the student population to attend commission meetings as a non-voting participant. Ms. Leatherwood suggested that ideas like this could improve the commission's involvement in the community.

Mr. Rebmann formally advised members that there will be a subcommittee named to represent the commission in its interactions with the local schools. This subcommittee will be selected at the September meeting. He further asked each member to think about for the September commission meeting, any project ideas that the commission might pursue with the school.

Ms. Leatherwood added that the school board will be voting on a proposed Environmental Club for this school year. Such a club might offer the best mechanism for developing a working relationship with the school.

There being no other business, Mr. Rebmann closed the official meeting.