

TOWNSHIP OF DENNIS ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

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OCTOBER VIRTUAL MEETING Minutes for Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 5:30 pm

Present were: Penrose (Chairman), Rebmann, Rosenthal, Slotterback, Turner (Vice-Chairman).

Members Herlihy and Salimbene were absent.

Also attending was Jessica Bishop, CFO/Administrator for Township of Dennis.

Members approved the minutes of the September 1 virtual meeting.

There were no guest speakers.

Mr. Penrose led off with extensive discussion of recent correspondence and activity involving the Consolidated Land Use Board.

The first was a letter from the American Littoral Society – “Notice of Application for a 5 year Regional General Permit 24” for potential beach restoration and intertidal reef creation throughout Cumberland and Cape May counties targeting horseshoe spawning habitat. Members asked where the application was made.

Next item was a letter from Engineering Design Associates advising the commission of intention to apply for a letter of interpretation of freshwater wetland to be filed with of Freshwater Wetlands New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for 486 Corson Tavern Road.

Mr. Penrose next explained a letter from the Pinelands Commission indicating it has issued a Certificate of Filing for a proposed three lot subdivision and development of three single family dwellings. In this instance, the application to Pinelands has come before application to the Land Use Board. Typically, such applications before the land Use Board, if approved include a condition that Pinelands (if applicable) approve as well Mr. Penrose added that there is no application to Land Use on its upcoming agenda.

Recent applications before Land Use have included approval of a subdivision creating two lots in Belleplain, and approval to build a 12,000 square foot warehouse near the intersection of Route 9 and Woodbine-Ocean View Road. Located behind the dance studio on the corner, the project also includes two residential units.

Also heard but not decided was an application from Holly Lake Condo Association asking to reopen Dudican Road as an entrance/exit to the facility. Mr. Penrose explained that the current main

entrance is located on a “bad” curve” on seasonally busy Route 47. He added that a number of concerned neighbors attended the Land Use Board meeting and that matter was “tabled”.

Mr. Penrose, commission “crossover” the Land Use Board, explained that many of the applicants coming before the latter are seeking variance relief from various stipulations of the Master Plan, including setbacks. He noted that most of the proposed developments called for lot clearing and changing the topography with grading and septic and drainage to an extent that maintaining any presence of “native vegetation” is typically not practicable.

Mr. Rebmann asked about types of parking surface and Mr. Penrose explained that applicants have asked for smaller space sizes, given the constraints of their lot sizes, thus lowering amounts of impervious surface.

Other applications before the Land Use Board include two businesses in the Ocean View area. One seeks to build a self-storage facility and smaller office building, while the other proposes building a storage/warehouse along with a pole barn. Again, due to the lot sizes and sizes of the structures, applicants are seeking variances, including for minimum landscape buffer.

Mr. Penrose concluded this segment of the meeting by noting that the applications are available for members viewing at the township hall. Mr. Turner added that materials are also available on the township website under Land Use Board agendas.

Regarding the municipal garden, Ms. Bishop indicated that Public Works had repaired several posts for which the commission thanked DTPW. Mr. Penrose suggested a work session at the garden to mow and conduct a plant identification, suggesting that Ms. Slotterback was the best authority for that task. She indicated that she would go over in the near future.

Updating the commission on the work in progress plastic bag ordinance, Mr. Turner advised that a related measure has passed the state legislature and is awaiting the governor’s signature. ANJEC has advocated lobbying the governor to sign. Mr. Turner explained that the state law covers both plastic and paper bags and apparently does not allow many alternatives. It is limited to stores of a certain size.

Mr. Turner suggested, and the commission agreed, to tabling the commission’s proposed ordinance until more is learned about what the state intends.

Mr. Penrose noted that manufacturing paper bags uses considerable energy and wondered if advocating use of reusable bags was the way to go. Paper bags whether landfilled or composted require considerable time to break down. The outright ban on both plastic and paper bags might create a hardship for smaller stores and restaurants that do take-out.

Commission members also wondered if the state measure would be a mandate or would allow local bodies to take their own actions.

Moving on in the agenda, Mr. Penrose asked about inviting a guest to a future meeting and Mr. Rebmann will attempt to arrange a speaker with the Littoral Society.

There being no public comment, the chairman closed the meeting.

Next Meeting (Virtual) Tuesday, November 3 at 5:30.