

## PRINCETON ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

**Minutes of Meeting of July 20, 2011– 7:30pm  
Meeting Room A  
Township Municipal Building  
400 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ 08540**

### **I. Opening Statement**

Adequate notice of this meeting as required by Sections 3d and 4a of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided and filed with the Township and Borough Clerks.

### **II. Chair Wasserman opened the meeting at 7:33 p.m.**

Present were: Wasserman, Kaczerski, Hiltner, Miller, Fichtenbaum, Applegate, Ullman, Ernst, Crumiller. Also present was Robert Kiser, Township Engineer.

Absent were: Hamilton, Thoft, Rojer, Eiref and Nemeth

There no members of the public present.

### **III. Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

### **IV. Minutes:**

A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted to adopt the minutes of June 22, 2011 as written and amended.

### **V. Introduction of new township member:** Wasserman introduced Judith Applegate the newly appointed township member of the PEC. Ms. Applegate gave a brief background to the Commission and said she is looking forward to working on the PEC.

### **VI. Discussions and Decisions:**

- a) **Sewer Service Areas:** Wasserman noted that the PEC discussed this issue in depth during the Westerly Road Church application and recently it has been a topic of discussion. He said he received an email from Mercer County stating that the PEC can comment on the recommendations when the DEP holds its public meeting. He said when the meeting is scheduled he will let everyone know. In the meantime he asked Robert Kiser to come and discuss the issue with the PEC. Mr. Kiser noted that the Sewer Service Map is a draft plan or a “work in progress”. He went over the map showing the members where the septic areas are and where the sewer service areas are located or where they could be located in the future. He noted that this map mimics what is mostly in place and was endorsed by the Regional Planning Board and Township Committee. The

Commission then held a discussion on whether or not this was a topic that the PEC would like to take on – whether there could be requirements or areas designated as “environmentally sensitive” and then design zoning according to environmental criteria. It was noted that larger commercial applications need to have more guidance on the environmental sensitivity – perhaps developing a zone with specific geological requirements. Wasserman noted that this can be tied to “green building standards”. It was decided that Fichtenbaum and Applegate would work with Kiser and Solow on this issue.

- b) **Stream Corridor Ordinance:** Wasserman said he received an email from Ed Schmierer, Township Attorney, stating that the Township Stream Corridor ordinance compliments the state and federal regulations. He asked Mr. Kiser if there was anything else that the PEC could do. Mr. Kiser said no, the current ordinance is in-line with state and federal regulations.
- c) **Borough Updates:** Crumiller stated that the “hydrofracking” issue will be on the Borough Council agenda in August and the PEC should have representation there to discuss why Borough Council should act on this issue. Wasserman suggested that the members send an email to Council members in advance of that meeting. Crumiller said she will alert the PEC when the date has been established. Crumiller asked if the PEC was interested in weighing in on the Valley Road school building. She said one group wants to tear it down while another wants the building to be renovated. She noted that the School Board will be making the final decision on it in the next couple of months. The PEC asked if there were repair costs vs new building costs and how they differed, green aspects of new construction vs renovation and details such as that. It was decided that more information would be gathered and the PEC would place this item on its September agenda for discussion.
- d) **Recreation Dept Recycling:** Wasserman asked Ernst how the recycling can be improved especially the trash on the playing fields. Ernst explained that they are trying to get more trash/recycling cans out at the fields; perhaps placing them so people walk by them on their way back to the cars. He said they are considering signage as well to control the trash left on the fields. He also noted that the Recreation Dept. is encouraging the use of reusable bottles instead of plastic. He said another hurdle is the fact that they do not have the ability to empty the trash and recycling can (on the weekends) and they are working on that. He stated that they will be getting 1 or 2 solar compactors for the parks as well. It was also noted by the Commission that there needs to be more trash and recycling cans at the other events sponsored by the Recreation Dept.
- e) **2011 Goals:** There was a brief discussion on whether or not yard-waste and recycling could be streamlined if consolidation were to occur. Crumiller stated that she will try and get this topic moving on the municipal level. The Commission decided that it will pursue this once a decision is made on whether or not the municipalities will consolidate.

## VII. Updates and Focus Areas:

- a) **Chair’s Report:** Wasserman said he distributed a letter from Grace Sinden regarding the white pine trees. It was suggested that Sinden write a letter to the

Editor regarding this issue. Wasserman asked if there was someone from the PEC that would like to write a letter as well. Hiltner volunteered to compose the letter.

Wasserman noted that Nemeth sent a letter to the local Senator requesting to meet with him regarding environmental issues but has not heard back from him yet. He stated that if anyone has specific discussion items for the Senator to please forward them to him.

Wasserman noted that the Food Waste Recycling Pilot Program has got off the ground and significant amounts of organic matter have already been diverted, 4 tons alone in 1 week in July. When asked about an economic analysis, Wasserman noted that the PEC will work with Janet Pellichero to ensure an analysis is done.

Wasserman stated that he distributed a letter from the Rogers Refuge regarding the deer culling. The letter noted that there appears to be an inverse relationship between the number of deer and the number of ovenbirds in the area. Evidently ovenbirds nest in the brush and deer tend to disturb this kind of foliage.

- b) **Parks & Natural Resources:** Miller noted that he received the 2003 Adopt-A-Park proposals from Wolanin and he also met with Ernst regarding this issue. He said it all comes down to the need for a Parks Director and to separate the parks into its own department. Wasserman noted that the open space tax was not reduced this year and the PEC has recommended a Parks Director for use of those funds. Ernst noted that in the Consolidation Commission report it branched out the Recreation Dept into smaller areas such as parks and roads. Wasserman suggested we wait for the results of the consolidation vote before this is pursued any further.

Hiltner noted that the Mountain Lakes Nature Preserve is now under a Historic Preservation easement which means anything done on the exterior will need Historic Preservation approval. He said he made some suggestions to the Historic Preservation Officer and his suggestions were ignored. He stated that there are geese all over the property leaving droppings in the water and on the ground. Had his suggestions been taken into consideration this would not be a problem right now.

- c) **Recreation Department:** Ernst noted that Shirley Turner has re-introduced the *Safe Playing Fields Act* and what that means is that no pesticides can be used on playing fields or playgrounds. He said the State Board of Recreation is opposed to this bill as it is written. He said kids need a safe playing field free from weeds and insects as well. The Commission raised the following issues: can a less toxic approach be used; is there evidence that the children are being harmed by the pesticides; and what reasonable alternatives are available. Ernst noted that Barbara Bromley and the NJ Green Industry Council are also opposed to this bill

as it is written. Ernst said he will try and gather more information on this and report back to the Commission. Wasserman said this item will be placed on the September agenda for discussion. Hiltner asked if ANJEC has taken a stand on this issue and Miller asked if the Sierra Club has as well. It was noted that Hiltner will follow up with ANJEC and Miller will follow up with the Sierra Club.

Ernst noted that the governing bodies will vote on the pool bond on Monday July 27, 2011. He said it will be decided whether the new pool will have a concrete liner or a stainless steel liner. He said concrete is less costly but will need maintenance over time, where the stainless steel liner is more costly up-front but will not require maintenance.

Ernst stated that the *Community Night Out* event is scheduled for August 2, 2011 from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. He said there are a quite few fun events and food, fun for the whole family. He encouraged everyone to attend.

- d) **Regional Planning Board:** Ullman noted that they will be discussing the proposed Arts & Transit neighborhood in the near future and she will keep the PEC informed. She also noted that the Lanwin Development/Province Line Woods application will be heard in September. Wasserman noted that this should be placed on the PEC September agenda for discussion.
- e) **PSE&G Report:** Hiltner noted that he distributed a report of energy usage but the numbers in that report also include some meter owned by Princeton University and he is trying to back out that information. Wasserman suggested giving the information to Sustainable Princeton and let them come up with ideas on how to reduce the numbers. Fichtenbaum noted that the Residential and Business committees can also work on the issue and she suggested sending the information to Diane Landis. Hiltner noted that he sent the information to Diane Landis already. He said it needs to be determined whether or not the information is good enough for a baseline and then set goals from there.
- f) **Winberies Expansion:** Fichtenbaum noted that the restaurant received its approval for expansion and there were no discussions on the environmental issues. Ullman noted that the Township Engineer determines if there are environmental impacts and in this case, the applicant was trading impervious surface for impervious surface and there were no other environmental issues discussed. The Commission discussed implementing “green initiatives” and Ullman noted that the Commission would need to meet with the Engineer. Wasserman stated that the Commission needs to get moving on the green building codes and said that Fichtenbaum and Hamilton will start working on this and then report back to the Commission.

**VIII. Adjournment:** A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Debra Rogers", is written in a cursive style.

**Debra Rogers, Secretary**

**Date Approved: September 22, 2011**