

Princeton Regional Health Commission
Minutes
October 16, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Princeton Regional Health Commission was convened at 7:30 PM at Princeton Borough Hall-East Conference Room.

Members Present: Robert Ciotta, PhD, Dr. George DiFerdinando, Catherine Hegedus, RN Lindsey Kayman, Dr. Charles Rojer, Bruce Topolosky, Dr. Laura Kahn and Jo Ann Hill, RN

Alternate: Leon Rosenson,

Liaisons: Bernard Miller and Heather Howard

Also Present: David Henry, Health Officer

Members absent: Rick Weiss

Public Comment

Grace Sinden a former member of the Health Commission. She express her concerns about proposed renovations especially the disposal of hazardous materials from the property formerly used by the University Medical Center at Princeton.

Alexi Assmus, PhD a member of the group Princeton citizens for sustainable neighborhoods. Dr. Assmus indicated she had a letter to be read as instructed by her attorney. Mr. Topolosky inquired if the letter was sent to the Health Commission Dr. Assmus indicated that it was submitted. Mr. Topolosky indicated that members of the Commission had copies of the letter. Dr. Assmus continued that additional materials that were received today October 16, 2012, in response to Princeton Environmental Commission request on October 4, 2012 for materials by October 15, 2012. We are not sure what the materials contain and will make sure our lawyers and experts receive them and review them. She still believes that there are enough issues to be of concern for the public health and safety.

Mr. Topolosky indicated that a letter was received from the attorney representing the hospital a copy of that letter was sent to the members of the Commission.

Resolution No. 2012-03 NJ Safe Playing Fields Act/Ordinance Update

Mr. Henry requested that this resolution should be approved since this was submitted to the State in April and to date; we have not received an answer. After much discussion the resolution was approved as prepared by Mr. Henry on a motion by Dr. Rojer and seconded by Dr. Kahn the motion carried on a voice call vote. Ayes (9) Nays (0)

Noise Ordinance for Princeton Borough/ Princeton Township – Public Comment Continued - Noise Ordinance – Recommendation for Governing Bodies of Princeton Boro/Twp.

Mr. Henry explained that this is the second open public meeting and the changes proposed are that any leaf blower and other lawn equipment that did not meet the current noise standard the use would be prohibited.

All current information collected on landscape machinery will be sent on to the Governing Body for its decision. Mr. Henry spoke to the schools, recreation and Princeton University.

Mr. Rosenson reminded the Commission that a previous speaker indicated that the current standards are not truly protected. Mr. Henry indicated that the proposal he is proposing will be more stringent than the current State standard. Mr. Henry also spoke to Mr. Trigg from Department of Environmental Protection and also reviewed minutes from the Noise Counsel of the State of New Jersey and found the option that a Municipality one could have a more stringent ordinance in a limited area.

Mr. Henry made a recommendation that the proposed ordinance be sent to the two Governing Bodies for their consideration.

Ms. Howard indicated that it is unlikely that this recommendation will be reviewed until next year by the new Governing Body.

Mr. Miller suggested that this be held until the new Governing Body takes office, and enquired who would be the enforcing agency.

Mr. Henry indicated enforcement would be the Health Department or the Police.

Mr. Miller indicated that this involves a person trained in noise enforcement with special equipment.

Mr. Henry indicated that he had included in his 2012 capital budget funds for equipment and in the 2013 budget training for his two inspectors.

Mr. Topolosky reminded the members that in a previous discussion of who was going to enforce this and it might be difficult to enforce but did not want to use that as an excuse for not taking this into consideration.

Mr. Miller indicated that leaving enforcement open leaves the municipality with the opportunity to say we are not sure how this is going to be enforced also the cost and it would be recycled back to the health department.

After much more discussion this ordinance was tabled until the next year.

Avalon Bay – Environmental Concerns from the Environmental Commission/Public

Dr. Rojer indicated that the Environmental Commission was informed that the hospital still had toxic materials on the property and tanks that are still on the grounds that needs to be taken care of before the building could be considered for occupation and we need to know that the ground is cleared of all contamination since the hospital has been there since 1920.

Dr. Kahn questioned the various reports received.

Dr. Rojer indicated that an assessment was done by Eco Sciences and they found that further evaluations should be done and the Environmental Commission were of the opinion that the further evaluation was not done and there is a suggestion that the hospital had a recommendation that everything was safe but there were enough questions that the Environmental Commission felt that further evaluations is warranted, and suggested the Health Department look into this.

Mr. Topolosky indicated that the concern is about the public health safety and the Health Department has not received any information to give a level of comfort. A lot of questions have been raised and since the information was not reviewed by the Health Commission the question procedurally is did the planning Board send any information to the Environmental Commission? Dr. Rojer explained that the Planning Board was made aware after the Environmental Commission sent their concerns to the Planning Board.

Mr. Topolosky inquired if a formal letter was sent to the Planning Board.

Dr. Rojer indicated that a formal letter was sent to the Planning Board from the Environmental Commission recommending further evaluation.

Mr. Rosenson suggested that since there is no one on staff to determine what toxic materials are in the ground and suggested that all local ordinance, EPA and DEP regulation be followed in terms of what information is submitted, also to make sure that information from State/Federal and Local regulations are submitted.

Dr. Kahn question if the Commission had the power to request an environmental assessment.

Mr. Topolosky indicated that is a question for the legal counsel.

Dr. DiFerdinando indicated that the Commission is willing to help in the discovery to help either the Planning Board or the Environmental Commission.

Mr. Henry noted that he checked the Department of Environmental Protection website and the hospital had no open complaints. All cases were currently closed.

Ann Studholme, Esq. representing Avalon Bay

Ms. Studholme explained that she did not believe that the Princeton Environmental Commission found that there was insufficient follow up. The Princeton Environmental Commission presented a characterization that is also called a phase 1 investigation (this is done by an independent license person).

After more investigating it was found that a phase 2 investigation was done and the tank issue was addressed and samples of the ground water was done to make sure that the test well on the property were clean and they were clean along with a copy of a letter were submitted.

Ms. Studholme indicated that all of the concerns the hospital and the purchaser have relied on, were in the reports and have all resulted in a No Further Action letter from the NJDEP.

Ms. Sinden thought that the Health Department has powers that the Environmental Commission does not have, the Environmental Commission does not have the professional staff they have members that are professionals and they do research.

Daniel Harris declined to comment under the advice of his counsel.

Mark Solomon Esq, representing Princeton Health Care System.

Mr. Solomon explained that the allegations of conflicting information was unsupported as it related to contamination, we have asked for any information related to the contamination to date, we have received no supporting information.

No Further Action letters were received and disclosed along with the case numbers and resolutions.

The Eco Sciences phase I report indicated that things might have sent down the drain and there should be further investigation this was done.

Mr. Solomon stated that should anyone have any further information that indicates that there is contamination to please let them know.

Mr. Rosenson questioned where does the process by the Department of Environmental Protection stand. Do they have more steps to take before issuing a permit if any?

Mr. Henry indicated once a No Further Action letter is issued that is the end of Department of Environmental Protection's involvement

Mr. Solomon indicated that if a tank has to be removed it is witnessed and the ground tests to make sure that there is no leakage. If a leak is found it is reported to the State.

Mr. Topolosky asked Mr. Henry to give the Planning Board Chair and the Environmental Commission the concerns of the Health Commission.

Mr. Rosenson suggested that Mr. Henry keep a close watch on future remediation on the site.

HiTOPS – Status Update – Elizabeth Casparian, PhD

Dr. Casparian gave a brief overview of the programs available at the facility.

The facility is 25 year old adolescent health organization and is an offshoot of family born birth center we have three main objectives one being health care for people between the ages of 13 to 26, for a variety of health care, the staff comprise of certified nurses, midwives and nurse practitioners with back up physician who read the charts. The second is clinical care with support for both parents and for young people who is questioning their sexual orientation this is a drop in group for anyone between the ages of 13 and 26.

Educational outreach is in 15 New Jersey high schools and will be in 16 North Carolina high schools in the coming years. We also work with Corner House.

Dr. Sandy Zordan-Friedman instituted a mental health screening.

Dr. Casparian gave a total of visits by Princeton residents.

A poll of clients visiting the facility was taken as to why HiTOPS was chosen and the answers were affordability, convenience of the location and privacy.

Dr. Casparian indicated the person answering the phone is bilingual. Since May of this year we have received phone calls asking if primary health care is provided. Many of the callers are bilingual and are in pain also walk-ins requesting the same healthcare services. These persons are directed to the bus service but are not sure if it is safe to travel on the bus.

Dr. Casparian asked for direction on how to proceed with this information.

Mr. Topolosky suggested the information collected and documented be sent to the hospital.

It was explained to Dr. Casparian that after discussing this subject with Ms. Hersh the question was never directly answered.

Dr. Kahn asked that a daily record of the phone calls and walk in be kept so that in time it can be used to determine how many people that are displaced.

Ms. Howard inquired if it is possible to ask the representative of the hospital to come to the next Health Commission meeting.

Mr. Topolosky indicated that a request for a representative would be extended to the hospital to attend the November meeting.

Ordinance 2012-02 Sanitary Code Amendments – Introduction

Mr. Henry explained the ordinance which incorporated changes and fees. This was the first reading this ordinance.

On a motion to recommend this ordinance by Dr. Rojer and seconded by Dr. Kahn

This was carried on a voice call vote. Ayes (9) Nays (0)

The meeting was adjourned.

The items below were all carried to the next meeting

Minutes – July 17, 2012

Monthly Reports/ Health Officer's Report (July/August/September)

Old Business a. Consolidation Update

House of Worship Liability

Mayors Wellness Campaign

2013 Proposed Budget – Budget remains the same as 2012.

Greater Mercer County Community Health Improvement Plan

New Member – Rick Weiss

Reports from Committees

Budget and Finance

Personnel

Planning

Environmental Commission

Princeton Alcohol and Drug Alliance

Closed Session-Personnel Matters Regarding Commission Employees (if needed)

Adjournment