

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

May 1, 2013 – 7 pm Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order. He read the Open Public Meeting Act. All stood for the pledge of allegiance. All were reminded to turn off their cell phones or put them in silent mode.

Members Present: Jerry Bowers, Henry Gore, Ted Harwick, Chairman Michael Keady, Christopher Meyers, and Secretary Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Members Absent: N/A

Township Committee Liaison: Ray Krov.

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: A motion was made by Jerry Bowers and seconded by Ted Harwick to approve the minutes of April 3, 2013 as received. All present were in favor. Motion carried.

Chairman Keady reminded everyone that the June meeting will be held on Friday June 7, 2013 due to the primary election on Tuesday, June 4, and the Township Committee meeting being moved to the EC's regular Wednesday slot. Resident Dwight Pederson has expressed interest in being on the Environmental Commission and the Township Committee has the appointment scheduled for the next agenda.

Sub-Committee:

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Ted Harwick and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as Secretary Kozak. Nothing to report.

Trails – Chris Meyers (chair), Henry Gore and Ted Harwick. Nothing major to report. Henry Gore heard that the trail has been approved to go thru the mill site in Milford. No confirmation has been received. Henry Gore further discussed how the abandoned railroad is being taken care of by local people and that the lease has been arranged thru the mill site but the EPA has not approved this yet. Jerry Bowers stated that he has attended Township Committee meeting where someone comes in to discuss issues along the stretch of railroad that goes from Milford to Holland Township and the Police Chief has stated at public meetings that the Police Department cannot do anything. The Police Department has expressed that the property in question is privately owned and unless the owner puts in a complaint then nothing can be done. Based on what the Police Department has said at public meetings, he is questioning the legal rights of hikers being able to use the property. Ted Harwick stated that no organization has sponsored the project but there might be a right of way agreement. Henry Gore stated that he believed that is what is being done as he has spoken with an outside agency such as the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance.

ERI – Jerry Bowers (chair), Mike Keady and Henry Gore. Everyone has received the latest version of the Holland Township Environmental Resource Inventory approved by the Highlands Council. The sub-committee worked hard with planner Mike Mueller and the Highlands Council. There was discussion about the need to tweak page 2. The Environmental Commission is listed on this page but the Environmental Commission strongly believes that they need a stronger statement on page 2 to enable them to perform their duties. Since they are paying for the services of Planner Mike Mueller they will demand that the verbiage be changed to the format they want. After additional discussions all were in favor of the change to Page 2.

The Highlands Council had some comments regarding the critical habitat discussion as the Environmental Commission was looking for more freedom to change things (something about rare plants etc) as they came up and Keri Benscoter

our representative at the Highlands Council reminded the sub-committee that the boundaries or critical habitat areas are set by the DEP and Holland Township has no authority to change those boundaries. However, if something comes up the Environmental Commission can reach out to the DEP and the Highlands Council to discuss their concerns. The acceptable change will be that the Environmental Commission can submit comments to the DEP for consideration.

The Public Hearing discussion took place. The Highlands Council does not require the public hearing to be before the Planning Board. It has been explained that to have more weight, The Environmental Commission needs to review this document and recommend adoption by the Planning Board.

Everyone was reminded that this document is an evolving document and changes can always be added thru the process. If adopted by the Planning Board then this document will be a supplement the existing Natural Resource Inventory already adopted.

Chairman Keady told everyone that that The Highlands Council reinforced that when Holland Township adopted the Highlands Council checklist ordinance it was more substantive than anyone realized. Projects have to go before the Highlands Council at the moment. The bottom line is there is no R5 zone left in Holland because the new Conservation Zone and Protection Zone are now in force. The Highlands Council will enforce all the provisions of the Highlands Land Use Ordinance until Holland adopts the ordinance and then enforces it. More discussion took place regarding the Planning Board and the review of the Master Plan which got into another discussion about nitrate dilution. In essence, everyone in Holland is on a well either from their own property or from a pumping station. More discussions took place regarding depletive water use and the general concept that public water and public sewer are taking waste water from Holland and sending to the ocean.

After some additional discussion, a motion was made by Henry Gore and seconded by Jerry Bowers to recommend this document to the Planning Board for adoption. More discussion took place regarding the public hearing process. The original goal was to have one public hearing for the adoption of the ERI and the Master Plan (which the Planning Board sub-committee – Dan Rader, Susan Grimshaw and Mike Keady are working with Planner Mike Mueller). After additional discussion a motion was made by Jerry Bowers and seconded by Chris Meyers to send this document to the Planning Board and to request that a public hearing be done as soon as possible and that the adoption of the ERI should not be held up while the Planning Board is working on the Master Plan Element. All present were in favor of this separate public hearing request. Motion carried.

Chairman Keady will draft a letter that will be distributed to the Planning Board members. For clarification, Mr. Morrow will be the only attorney to review this document with his charges to be put against the grant and Planner Mike Mueller will be the only planner involved with charges being applied to the grant. The Planning Board reviews and adopts the ERI and the Master Plan. The Highlands Land Use Ordinance will be adopted by the Township Committee and will be reviewed by the Township Attorney. The Engineer will not be reviewing any of these documents. The court reporter can be an expense submitted against the grant along with the advertising expenses. Liaison Krov suggested that a summary should be given at the public hearing and that Figure 1 should be enlarged for people to see what the impact is to them.

Web Page – Chris Meyers (chair), Jerry Bowers – Nothing to report.

Shade Tree and Community Forestry Plan Sub-Committee – Henry Gore and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as secretary. The DEP has signed the grant as of April 10th. There is \$3,000.00 to pay the consultant. Secretary Kozak explained the conversation she had with CFO Peter Rees (upon consultation of the State). The Township can do in-kind or it can also add money in to pay the consultant. We are just starting the process. A list of recommended forestry consultants has been provided. Secretary Kozak will review the list with Tax Assessor Michelle Trivigno to see what she knows about the consultants on the list. Secretary Kozak will provide the information to Henry Gore as he is going to draft a RFP for the

next meeting. This is not for private property and this will act as a general resource inventory. Secretary Kozak reminded everyone to keep track of their voluntary hours with this project. The state suggested using an old method of tracking which is to keep a notebook with you and to write down the date and the time spent with a brief description in it. At the end we can review all the notebooks to put together a formal accounting. Per Liaison Krov the Environmental Commission can handle this process as it does not exceed the bid threshold. The Environmental Commission can create the RFP and interview. The grant expires October 31, 2014. We will send our proposal to about six registered foresters from the list and go from there.

Public Comment:

There was no one present in the audience for comment.

At 9:05 Jerry Bowers made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary