

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

March 5, 2014 – 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, Dwight Pederson, Richard Schrack and Secretary Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Absent: Robert Thurgarland (to be sworn in at the next scheduled meeting)

Township Committee Liaison Present: Ray Krov.

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: A motion was made by Jerry Bowers and seconded by Henry Gore to approve the minutes of December 4, 2013 and January 8, 2014 as received. All present were in favor of approving the minutes. Motion carried.

Oaths of Office: The Oath of Office for Robert Thurgarland was tabled as Mr. Thurgarland was out of state for this meeting.

Sub-Committees:

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Ted Harwick and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as Secretary Kozak. The Musconetcong Watershed Association will be hosting its annual river clean up on April 12, 2014. Member Rick Schrack asked secretary Kozak to sign him up. All present asked secretary Kozak to have the information posted to the Holland Township website.

Trails – Ted Harwick (chair) and Henry Gore. Ted Harwick prepared a handout for discussion:

HOLLAND TOWNSHIP
Environmental Commission
Trails Sub-Committee

It is the sense of the Commission that the general welfare of Holland Township may be enhanced by a more formal approach to the maintenance and development of trails within the Township. To this end what follows is an outline or logical progression of how to arrive at the desired conclusion.

- I. Holland is a highly rural area which presents the potential for outside activities and indeed has existing trails.
 - A. Trails are beneficial to the residents by presenting the opportunity for fresh air exercise.
 - B. Trails provide the interaction between people and nature.

- C. A well developed and documented trail system will raise the stature of Holland Township.

II. First step in program is to inventory existing trails.

- A. Build on what we have.
- B. Ownership of trail property.
- C. Physical characteristics of the trails.
- D. General access, such as parking, for peoples' use.

III. Approach to establishing new trails.

- A. Ownership status of property; Bethany Ridge, for example.
- B. Are existing trails be utilized enough to justify expansion?
- C. Connecting routes between existing trails.

IV. Cost factors in dollars and cents.

- A. Assumption the Township will not fund cost
- B. Seek governmental grants and funding.
- C. Private foundations and charities.

V. Man power needs to build new trails.

- A. Boy Scouts, school projects.
- B. Environmental groups.

VI. Production of literature, brochures, handouts, etc.

- A. Professional artists?
- B. Who pays?
- C. Township website?

Ted Harwick stated he spoke with Deputy Mayor Dan Bush regarding the property known as Huntington Knolls in regards to the possibility of including that development in a trail project. The Milford Bluffs are close to the existing property and he questioned if there was a chance to connect the trail. Mr. Harwick further questioned if the Township Engineer would donate his time when reviewing the project before the Planning Board? Chairman Keady suggested that comments regarding that project be brought up to the Township Attorney but reminded everyone that the Milford Bluffs parking lot can only hold about 4 cars. The Gorge area is also limited in parking. Basically trail parking is limited in Holland Township. Henry Gore brought up discussion of the possibility of connecting the rail canal or the one that stops below the mill. Hunterdon Land Trust is working on coordinating Land Acquisition. Jerry Bowers reminded everyone that this project is a huge undertaking for the commission. All were asked to look over Ted Harwick's hand out and to send

comments to Mr. Harwick. The DEP letter was endorsed by the Township Committee and signed by Mayor Roselle.

Web Page – Jerry Bowers, Dwight Pederson, and Rick Schrack – the links are up. Nothing to report. Ray Krov suggested adding more information to the website to educate people on land use. The subcommittee will look into this.

Highlands Conformance – Jerry Bowers (chair), Mike Keady and Henry Gore. The subcommittee is to meet on Tuesday March 11, 2014 to identify the changes made in the New Model Highlands Land Use Ordinance compared to the previously adopted version. The protection of Critical Habitat for Endangered Species was one part pulled from the original, but that discussion will be prepared as a separate document at a later date. The Wetland section was also pulled and will become its own document at a later date. Holland submitted its documents in 2010. In May of 2011 we received preliminary plan conformance approval. The thrust of the overall document is protecting and projecting the purposes of the Highlands Act. Henry Gore talked about the importance of method. Mike Keady is to talk with Planner Mueller to see if he can start moving forward with the zoning map (taking the existing map and fine tuning it with the new information). Just a reminder. The preservation area consists of the protection zone (sloped land) and is 88 acres with the conservation zone (farmland) being 25 acres. The Planning Area consists of the protection zone (sloped area) being 33 acres and the conservation zone (farmland) being 13 acres. New developments must be clustered on 20% of sites. All the above is based on a nitrate dilution method of protecting the water. The impact on the existing residents is nothing if they are grandfathered. If you want to add to your property then its 25% of the existing with some restrictions. This needs to be identified for the residents. During the public portion of the new Land Use Ordinance the public might ask questions about their land and how the new Land Use Ordinance would change their options. Our responsibility is to respond and to educate. This got into a discussion of how to educate with a suggestion being making up a “cheat Sheet” which can be handed out, posted on the web etc. The major benefit of this plan is to stop developers from being able to build houses in the mountains and disrupting the existing views. Mr. Keady stated that he believes primary responsibility for this task will fall on the Environmental Commission and that he will bring it before the Planning Board for endorsement, after which it will go to the Township Committee for adoption. Mr. Bowers reminded the commission that they are doing the homework for the Planning Board and the Township Committee. The Environmental Commission needs to present them with the information.

Shade Tree and Community Forestry Plan Sub-Committee – Henry Gore, Dwight Pederson and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as secretary. The second draft was sent to the subcommittee for review. They have to meet to discuss. Henry Gore wants more discussion of the CSIP 15 – other. He believes it’s a catch all for towns to take specifics of their town and put needs of their town into this plan to get their support and to look for available grants. He believes this is the section we need to develop to identify what Holland Township wants to do, with particular emphasis on the newly acquired property known as Holland Park. Liaison Krov stated that he believes we need to identify with the Forestry Plan and then later to develop more of what they want to do and then represent to the township. When the “thaw” happens the Environmental

Commission wants to do a walk or informational day for the public to come in and see the property. It was suggested that Deputy Mayor Dan Bush knows the property best. Henry Gore reminded the board to look at the Environmental Powers discussed in the EC handbook and to follow them. The Environmental Commission needs to be included in an assessment of the lands that are owned by the Township. More discussion took place about Holland Park. More discussion took place about the pictures needed for the Forestry Plan and how Mike Keady and Henry Gore will get together to take pictures. They both want to show the area as a whole. Secretary Kozak asked them to look at the front trees of the municipal building as someone has mentioned issues with these township trees.

Organic Lawn Maintenance Techniques – Dwight Pederson requested discussion regarding municipal property but the topic was tabled.

Seedling Project – the members received information about the opportunity to obtain a maximum of 2000 seedlings per municipality thru a NJ based program to help recover from Hurricane Sandy. All looked over the information and determined interest. A motion was made by Ted Harwick and seconded by Henry Gore to endorse this and move forward with the program. Secretary Kozak will respond and keep everyone posted on how many trees are allotted to Holland Township. Ted Harwick volunteered to pick up the seedlings at the Warren County Soil Conservation location in Hackettstown NJ. The commission decided to hand out the trees at the recycling center on Saturday after pickup. Publicity will be posted on the web and in the community. It is a community event for our residents to pick up a max of 5 trees bundled together. They have a few days to replant. Mike Keady will talk with the Green Team representative to see if she can help spread the word in the school. If the school can help with pickup then more information will follow. Information will be posted on our website. Pick up April 5th from 9 am till noon.

Water Usage Tax – The Township Committee was going to move forward with a standard letter that has been circulating amongst the various towns. The originator of the letter is Pohatcong Township. The original intent was to support the concept of a water use tax but the wording was not in the best interest of Holland Township. A motion was made by Henry Gore and seconded by Rick Schrack to have Mike Keady and Jerry Bowers move forward with rewording the letter that states support of both a water use tax and the Highlands. All were in favor. After much more discussion, it was decided that Holland Township endorses the Highlands so it is in the best interest to just do nothing.

ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grant (deadline April 2 for an up to \$1,500.00 grant with volunteer hours to be 80 hours of labor) – A grant could help Community Outreach with the Holland Park project (make brochures, create literature etc.). Henry Gore suggests that a Landscape Architect is hired to let the community know what can be done with the land purchased. It was suggested that maybe we could work with a college such as Rutgers and with a grant see if maybe a landscape architect student would be available for a project. Reminder, the Holland Park does adjoin County Park Land and the Community Center. Mike Keady will try to move forward with this project.

ANJEC workshop – Rick Schrack attended the workshop and brought back some handouts. They suggested that Environmental Commissions develop yearly goals. They also suggested environmental clubs at local schools. Mike Keady stated that the Green Team is more connected to the school.

Hoffman Property – Liaison Krov reported that there is nothing to report.

Public Comment: There was no one present in the audience for comment.

At 8:50 Jerry Bowers made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary