

WARREN TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

March 12, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The Environmental Commission (EC) of Warren Township, in the County of Somerset and State of New Jersey convened in a Regular Meeting at the Warren Township Municipal Building, 46 Mountain Blvd., Warren, New Jersey on Tuesday, March 12, 2019.

Laura Mandell called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM

Flag salute

Pursuant to the requirement of Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, Adequate notice of this meeting was given by posting a copy on the Township Bulletin Board and sending a copy to the Township Clerk, Echoes Sentinel and Courier News as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. All Commissioners are duly appointed volunteers working for the Township of Warren.

II. Roll Call

Present: Laura Mandell, Susan Zeitels, Wayne DeFeo, Karen Kaiser, Harold Black

Absent: Phil Lobo, Karen Task, Sal Di Bianca, Sandra Ponzio

III. Discussion

Laura Mandell reviewed the correspondence with the committee. 1. Request for Wetlands General Permit for 26 Berkshire Drive, 2. a New Green Infrastructure Guide from Rutgers, 3 All are invited to the annual Land Conservation Rally which will be held on by Consortium of NJ Conservation groups on April 12 and passed around information. WEC received a copy of the Long Hill Environmental Commission minutes. Laura mentioned that she will ask Krisann if WEC reciprocates as well

Laura discussed the Warren/ Watchung Green Fair, which will be held on May 11 from 10-1, at the Warren Middle school, all are welcome and encouraged to attend.. The event is being held at the Warren Middle School. The Green Fair has two components, one is to recycle hard to recycle items like metals, Styrofoam and electronics and there will be a paper shred. The other is that local community groups have tables on environmentally friendly projects.

The January minutes were reviewed. Wayne DeFeo made a motion to approve and Harold Black seconded it. Laura Mandell asked Susan Zeitels and Karen Kaiser to discuss the ANJEC (Association of NJ Environmental Commissions) event that they had attended.

Susan Zeitels discussed some of the topics covered. She said it was recommended that the WEC review the Zoning to consider making changes to the Zoning Ordinances if necessary. It was also recommended that Environmental groups use the ordinance to address grading of steep slopes. There was emphasis on using native plants upon replanting. It was also stressed that all members of Environmental groups should be sure to get permission before walking sites to review applications and such. The Sustainable NJ website has information on Stormwater Runoff for review. Recharge calculations were reviewed and all recharge systems should be able to fully recharge within 7 days. Environmental Commissions should consider the appearance of the township. Members were encouraged to ask lot of questions about development in town. Susan felt that the group is on target when it comes to the work they have been doing in relation to their responsibilities. Karen Kaiser mentioned that she was able to ask about the situations where some maps are showing wetlands and other maps do not. She was told that in all cases where ANY map shows wetlands, there should be an LOI requested and the Environmental Commissions can reference any reputable wetlands mapping. ANJEC will hold their 50th Anniversary Environmental Congress on October 4.

Laura Mandell mentioned that the ordinances that the WEC presented to the Township committee were not incorporated on February 28 when the other ordinances regarding affordable housing were voted on. She mentioned that the group should continue to make recommendations for stormwater management and dark sky ordinances going forward.

Wayne DeFeo discussed the Water Bill, which is being referred to as the “Rain Tax”. He explains that it would allow municipalities to establish a separate Stormwater Utility that would help regulate excessive

amounts of stormwater runoff. The utility would be able to assess a fee if a property creates excessive stormwater. The money would be managed by the township to help mitigate stormwater issues around town. The properties that were assessed could mitigate those fees by complying with recommended improvements, such as using pervious pavement or installing underground stormwater runoff controls. This would go through the DCA. The WEC could present the idea to the township committee, who would ultimately decide if a utility would be established. It would not be mandatory.

Karen Kaiser mentioned the new State Stormwater Ordinances should be available soon. The township will have one year to comply.

Wayne also mentioned that the DEP is reclassifying streams, adding 759 miles of streams and rivers to Class 1 with increased buffer areas. These seem to be mostly in Western NJ, and does not seem to include Warren locations. .

Wayne DeFeo asked if there are any updates on the previously discussed applications. Lisa Sammartino let the group know that the Brookside Drive subdivision was approved and the Peach Tree Lane subdivision is still being heard by the Board. She will send the resolution and reports for Krisann to share with the group.

COMMENTS BY WARREN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION:

WEC discusses the notification of Flood Hazard Permit for 154 & 156 Washington Valley Road for Westfield Hall, Inc. The WEC makes the following recommendations regarding the proposed church and parking lot which are the subject of the application.

1. WEC would like to commend the applicant on the proposed use of an underground stormwater retention system and the use of native plants in the seeding mixture.
2. WEC recommends planting more deciduous trees to replace the ones to be removed, including sizeable, mature trees. Recommended are Black Walnut, Magnolia, Walnut, Red Bud, Flowering Dogwood, Norway, White Pine to be mixed with the evergreens. These should be protected in some way from the deer, and the proximity of power lines should also be considered.
3. WEC would like to see areas for recycling to be incorporated into the plans.
4. WEC would recommend the trees create an appropriate buffer, as this property is highly visible along Washington Valley Road.
5. WEC recommends the use of Fully Shielded Dark Sky lighting, using warm white or filtered LED lights.
6. WEC commends the applicant on limiting the lighting to only the parking area where necessary.
7. It is noted on the plans that there are scour holes located at the inlets, WEC would recommend using scour holes also at the outfalls as well to help prevent erosion.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. CASE: BA19-01
BLOCK/LOT: Block2 Lot 2.01 – 10 Independence Blvd.
DATE: January 16, 2019
APPLICANT: **10 Independence Holdings, LLC**
ENGINEER: Newlines Engineering & Survey- Glen D. Lines PE, P.P
ATTORNEY: Lisa A. John-Basta
Proposal: Preliminary and Final Site plan for new retail/restaurant/bank space- Including use variance for drive thru and bulk variance.

COMMENTS BY WARREN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION:

1. WEC strongly recommends that the Drive Thru be denied.
2. WEC requests that deciduous trees be planted in addition to the boxwoods shown on the plan. WEC would like to see a variety of native trees planted, including Red Bud, Dogwoods, Flowering Pear, Mountain Maple.
3. WEC recommends the trees be planted to create some shaded areas to avoid creating a “heat island”.

4. WEC would like to recommend using pervious pavement to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff from this location.
5. WEC recommends using fully shielded lighting, using warm white or filtered LEDs instead of the bright white.
6. WEC recommends that along the area directly across from Colonial Crossing, either of these options be implemented:
 - a. Create a bioswale along the grassy area where the lot meets the roadway, as the slope of the property would lend itself to a bioswale.
 - b. Or plant a row of deciduous trees there
7. WEC strongly recommends that the FAR variance be denied.
8. WEC would like to note that the number of parking spots is greater than what is required.
9. WEC recommends that the Environmental Waiver Request be denied.

2. CASE: BA18-12
 BLOCK/LOT Block 119 Lot 2 115 Mountain Avenue
 DATE: January 23, 2019
 APPLICANT: **John Sicignano**
 ENGINEER:
 ATTORNEY:
 Proposal: Variance Side Yard for Accessory Building

COMMENTS BY WARREN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION:

1. WEC recommends that the town not sell the parcel adjacent to Mr. Sicignano.
2. WEC recommends that the Board give the variance to allow the garage to be built along the property line.

3. CASE: PB17-08A
 BLOCK/LOT Block 12 Lot 9 – 98 Liberty Corner Road
 DATE: March 5, 2019
 APPLICANT: **Rick Markham**
 ENGINEER: Page-Mueller Engineering Consultants, PC
 ATTORNEY: Fred Zellely
 Proposal: Minor Subdivision – Amended Plans ** WEC reviewed earlier in 2018 (driveway access to rear parcel would be moved to Oak/Third)

COMMENTS BY WARREN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION:

WEC had no comments on this change.

V. Adjournment –9:06 pm Laura Mandell made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Wayne DeFeo seconded it.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2019 at 7:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Sammartino, Land Use Secretary