

## Environmental Commission Minutes

### Regular Meeting

Meeting Date/Time: February 27, 2007 at 7:30 pm

Meeting Location: Hutchinson Educational Center, Historical Society

Attendees: Susan Bottino, Ann Fischbach, Barbara Jones, Ryan Rosenberg, Chris Toelg, Jan Troizier, Kristin Waller

Absent: Roger Cook (Chair), Paul Byrne, Gary Grubb, Chayna Wilson, David Zaiser

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Vice-Chair Barbara Jones.

Yan Troizier moved to approve the agenda and Susan Bottino seconded. Agenda approved.

The Vice-Chair announced that the meeting had been publicized and was in conformance with the Open Meetings Act, having the date and time advertised in the Borough's newspapers of record.

Troizier moved that the minutes of the January 23, 2007 meeting be approved and Bottino seconded. Minutes approved.

Ann Fischbach and Chris Toelg were welcomed as new members. Troizier was welcomed back as a member. Chayna Wilson will serve as an alternate.

### **Discussion Summary**

#### **Old Business**

**Pesticide-Free Zones** – This topic will be discussed at the March meeting. To re-cap the status, the EC's recommendation has not yet been forwarded to the Borough Council. It was previously voted that the resolution include the four parks and the Greenway. However, the Chairman has some concerns about including the Greenway as there can be incursions of weeds on the gravel path and he believes Round-up may need to be sprayed to combat this weed growth.

Jones contacted Harold Mulleavey and found that a scout group may be interested in the weeding project but typically a donation of \$100-\$150 is made and the duration of the project for a particular scout and helpers is just one year. Jones suggested this could be an ongoing project with different scouts taking the lead each year. Fischbach suggested that students enrolled in the confirmation class at St. Anthony's Church may be a good resource to tap as they do community service. **Fischbach will discuss this option informally with a contact and give feedback to the EC at the March meeting. Bottino offered to check to see what other towns that have implemented PFZs have done in similar situations and report back to the EC at the March meeting.**

**Re-review of Mercer Street Revitalization Plans** – As David Zaiser was absent from the meeting, there were no new developments to report. **Zaiser will contact the engineer**

**to discuss the EC's comments and concerns which were brought up at the January meeting.** The EC discussed the Hightstown Diner parking lot and where exactly the private property boundary was on Mercer Street and where the public right-of-way or borough or county property lies. **Clarification on this point is needed.** Line of site at the intersection of Ward and Mercer must be maintained.

**Solar Power Initiative** – no change in status.

**'07 Budget** – Temporary so far. Ryan Rosenberg stated that the Borough Council is awaiting a proposed budget from the EC. **Jones will check with Roger Cook to see if it is okay to submit a budget similar to last year's and if so, she will send it and a letter to the Borough Clerk. (NOTE: later in the minutes, it is explained that the budget may need to be increased by \$100 for Greenway brochure printing costs and that Jones will check with Cook on adding this.)**

**Street Shade Tree Committee** – no change in status. Money for the trees has been encumbered and the trees have been ordered. **Placements will need to be determined soon.**

**Downtown Tree Planting** – no change in status. **Zaiser and Gary Grubb are reviewing new locations for the transplantation of a Princeton Elm currently blocking a sign.** Memo follows.

## **Memo**

To: Larry Blake

From: David Zaiser, Shade Tree Official

Date: 25 February 2006

Re: Tree Relocation and Additional Removal

Cc: Gary Grubb

At the request of the Borough, Gary Grubb and I reviewed potential new locations for a tree currently planted along Stockton Street, at the north end of the municipal parking lot. There were concerns that the tree is blocking a new sign. We found the tree (a recently planted Princeton Elm) to be in good condition to move.

We selected two potential new locations for this tree in Association Park. One location is along Park Avenue, immediately north of the playground area, not far from a recently removed tree. This location was marked on the ground with green spray paint. The other location is along the west edge of the Park on Hutchinson Avenue near mid-block. This location is also near another

tree removal and was similarly identified with green spray paint. Please relocate the Princeton Elm from the Stockton Street location to either of these two Association Park locations

Please note that in reviewing the Association Park locations, we found an existing maple located on the west side of the Park along Hutchinson Avenue, somewhat closer to the north than mid-block. The tree has a deep hollow in the trunk, low near the root flare and should be removed before the tree leafs out in the spring.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions.

**Oak Lane Trees** – Funds of \$2,400 now available for approximately five trees to be placed anywhere on Oak. Zaiser sent letters to residents on February 20 with a deadline of March 15 for those who wish to have a tree. **We should have feedback by the next EC meeting.** Letter follows.

## **Borough of Hightstown**

### **Environmental Commission**

148 North Main Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520-3291

20 February 2007

Dear Oak Lane Homeowner:

The Borough plans to plant several trees on Borough property along Oak Lane this spring. In most cases, these trees will be planted adjacent to the street between the curb and the sidewalk. We are writing this letter to solicit your interest in having a tree planted adjacent to your property.

Please read the information provided below and if you are interested in having a tree planted near your property, please contact the Borough Shade Tree Official, David Zaiser at 609-490-0243 (you may leave a message) or send me an e-mail at [dzaiser@kssarch.com](mailto:dzaiser@kssarch.com). Remember to leave your name and address along with a statement regarding your interest in a tree. And please respond no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>. If you are not interested in a tree, you need do nothing.

We will attempt to honor all requests on a first come first served basis, but trees are limited and we cannot guarantee that we will be able to accommodate every request.

The Borough's Environmental Commission will manage the tree planting process. Tree sites will be selected from among the requests received and any such additional sites as selected by the Commission. Specific tree locations will be determined to avoid underground and overhead utilities. Tree species will be selected specifically for each location to avoid conflicts with sidewalks and utility lines and to enhance the overall beauty of the street.

We endeavor to select trees that minimize the potential for conflicts with utilities and sidewalks, but occasionally these conflicts may still occur. It is not uncommon for the locations of utilities or size of the space available for the tree to make it impossible for a tree to be properly planted near certain properties. We ask for your understanding in these instances. If properly located and cared for, street trees can last a lifetime.



... interest in April, once we have reviewed conditions at each  
ble to tell you if we will be able to accommodate your request.  
estions or concerns, please feel free to leave such messages  
oted above.

Sincerely,

David M. Zaiser  
Shade Tree Official

**Shade Tree Officials Report** – no change in status.

**Street Tree Management** – no change in status. **Zaiser is working on this.**

**Street Tree Maintenance** - No maintenance was performed in January. Rosenberg said that the Council would like to have a list of where trees were planted last year. **Troizier and Zaiser will put this together and get it to Rosenberg.**

**Greenway Project** –Gary Rosenweig, an attorney working for the borough, received a response from the lawyer for the Turco family regarding the easement. **The Turcos and their lawyer will be meeting at the end of February to discuss this and will get back to the EC. Cook will discuss getting more signs for the Greenway with the Borough Engineer.**

**Omni Report** – Jones learned from Harold Mulleavey that after many attempts, he is unable to procure the report. **Fischbach offered to follow-up on this for the next meeting with DEP and with Rutgers.**

**Parks and Recreation** – nothing new to report.

**Clean & Green Team** – Rosenberg is planning a spring litter clean-up for April 28. **He will advertise it in the newspaper and through an e-vite. He will also make some flyers/signs that Bottino will post around town.** Fischbach suggested contacting the schools to include the children in litter pick-up either on that same day with the rest of the volunteers or possibly as an activity during the school day around each of the grade schools. Flyers could be given to the students to take home encouraging them and their families to join in on April 28 if that is the option picked. Suggestion was made that the students could “adopt-a-park” to clean up. Since the schools are Hightstown and East

Windsor, it was discussed that maybe this could be a joint effort between the Hightstown EC and the East Windsor EC. If the schools are involved, maybe the superintendent should be contacted instead of each school. **Rosenberg will consider these ideas and let the EC know what he thinks would work best and what actions will be or have been taken at the March EC meeting.**

**High School Landscaping Plan – Rosenberg and Kristin Waller will arrange a meeting with the (two) Hightstown members of the School Board to discuss fundraising for the high school landscaping.** The EC wants to get buy-in from the School Board before the project commences. Waller has completed the necessary paperwork at the school and she and Rosenberg have a plan in place for obtaining donations.

**Jeff Bond's Mercer Street Property Plan –** EC still does not have these plans. Per the January meeting, it is assumed that **Byrne will follow up with Planning Board Secretary.**

**2007 EC Goals – Update on phased goals and deadlines. (Members not listed who want to participate are encouraged to get involved.)**

1. Street Trees, Municipal Maintenance Plan and Survey – Zaiser
2. Greenway Development – Chairman Cook
3. Brochure of Greenway – Byrne, Rosenberg – The group contributed ideas to Rosenberg's plans for the brochure. It was suggested that the brochure include a map, rules of use, section on what a greenway is and what the state is doing to get greenways developed, explanation of Cook and his efforts, mention that greenway development is ongoing. The brochure could be included in the water/sewer bills, at the Greenway entrances, on the borough website. Rosenberg suggested adding photos of the greenway and sign. The EC thinks that at various points along the Greenway, there should be a plexiglass/wood or some other type of display with a map and points of interest listed. Maybe this could be done by Public Works. **Rosenberg will speak to Larry Blake about this.** Rosenberg is planning to have the brochure ready for the October community day with drafts for review by the EC along the way. It was suggested that the first part of the brochure, a map of the Greenway, could be developed independently as a pdf file and put on the website at soon as feasible. It was also suggested that interpretive displays be available along the Greenway pointing out different tree species, etc. This may be done at a later date, potentially with grant money. Rosenberg will donate his graphic design skills for this project. Rosenberg estimated a cost of \$100 to print 1,000 copies of the brochure. **Jones will check with Cook on adding this to the 2007 budget.**

4. Greenway Maintenance Grant – Jones, Chairman Cook
5. Lake and Stream Pollution – Grubb
6. Noise Ordinance – Bottino, Grubb – The plan for this goal is to explain in a short blurb on the website what the noise ordinance is and to have links there to the borough and the state laws. It will also state whom to contact with a complaint. It will have a photo of the signs and make the noise ordinance more understandable and user-friendly. **Bottino and Grubb will come up with a draft of this for the March meeting.**

7. Site Plan Review Coordination – Byrne
8. Clean and Green – Rosenberg, Waller – In addition to the topics already discussed for litter pick-up days and high school landscaping, there will be a summer planting at the new garden area in Memorial Park.
9. Community Awareness – Jones – **Jones will e-mail EC members slogans for buttons she hopes to have for the spring (April/Earth Day) and EC members will e-mail back their votes on their favorites.** Members discussed continuing this idea next year with pencils, bracelets or rub-on tattoos.

### **New Items**

**Jones will forward a volunteer survey from ANJEC to members.** Jones also reminded members that the D&R Canal Commission has monthly meetings open to the public.

A reminder from the January meeting... **Chairman Cook will inquire from ANJEC as to getting new commissioner books. Zaiser will download the ordinance that describes the role and duties of the EC.**

Bottino noted that the January Hightstown Crier mentioned that all commissions' minutes will be available on the website starting in 2007. **She will coordinate this with Chairman Cook.**

**Next Meeting** – March 27, 2007 at the Historical Society at 7:30. Waller will be away.

**Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan J. Bottino