

HOLMDEL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Minutes ~ Regular Meeting via Zoom Webinar
Wednesday, July 14, 2021– 7:30 p.m.

Bill Kastning opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and Loretta Coscia read the following **OPENING STATEMENT**: “I hereby announce, pursuant to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided on January 8, 2021 to the Asbury Park Press and the Two River Times. Notice has also been posted in the entrance of Town Hall, filed in the Clerk’s Office, and posted on the Township’s website, www.holmdeltownship.com, all pursuant to Section 13 of the Open Public Meetings Act.”

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence to Honor Military and Police Who Have Been Wounded or Killed in Action

Roll Call

Members Present: Ralph Blumenthal
 Bill Kastning, *Chairperson*
 Zach Gilstein
 Karen Strickland, *Vice Chairperson*
 Chris Yonclas
 John Galasso, *Alternate 2* (arrived at 7:39 p.m.)

Absent: Randy Rauscher
 Tony Salerno
 Janet Jackel, *Alternate 1*

Guest: Joseph Tetro, 280 Middle Road

Environmental Commission Business

- Draft Minutes – May 12, 2021 **Motion** by Ralph seconded by Karen to approve the minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.
- Joseph Tetro, 280 Middle Road – stream blockages on property
Joe Tetro spoke about the problems he has been having on his property downstream from Leocadia, Holmdel and Hazlet properties. He is concerned with the new homes to be built on Middle Road and Laurel Avenue increasing run-off and further flooding his property. Mosquito Commission no longer returning his phone calls. Chris said the problem is a matter of siltation. Joe said the siltation overflows the banks, and cuts behind the property to the edge of his driveway. He walked through the property with a member of Hazlet Public Works. Trees would have to be removed to bring in machinery. The bridge had been cleaned out a few times and is now very full. The photos he submitted are recent. Bill said it sounds like there is an upstream problem/siltation and downstream problem with blockages. If debris is being caught beneath the bridge, it is a county issue. Siltation is a never-ending battle. If downstream flowed, it may help the siltation problem. Joe said on one of the maps it shows the lot going right across the swamp area. He believed Holmdel and Hazlet were in a joint venture on this property. Mr. Tetro said he would like the stream to be opened-up again and flow toward Route 36, relieving the water pressure.

Zach asked if the stream moved naturally or is it due to construction. Mr. Tetro said it moved naturally. Many tires wash downstream. If this is cleaned-up, it may address the water overflow issue.

Ralph suggested sending a memo to the Administrator asking the township engineer to look at it, as well as refer the matter to Hazlet. Mr. Tetro stated he has contacted Serena DiMaso who referred him to Bonnie. He also spoke with Victor Stevens who said there is nothing he could do.

Chris suggested going to the DEP. They would be in contact with people to get funding for dredging.

Bill asked Allison McLeod (Webinar Host) if the proper action was to send a letter to Cherron, and from there the township would take action with the DEP. Allison said from her experience, the owner is technically responsible for the stream cleaning (de-silting/de-snagging). It is a permit by rule so you do not need a

specific permit. She asked who technically owns the area. Ralph said immediate downstream is township owned. Chris said the state owns the streams. The navigable waters are the only ones DEP will remove. Chris said you couldn't touch a stream unless you have a DEP permit. De-snagging de-silting allows a permit by rule. You simply have to tell them you are doing it and can do it. Bill said he, Ralph and Karen will work on a memo to Cherron. He asked how much frontage there is on the streambed. Joe said when the stream moves, so does the property line. It is in part on his property and Holmdel's property.

Roberta Kaufman, member of the public joined the meeting to make comments. She said a good portion of Joe's property on the other side of the road is wetlands. She asked how much is it infringing with new flooding on uplands? Mr. Tetro said it is coming closer to the house and cuts across the back of his yard. She feels it is important to know and document where the wetlands begin and where they end.

Karen asked about the Rutgers Study on the Waackaack Creek. Bill said he would call Mike Nikolis to get the contact person for the study.

Bill, Ralph and Karen volunteered to come up with a memo and share with the commission before sending to Cherron.

- Trails – No update at this time
- Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Management/Septic Management/Update. Bill said there was some information in the newsletter about educating the public on maintaining their septic systems. The county will not do anything other than provide educational materials. Allison said the county is working on something; once approved it would be sent to Holmdel.
- Holmdel's Green Acres Grant – Bill stated that the HEC provided a letter of support. Allison advised that it was sent out this morning, and thanked the commission for their input. Allison said a letter from CILU was also received. Zach asked what would the grant be and when would we acquire the land. Bill said although they approved the submittal of the grant, most Township Committee members felt a plan was needed. When you have a source of permanent funding, you have to submit a request for properties you would like to preserve (wish list). Those properties were listed on the application. When the grant is obtained, it can be used however you want. The three properties are very important in protecting the watershed, the aquifer, and the water flowing into the Swimming River Reservoir. It could be utilized for other properties as well. All three properties are for sale. Ralph said there are other funding sources as well. There are no contracts for purchasing at present. It is the start of the process and having money on hand helps with negotiations. Township Committee approved Monmouth Conservation Foundation with Bill helping them with this process.
- Proposed fall referendum on raising the open space tax – Bill said there was a first reading at the Township Committee meeting on an ordinance for approval on 8/10 to ask voters to decide to raise tax by 1 penny. The town can educate the voter, but cannot tell voters how to vote. There will be necessary outreach to educate the voters. Other issues are paying off bonds on the Chase tract. All these moving parts have to work together to educate the voter. Bill said the Monmouth Conservation Foundation assisted Monmouth County to educate the public about the referendum and a "vote yes" campaign saying why it was a good idea. Ralph asked if it was a binding or non-binding referendum. Allison said she would find out. Zach asked about the current open space fund and for an accounting of what has been spent in the last five years. Ralph said the current assessment and current tax rate raises 1.1 million per year and 700,000 goes for open space debt service, both principal and interest. Bonds issued 20 years ago will fall off within the next year or two, and the money would become available for other purchases.
- Earth Day – Karen said the committee who ran Earth Day from 1998 to two years ago was joint between CILU and HEC. HEC in the past had donated \$500, usually matched by CILU. Hoping to hold the event on May 1, 2022 at Bayonet Farms. The HEC agreed to support the event. Karen made a **motion** to support Earth Day up to a \$500 budget amount. Ralph seconded the motion, carried on voice vote.

Map – Ralph said he and Janet signed up for the ANJEC program regarding NJ Mapping. He listened as well as Janet, and they were both disappointed in the presentation. It would be helpful if it were a more focused presentation. They provided links, which he accessed and was frustrated in doing so. The information was

extremely dated. He suggested having a session on Holmdel, accessing that information. Bill said he would be happy to do that. Suggested calling it a workshop “Special” meeting.

In person meetings – Loretta to look into holding the August HEC meeting hybrid, with Chris zooming in.

Planning Board

- **St. Benedict School, 165 Bethany Road, Block 30.09, Lot 6.01 in the R40-B Zone**
The applicant would like to place a mobile classroom onto pre-existing asphalt in a paved area of the campus, requesting a variance for a pre-existing condition of an 88.1 foot, side yard setback where 100 feet is required. *Completeness Waiver/Public Hearing scheduled for 7/20/21*

No HEC concerns

- **Subhash Warrior, 832 Holmdel Road; Bl 29 ~ Lot 39 in the R40-B Zone – Preliminary/Final Major SD #661** Applicant proposes to subdivide 5.1265 acres into 2 single-family residential lots. Proposed Lot 39.01 will have a lot area of 108,991 sq. ft. and will retain an existing single-family residence to be remodeled and garage added. Proposed Lot 39.02 will have a lot area of 114,320 sq. ft. is proposed to be developed with a new single-family home. New lot 39.02 will be a flag lot, requiring a lot frontage variance along Holmdel Road providing 26.99 ft. (140 ft. required). The northerly (rear) portion of the site contains steep slopes that will be placed within a conservation easement dedicated to Holmdel. Both homes will share a common driveway located on new lot 39.02.

Note: Jurisdiction for this application will remain with the Planning Board inasmuch as there is no longer a density issue. The road widening dedication has been replaced with an easement. Public Hearing has not been scheduled.

HEC asked to be provided with electronic plans to further review this application, as there are environmental issues on the property.

Ralph recused himself from Zoning Board application discussion at 8:52 p.m.

Zoning Board

- **1 Crocus Drive, Christie & Jeffrey Sargent, ZB Variance #449, Block 5, Lot 50.43** Applicant seeks variance relief for side yard setback of 30 feet for installation of a built in pool where 80 feet is required. *Public Hearing scheduled for 7/21/21*
No HEC concerns
- **32 Main Street, Guillermo Hidalgo & Jennifer Perry-Hidalgo, ZB Variance #452, Block 3, Lot 2 in the B-1 Zone** Applicant seeks variance relief for front setback where the existing home is 23’6 feet from the property line and 50 feet is required; and the left side setback, which is 1.9 feet where 20 feet is required. The home is more than 250 years old and applicant would like to restore the home adding second floor space above the existing first floor space, with no increase to the footprint of the house. *Public Hearing scheduled for 7/21/21*
No HEC concerns

Adjournment

There being no further business at 9:00 p.m., **motion** by Karen seconded by Zach to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Loretta Coscia
Secretary

Minutes Approved 8/11/21 (RB/KS)

