

HOLMDEL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Minutes ~ Regular Meeting

Wednesday, August 11, 2021– 7:30 p.m.
in the Court Room at Town Hall

Bill Kastning called the meeting to order at 7:30 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.”

Roll Call

Members Present: Ralph Blumenthal
 Bill Kastning, *Chairperson*
 Zachary Gilstein
 Randy Rauscher
 Tony Salerno
 Karen Strickland, *Vice Chairperson*
 Christopher Yonclas
 John Galasso, *Alternate 2*

Absent: Janet Jackel, *Alternate 1*

Also Present: Loretta Coscia, HEC Secretary
 Jim Sousa, CME Engineering
 Joseph Tetro, Resident – 280 Middle Road

Pledge of Allegiance ~ Moment of Silence

Environmental Commission Business

- **Draft Minutes – July 14, 2021 Motion** to approve minutes by Ralph, seconded by Karen and carried by voice vote.
- **Ramanessin Brook Water Quality Monitoring Plan**

At the request of the township committee, CME Township Engineer Ben Matlack asked Jim Sousa, a member of the Environmental Division of CME, to prepare a draft Ramanessin Brook Water Quality Monitoring Plan. Ralph said for decades the environmental commission studied the Ramanessin Brook and in the 1990s did some initial water testing. In the early 2000s, there continued to be a concern with the impairment of the Ramanessin. In 2003, a NJDEP Division of Watershed Management 319h nonpoint source pollution mitigation grant was awarded to the Monmouth County Planning Board to study the sources of the nonpoint source pollution. TRC Omni was retained to undertake a nonpoint source assessment sampling study which was completed in late 2005. Based on the study’s findings, several recommendations were set forth for further analysis and mitigation. Approximately 1 ½ years ago, the HEC met with Ben and mentioned they were interested in a follow-up on the Ramanessin issues. It was suggested that CME make a proposal to the township to undertake a follow-up a study as recommended by TRC Omni. The HEC was not aware CME was working on this until a copy of the draft study was received via email on Monday.

Bill said since the TRC Omni Study, many tributaries were declared Category 1, requiring a 300-foot buffer as it feeds the Swimming River Reservoir, a source of potable water for many Monmouth County residents.

Jim said the plan is based on an intensive study done in 2005, including engineering studies, water modeling and water quality sampling. Subsequent studies identified parameters, which caused

exceeded State water quality standards to be exceeded. Fecal coliform, phosphorus, arsenic, and PH listed in recent reports. Some may be from erosion in the stream bank. Jim said the plan calls for one-year monitoring period. There will be four quarterly events extending to one month in order to appropriately collect for fecal coliform. The DEP wants five consecutive weeks of stream samples. They will evaluate different seasonal changes in different events; spring vs fall and different levels and flow conditions. Bill asked if it would be after a significant rain event. Jim said it could be. It is set up now for once a quarter for a month - February, May and so on, regardless of a rain event.

Bill inquired as to the sampling process. Jim said it is from human collection with sampling teams utilizing simple dipper bottles transferred to lab bottles by hand. They would need volunteers, as fecal coliform must be in the lab within six hours of collection.

Chris said the sampling points do not take into consideration the developments that have septic. He does not see sampling from any developments east in the Township. His concern is not sampling for septic issues as he thinks there should be. Jim stated that the cost is one factor, as well as logistics of sampling. One would like to collect them at the same time. The plan calls for sampling along the main stream. Some of the sample locations are duplicated as it allows a direct comparison to the historic data, changes, improvement or worsening. Those locations were defined as they are very accessible and useful for sampling. The plan could be revised to check side tributaries throughout areas with septic. It will increase the budget, but it is something that could be done.

Bill asked if cost is based on the original study, and to give a comparative analysis if we can have a separate cost of additional studies as proposed by Chris. Jim stated the more points the better, but we are trying to make it practical. Bill asked Chris to identify additional sampling points. Jim said the cost would depend on lab work, field equipment rentals and getting a sufficient number of volunteers. Chris feels the cost of the sampling is very high. Ralph suggested we make a note of the areas for further discussion, and the cost of additional locations of sampling. Jim said there are six locations, with three groups of two volunteers for each location. Each team would collect two samples. Jim said if project were to be move forward, there would be a training program for the volunteers.

Chris asked if the sampling requirement would meet the TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) for the DEP. Jim said TMDL would depend on the results, and asked if this were something that would go to DEP for review for a funding request prior to implementation. Ralph said any source of funds would be looked at, whether federal, DEP or ANJEC. Jim said if the township gives an okay to the plan, you should send to the DEP Water Quality Division for review and comments. Jim said it is a threshold level in some problem streams. He thinks there are none established for this stream. Chris said there are no TMDL for the Ramanessin. Jim said if you collect this data for a year, you do not want the DEP to say it is unusable for quality assurance concerns.

Ralph said the fact that there is an issue with fecal coliform has been known for a long time. Is it human coming from failing septic, or the geese or deer or from whatever? Jim read that in the TRC Omni study, testing was inconclusive. Ralph said one potential approach was to do the DNA analysis of the fecal coliform. He suggested including what is technically appropriate to better identify the source, which would affect any remediation efforts. John said the TMDL is relevant if you are permitting a discharge. The total discharge loading is permissible to the water body without impairing it. He does not believe there is any proposed development that would have a permanent discharge. Since it is Category 1 water, there are rules that say you cannot have any deleterious impact whatsoever to the Category 1 water, so is it necessary to establish a TMDL.

Bill said there are many vacant parcels in that watershed that could possibly be developed. They do not have to add to the load but if not done appropriately would add to the impact.

Zach asked what actions were taken after the study. Ralph said there were significant remediation efforts made of over a million dollars; subsequently, little was done. The County did some spot testing confirming there was still a problem. The subsequent testing was inadequate. Things that you want to identify are things that can be done to fix the problem. If testing reveals something that cannot be remediated, you focus on what can be remediated.

Chris disagrees with testing for arsenic and phosphorus in the soil as it does not exceed the State standards and is hard to remediate, so why test for it. Jim said the 2005 study concluded definitively that a major source of the pollutant loading in the stream was instream erosion due to the nature of the soils. He thinks the solution in certain areas is stabilization of soils being eroded. For one or two projects, they did some of that work following the 2005 study along a couple of reaches of the stream and that would be the mitigation effort.

Ralph mentioned another item not in the draft, which came up 15 years ago, is a high divide that runs across Holmdel east to west, dividing the southern flowing stream that flows north into Raritan Bay. Some of the underlying layers of soil outcrop north of the divide and water that falls and infiltrates north of the divide, flows into them and into the Ramanessin. The pollution comes out if the water flows out through the ground it comes out in the Ramanessin.

Bill said a Clean Ocean Action group did a study and there were some point source issues and some non-point issues. latter of which were due to horse farms and dog feces and he does not know if we have a similar problem. Ralph said, let's get all issues on the table and identify what is appropriate and comprehensive. Keep costs down. Randy asked about DNA testing. If we can prove failing septic systems, it will help. John said the cost of DNA analysis has come way down, so it could be an affordable way to do it. Bill asked if DNA was accounted for in the costs. Jim stated it was not.

Randy asked when they sample, do they directly measure flow of water. Jim said they do not in this plan. Jim said what is proposed is to put in water gauges to measure water depth, which will be proportional to the flow.

Karen asked about the price tag of \$222,000. What would you say to people in the community? Jim said it is the importance in quality of the watershed.

- **Rutgers Study – March 2019** - Bill reached out to contact and waiting to hear back. Ralph believes monitors were put in place in fall of 2019. Would like to know when final collection will be done.
- **Waackaack Creek Preliminary Model Report** – Electronic copy was sent to HEC.
- **Joseph Tetro, 280 Middle Road – stream blockages on property** – Chris said he spoke with Vicky Thompson who will meet on this issue with DEP and the Bridge Department. Chris will get a date from Vicky in a few weeks and they will do an on-site visit. It was agreed to ask Cherron to call someone regarding Mr. Tetro's issue one of the properties listed as Holmdel, is in Hazlet. Chris will confirm that permits have been obtained.
- **Maintaining/updating Holmdel Trails** – Karen spoke with Roberta Kaufman who had numbered the trails and labeled the different streams. Bill said both CME and Chris have software to assist with updating of trails. Ralph said CME has master file. We want something to post on Township website. John offered to walk trails with Karen next month. Bill said county would give a grant for trails. Ralph to speak with Cherron about funds to update maps with CME.
- **Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Management/Septic Management** – Bill said county would supply additional information. He will check with Allison McLeod for an update.

Planning Board

- **Subhash Warrior, 832 Holmdel Road; Block 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 been scheduled for 9/7/21

Category 1 stream. Proposal for a garage within 300' from the stream. Loretta will prepare a memo that there is no indication of 300' buffer on the plan. Would like to know how intense run off on proposed driveway will be managed. Easement 2, for steep slopes, does not go to back of property line. Each easement should be marked. Appropriate stormwater regulations should be followed.

Ralph recused from Zoning Board matters.

Zoning Board

- **14 Wildhedge Lane, Christopher & Amy Hooper, Block 15.04, Lot 7 in the R40A Zone**
Applicant seeks relief to replace a pre-existing, non-conforming front porch that is 45.79 feet from the Wildhedge Lane property line, where 50 feet is required. *Public Hearing scheduled for 8/18/21*

HEC had comments.

- **470 Red Hill Road, Dementia Center “The Enclave at Holmdel” ~ Preliminary/Final Site Plan #2020-6, Block 49.02, Lots 40, 40Q and 41 in the R40-B Zone** Applicant seeks a use variance to create an Assisted Living Residence, which will be a facility for those suffering from dementia, for 105 residents. The Facility will consist of a state-of-the-art residential memory support program that will house a variety of innovative programs and building design concepts including an assessment program; educational services; and extensive community outreach and support. *Revised Plans received. Scheduled for a Completeness Waiver/Public Hearing on 9/22/21.*

Plans were preliminarily reviewed. Will be carried to next HEC agenda on 9/8 for further review/comments.

Adjournment

There being no further business at 10:00 p.m., **motion** by Karen to adjourn seconded by Tony. Motion carried by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Loretta Coscia
HEC Secretary

Minutes approved 9/8/21 (RB/RR)