

Vernon Township Environmental Commission

Minutes: June 17,2024 meeting

Meeting was called to order by Chair Stephanie DiBrienza at 7:00pm

Statement of compliance read by Chair Stephanie DiBrienza

Chair Stephani DiBrienza led the Commissioners in the pledge of allegiance and salute to the flag.

Roll Call taken for attendance by Chair Stephanie DiBrienza.

Stephanie DiBrienza Chair Present

Ann Larsen LUB Liaison Present

Barbara Jaggi Present

Catherina Sawoszczyk Present

Debbie Coulson Vice Chair Absent

Catherina Sawoszczyk volunteered for minutes recorder for tonight's meeting.

Stephanie DiBrienza motioned for Approval of minutes from May 28,2024 deferred to July meeting as not completed. ALL present approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Environmental Grants

Discussion of availability of grants for environmental projects for Vernon. Chair Stephanie DiBrienza motioned that all members research availability of grants for environmental projects and bring them to the meetings for discussion. All presented approved.

Fill Ordinance Local Farms

Discussion on possible existence of an ordinance that exempts regulation of fill for farmland continued. Barbara suggested contacting A. LaRocca to assist in search of ordinances.

NEW BUSINESS

Stephanie DiBrienza informed the commission she had received a phone call from a resident with concerns for the environmental impact of a construction project to begin on Guthrie Road.

Stephanie DiBrienza informed the commission there was concern by some residents for Gypsy moth activity and there would be no state Department of Agriculture ariel spraying in Vernon as no application requesting state spraying for the 2024 season was made last year. The applications need to be requested a year in advance. Stephanie distributed the Gypsy Moth Suppression (June 11th, 2024,

release date) from Sussex County News to members. Stephanie will follow up with the mayor for 2025 GYPSY moth spraying.

Discussion on signage in violation of township ordinances impact on the environment and aesthetic of the township occurred.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- Agenda items only

Stephanie opened the meeting to public comments.

Rob O'Donnell introduced himself to the commission and voiced his concerns for activity of a surveyor he witnessed working on Guthrie Road. Rob states that in speaking with the surveyor he understood that there are plans for a large housing development. Rob voiced concerns for the area wildlife. Rob stated he feels this area is a wildlife conservation area with bobcats, bald eagles, and yellow bills and the land's status is a wetlands area. Rob called Maria Brac, a Vernon resident, on his cell phone, placing her on speaker, to support his concerns. Maria stated she did call the NJ DEP to report her concerns. The EC commissioners assured them that there is a process that needs to be followed and once the applications for construction are placed the Land use board would notify the EC for input. Ann Larsen assured them that as the LUB liaison she would look out for the application. The commissioners Thanked the residents for their concern and monitoring of the environment.

Stephanie closed the meeting to public comments.

LAND USE BOARD liaison Report

Ann Larsen reported there were no meetings of the LAND USE BOARD from the time of the EC last meeting May 28th, 2024, and today's meeting June 17th 2024. The next LUB meeting is scheduled for June 26th, 2024.

LAND USE BOARD APPLICATIONS UNDER REVIEW

Ann Larsen reports no applications under review currently.

Commissioner Comments

A discussion occurred with actions members will take prior to the July meeting ;Catherina Sawoszczyk will put a notice together about the extreme heat for the web site. Barbara states she will follow up with reach out for ordinances on fill. Ann Larsen will monitor for new applications and Stephanie will follow up with the mayor.