

June 28, 2021 Environmental Commission Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: M. Duerr, Doherty, McCarthy, Stippick, Tinney
MEMBERS ABSENT: Brandt, Mounier,
ALTERNATES ABSENT: Cavone, Link
LIAISONS ABSENT: Doyle, Flaim
GUESTS: E. Duerr, R. Duerr, B. Halpern, and A. Wheeler.

The June 28, 2021 meeting of the Township of Franklin Environmental Commission was called to order by Mr. Stippick at 7:33 pm as a virtual meeting on Zoom.

I. Minutes

There was an error in the minutes of the May 24, 2021 meeting: In the Zoning and Planning Board Applications, B. Planning Board application – PB21-2, it was stated that there is sewer service available at the site. The correction is that there is no sewer service available.

Upon a motion by Ms. Doherty, seconded by Ms. Duerr, the minutes of the May 24, 2021 meeting were approved with that correction.

II. Emergency Response and Management Report:

There were no incidents or updates received.

III. Zoning and Planning Board Applications:

There was one Planning Board application – PB 21-3 – An application for a minor subdivision/lot line adjustment by David and Jeanne Faubell for a property on West Malaga Road (block 702/lots 12 & 13). Lot 12 will be residential and lot 13 will remain in farming.

The Environmental Commission had no comment on this application.

IV. Old Business

A. Piney Hollow:

1. Ms. Halpern reported that we are still waiting for the Pinelands Commission approval of the revised plans.
2. Mr. Stippick reported that the Bioblitz at the Preserve is continuing. To date, 575 species have been identified. County-wide, approximately 2,000 species of plants, insects, and birds have been recorded.

B. Malaga Lake Park:

1. A cleanup at the park and along Malaga Park Blvd. occurred on June 5, with Marcelo Garcia, the DEP Watershed Ambassador for our area. About 10 to 11 people attended, eight of whom were Watershed Ambassadors. Malaga Lake Park did not need much cleanup but the group did a great job of cleaning both sides of Malaga Park Blvd. There was an iNaturalist cataloguing of approximately 100 species of plants, trees, birds, and insects. Joe Arsenaault attended and gave the group a tour, which was a great educational experience for the Ambassadors, as Joe is a consummate plant guide.
2. Mr. Stippick has the materials for replacing the broken posts of the Nature Trail but they still need to be done. He will ask Phil Russo to assist him in doing this. Phil did offer to improve the trail and may be willing to do this.
3. Mr. Stippick reported that the wildflower garden is still doing well.

C. 2021 Projects

1. The Tall Oaks subdivision on Morris Ave. now has 6 houses. The land behind them (about 20 acres) is township-owned as open space. There was discussion of putting in a trail but there was no decision about this topic. Access to the land by the public is at the end of the cul-de-sac, where there's a dedicated row alongside the last house and next to the power line.
2. Ms. Doherty reported that there has been no word yet about the application for a grant to do the signage at Malaga Lake Park.
3. Community Day:
There was discussion about who could help with set up/break down of the Env. Commission booth and manning it during the 11 to 4 pm time period on Sept. 25. Mr. Stippick, Ms. McCarthy, and Mr. Tinney volunteered to help. The Recreation Commission supplies the tables but we bring our own chairs. We have two tents and lots of items to display, which are in the storage facility in the old Municipal building.

The exhibit display will be about converting your lawn to wildflowers, a small section at a time. It was agreed that plants (in pots) arranged to suggest a garden would be needed. In addition to whatever we can supply, we may be able to borrow plants from Triple Oaks Nursery, as we have in the past. Ms. Doherty will contact Lorraine Kiefer to ask about borrowing 4 to 6 plants.

Mr. Stippick will begin gathering milkweed seeds that we could give out.

It was also agreed that a handout/flyer with instructions and a list of recommended plants, along with information about the importance of pollinators, would be desirable. Mr. Stippick volunteered to put this together.

We will need to borrow the So. Jersey Land & Water Trust's display stands for images and information that we put on display. Ms. McCarthy will arrange to obtain them.

VIII. New Business: There was no new business.

IX. Mail Review/Announcements/Conferences: There was no mail.

X. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Ms. Doherty, seconded by Ms. Duerr, and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne McCarthy
EC Vice-Chair
Acting as Secretary for the Environmental Commission