

## October 24, 2022, Environmental Commission Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doherty, E. Duerr, M. Duerr, Link, McCarthy, Stippick  
MEMBERS ABSENT: Brandt  
ALTERNATES ABSENT: Cavone  
LIAISONS ABSENT: Doyle, Flaim  
GUESTS PRESENT: Debbie Barsotti, Mindy Curran, Penny and Darryl Burkey, R. Duerr and B. Halpern

The October 24, 2022, meeting of the Township of Franklin Environmental Commission was both a live meeting in the municipal building conference room and a virtual meeting on Zoom. It was called to order by Mr. Stippick at 7:32 pm.

- I. **Minutes:** One correction to the September 26, 2022, meeting was needed. It was recorded that Mr. Stippick and Mr. Joe Arsenault collected lake specimens for display at the Community Day booth. The collection was actually done by Mr. Stippick and his son, Jack. With that correction and upon a motion by Mr. Stippick, seconded by Ms. M. Duerr, the minutes of the September 26, 2022, meeting were approved.
- II. **Emergency Response and Management Report:** There were no emergency response or management reports.
- III. **Guests:** Mrs. Burkey explained that she and her husband have a neighbor that is burning wood to heat his home and smoke is coming into their house constantly. It is sometimes totally overwhelming. Last year the neighbor on the other side started using a wood boiler outside and that runs 24/7. The Burkeys have talked to the Franklin Township Fire Marshal and to the Gloucester County Health Dept. and have learned from the NJDEP Compliance & Enforcement Program that the state regulation requires that “there should not be visible emissions from heating with wood after three minutes.” The Burkeys are seeking a solution to this problem.

It was suggested by the Environmental Commission that the Burkeys talk first to their neighbors. Many stoves have no pollution controls. If the wood used is not seasoned, burning it creates the smoke problem. 90% of firewood sold is not seasoned, even if the seller says it is. People who have wood heating need to buy their wood a year ahead and let it season. In addition to creating excessive smoke, non-seasoned wood builds up creosote in the user’s chimney which can become a serious health hazard.

If conversation doesn’t succeed, the Burkeys were advised to call the DEP Hotline at 1-877-WARNDEP. They can also call the Southern Regional Enforcement of Air Office, located in Camden. For any complaint that they register, they should be sure to get the claim number. This problem falls under the NJ Nuisance Act, NJSA 7.

- IV. **Applications:** There were two applications reviewed.
  - A. **PB 22-09.** This application is from Aubery Construction for 22 Grubb Rd, block 5501/lot 2, 1.27

acres, for a change of use that is also requesting two site plan waivers. One is for the building setback lines and the second is for a topography/regrading plan. The site contains a pre-existing structure that was used as a church and includes a parking lot. The proposed use makes no changes to the impervious surfaces except for the addition of a concrete apron at an overhead door at the rear of the building and no changes to existing setbacks or topography.

The Environmental Commission had No Comment on this application.

- B.** ZB 22-17. This application is from Charlotte Investments, 1720 Harding Hwy, block 7202/lots 22 & 23, for a use variance. The current use, which is a contracting and landscaping business, is a nonconforming use in a Light Manufacturing zone. The applicant plans to continue the same business and seeks a variance allowing the desired contractor use to occur in this LM district. Materials and vehicles are stored on the site.

A variance was requested two years ago for this site by the previous owner (who had more changes than in the current application) and it was approved conditionally. However, DEP did not respond to the owner's request for an LOI, since lot 23 is partly in a floodplain hazard area (lot 22 is not in the floodplain area). DEP advised that company that it must get a flood hazard area permit first and then come back for the LOI.

The Environmental Commission comments were that the Zoning Board should be advised of these two requirements and that the current company will still need to meet those requirements. Approval will be conditional again. In addition, regarding the septic system at the site, the applicant needs to go the County with information on what the use has been and whether the current use is different. Will it involve any increase in load and/or any change in the type of waste?

**V. Old Business:**

- A. Piney hollow:** Mr. Stippick reported that the CME engineer is still waiting for a response from the Pinelands Commission to his most recent submittal. It was agreed that it will undoubtedly take the Pinelands Commission at least 90 days to respond, so there are just under two months left in that period.

**B. Malaga Lake Park:**

- 1. Cleanups:** Mr. Stippick reported that there was a lot less trash on the nature trail than he saw upon his last visit. He does not know if anyone or any group did a cleanup. There is also far less trash along Malaga Park Blvd than normal because of the road being closed for the bridge replacement. Consequently, there is no need for a fall cleanup.
- 2. Dock:** The dock at the boat launch is unstable – it is moving too much. It's a floating wood deck with steel pipes into the lakebed and the pipes seem to not be there. We need to send a note to Mr. Finley, Franklin Township's new Administrator. Ms. Doherty will send the message.

3. **Grant for a Sign:** Ms. Doherty advised that she never heard about the grant application for a larger sign at Malaga Lake Park. Ms. Kennedy was Administrator at the time the application was discussed, and she never informed Ms. Doherty if it was even submitted.
4. **EC Budget:** Mr. Stippick contacted Barbara Freijomil regarding the EC budget but has not yet received a reply. We need funds before we can repair the Malaga Nature Trail posts.
5. **EC Official Email:** We now have an official email: [envcommission@franklintownship.com](mailto:envcommission@franklintownship.com). Mr. Stippick will manage the site. He will also send the monthly EC meeting agenda to Sara Thurston. Ms. McCarthy will send approved minutes to Sara. Mr. Stippick also wants to send monthly information (limited) to people we talked to at Community Day.
6. **Signage:** We still need a basic sign at the park saying “Nature Trail” with an arrow, so visitors at the main parking lot will know it exists. We should also create a simple sign at the start of the Trail that has a QR code on it. Ms. McCarthy will contact Public Works to find out if they can make such signs. We will need space on our website for the QR-related information that is on the printed Trail Guide. Ms. McCarthy will contact Sara Thurston to ask about this.

**VI. Mail:** There was one notice from the Pinelands Commission:

Letter to Christine Thompson, DC Farms, LLC, at 220 Yegla Lane, Newfield NJ, dated October 13, 2022, replying to a request for a Letter of Interpretation as to the number of Pinelands Development Credits which are allocated to this 20-acre parcel, block 7101/lot 84. The final allocation number is .25 Credits based on the calculation of uplands, wetlands, wetlands in agricultural use, and the presence of two dwelling units on the site.

**VII. Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Ms. M. Duerr, seconded by Mr. Stippick and approved unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Suzanne McCarthy, Acting Secretary.

**The next meeting of the Environmental Commission is on Monday, November 28, 7:30 pm. It will be both a live meeting in the Municipal Bldg. conference room and also a Zoom meeting.**