

North Plainfield Environmental Commission
Minutes for Meeting for August 21, 2024 7:00 PM at the
Vermeule Community Center

Members Attended:

- Harry Allen
- Steve McIntyre
- Keona Miller
- Skip Stabile

Read Compliance Statement

Items Discussed

1. Recreational Field Proposal for West End School.
 - a. Issue was potential flooding on the East side of the Stony Brook.
 - b. Visited the site, interviewed neighbors, and reviewed the FEMA Flood Insurance FIRM.
 - c. Concluded that the proposed project would not increase the flood risk in the area, because the runoff coefficient (% Runoff) could not be increased as per construction ordinances.
 - d. Long term flooding attributed to changing rainfall patterns could increase flooding risk, so we recommended FEMA Flood Insurance.
 - e. A note to that effect was left with the concerned homeowner.
2. Participation in Urban Forestry Grant

- a. A three-tiered tree grant was approved for the Borough, involving a tree inventory, tree removal, and tree replacement.
 - b. NPEC would like to get in on the planning, but we have not been invited as the plans are in their infancy and money hasn't been allocated.
 - c. Contacted the company that prepared our Environmental Resource Inventory to ask about their experience in tree inventory.
 - d. We discussed using students in an effort to inventory trees using geo-located cellphone photos and a centralized database.
 - e. We are awaiting an update on this project from the Borough.
3. Status if the Borough efforts at newly acquired Green Brook Park.
- a. Originally, we were told that the North section of Green Brook Park was going to be left to nature.
 - b. If so, NPEC would like to see it reforested as a floodplain woodland ecosystem. We could spearhead a replanting project along with the Shade tree Commission.
 - c. We have since found out that there is a recreational use being proposed, but reforestation can be accommodated within that land use.
4. Review status report on the Lockheed TCE site, including the latest on PFOAs.

- a. This has been a problem since we first got involved in 1993. There is still trichloroethene contamination at depth at Watchung Square Mall.
 - b. Although groundwater advection (gravity flow) has been reduced due to groundwater alterations (reduced infiltration) at the Mall, TCE diffusion is still occurring in all directions from the source (200 feet under the gatehouse at Crystal Ridge).
 - c. The predictions of groundwater and TCE movement, which were made in the 1990's have not been updated and there is still unaddressed contamination in North Plainfield and Watchung.
 - d. Monitoring in place by Lockheed does not address this problem, which also may involve the latest contaminant-of-the-week, PFOs and PFOAs.
5. Discuss revisions to the North Plainfield Environmental Inventory.
- a. New history material has been obtained from the Vermeule historian and needs to be added.
 - b. School science contributions, especially more recent student environmental assessments of the Stony Brook, Butterfly Gardens, etc., need to be included.
 - c. Lockheed progress report section is out of date.

Next Meeting: TBA

Respectfully submitted, Dr. Harry L. Allen, PhD, Chair