

Peapack-Gladstone Environmental & Shade Tree Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: February 26th, 2024

Start time: 7.35 pm.

End Time: 8.45 pm.

Attendees:

John Kappler

Sarah Heck

Jamie Murphy

Barbara Heskins Davis (The Land Conservancy
of New Jersey)

Justice Lettich

Andrew Goode

Stellario D'Urso

Allie Vaccaro (The Land Conservancy of New
Jersey)

A quorum was established (minimum 3) with 5 members present.

Significant Discussion:

- Barbara Heskins Davis presented the Environmental Resource Inventory draft report and answered questions from the board members with particular emphasis on questions posed by John Kappler via email before the meeting. Barbara provided a list of follow-up items after the meeting, as follows:
- Schedule
 - March 18 – EC comments due back to John/TLCNJ
 - March 25 – TLCNJ to respond to John with any questions, next EC meeting
 - April 18 – TLCNJ incorporate comments and send ERI back to town
 - May 15 – LUB meeting to review and consider it for adoption
 - Action Item: John – will follow up with the Land Use Board to confirm the date
- Discussion/Comments/Action Items
 - Historic sites
 - Include the text/map/table for historic sites from the 2013 ERI as an appendix in the ERI Update
 - Action Item: Jamie to confirm that nothing has changed
 - Open space/trails
 - Do not include open space mapping in ERI. The town is in the process of approving OSRP
 - Agricultural soils
 - Include soils map and table from the 2023 Farmland Plan in the appendix in the ERI Update and reference it in the text

- Critical Sites Map
 - Do not include critical sites map as the ERI includes separate maps
 - Include a one-page fact sheet that includes the websites/resources of NJGEOWEB and the NJ Highlands Council Interactive ERI at the front of the document as a resource for residents
- Infrastructure
 - Do not include it as it should be part of the Master Plan
- Flood Hazard Areas, FEMA mapping
 - Action Item: TLCNJ to research FEMA mapping to confirm if the GIS has been released for the updated designations. In the fall of 2023, the floodplains were redesignated by FEMA as wider southwest of Peapack Brook (maybe other places)
 - Action Item: Jamie will reach out to Nancy for information to share with us
- Appendix E of 2013 ERI
 - Include this again: intermittent stream, which does not exist between School Street and Main Street – it was piped. Will need to reference it in text
- Minutes
 - The minutes for the 01/22/2024 meeting were approved.
- Placement of three white oaks:
 - Various options were discussed, including Rockabye Meadow, Tiger Hill, Main Street (as a replacement for the sycamores),
- Placement of large caliper trees vs smaller seedlings at the entrance of town.
 - Most seemed in favor of planting several smaller trees vs. large caliper ones.
- Trails
 - The trail maintenance project may cost \$5,000, with options to use GIS software or explore other programs that Andrew is looking into.
 - Andrew suggests prioritizing trail walkability issues in wet areas and involving experts who have dealt with these issues in other parts of the state.
 - Jamie suggests that the council will not make any decisions on trail improvements without proper input.
 - John explains Jacob's Ladder is an abandoned right-of-way that could be used to connect the backside of Natirar to the lake.
 - DPW wants to survey the area before clearing it, but John suggests using a 15-foot right-of-way survey to mark the path for clearing.
 - The group discusses the potential for a new trail in Highland, with parking and signage considerations.
 - Discussion regarding water quality issues and coordination with the Environmental Commission.
- Others

- Jamie mentions Mark is supportive of the curb bump project but the town will not pay for it. Funding will have to be found elsewhere and Jamie will look for solutions. She is also hopeful to find money to get two of the lampposts that are in the park along that road.
- A suggestion was made to name a local park after a historical figure.
- The group discusses potential grants for water quality improvement projects in New Jersey.
- Jamie mentions that the town has had electric vehicle charging stations every year, but they are not very supportive of making a move to electric vehicles for actual town use.