

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2023**

The meeting of the Environmental Commission, held via remote video conference and in-person at the Municipal Building, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, New Jersey, was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by Richard Wolf, Chair. The Opening Statement was made. Roll call was taken.

Present: Janet Ariemma (*remote*)
Sally Coda
Mike Devaney
Jack Pfister
Richard Wolf
Jennifer Storms, Secretary

Absent: Victoria Galow
Richard Seibert
Megan Charles, Alternate I
Gary Montroy, Alternate II
Ward Donigian, Council Liaison

The minutes of the meeting held on June 14, 2023 were approved following a motion by Pfister; seconded by Coda. Montroy abstained. All others present voted to approve.

Pfister made a motion to open the meeting to the public; seconded by Devaney. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Sustainable Jersey Certification

Coda updated the group on her work on our continued Sustainable Jersey certification to achieve silver status. Members discussed working with the Film and Arts Committee to develop a cultural program for additional points.

Environmental Grants

Wolf said we continue to work on grant opportunities with Administration.

SITE PLAN REVIEWS

Crossroads Developer Associates LLC and Garden Crossroads LLC, 1 International Blvd., Blocks 26 & 183, Lots 2 & 1 (including Block 26, Lots 10 & 11), Docket #645

The Environmental Commission reviewed a Preliminary and Final Site Plan and Soil Movement Permit Application.

Pfister noted his concerns about the development, particularly stormwater runoff and traffic, noise and air pollution. He feels this application will negatively affect our quality of life in a negative way, and he opposes the development.

Resident John Fesen noted his additional concerns for this project, and said the town should consider having a town hall meeting with residents to answer questions for the public. Members discussed.

Comments to Planning Board:

- 1) Continued Expansion of Warehouse operations in Mahwah is not consistent with the Master Plan. Large big box facilities continue to increase the traffic in and around our community.
- 2) Reports state there will be 570 trucks per day seven days a week. These facilities are enormous and take over the entire property. The size and aesthetics of these buildings will significantly change the nature of the surrounding community.
- 3) The topography of this location will magnify the noise generated. To reduce both increased noise and air pollution, we would require that this facility restrict access to energy efficient non-emission vehicles.
- 4) The buildings and parking lots will create an urban heat island effect. We recommend adding additional green infrastructure to reduce the impact (green or white roofs; rain gardens and green space throughout the parking lots and bordering the edges; large tree plantings to provide shade and wind protection; solar panels on roof or surrounding area to absorb sunrays, etc.).
- 5) Increased traffic, specifically large trucks, will make an already dangerous intersection of Routes 87, 287 & 17 even more susceptible to fatal and severe accidents. Truck parking in highway exit, entrance & breakdown lanes will become a bigger problem for traffic and police incidents.
- 6) Stormwater Runoff – the conclusions in the attached report seem unreasonable given the large impervious coverage being created by these facilities (1.7M sq. ft of roofing & 1.7M of asphalt) and one building almost on top of the riverbank. Runoff to the river is inevitable (especially pollutants such as oil and debris from asphalt & traffic). We would recommend getting a 2nd Stormwater Report to specifically address runoff that is now commonly arising from large storms (in recent years hundred-year storms are occurring annually). The report should also determine if there is any impact on near-by wellheads that service Mahwah's water supply. We would also recommend exploring more high-tech options for retention and reclamation of water for re-use onsite.
- 7) There is a Steep Slope waiver being requested in the proposal. We do not believe granting this waiver is appropriate, particularly as this space is so close to the riverbed.

- 8) This land has been a Contaminated space for over 50 years. Although currently being maintained as a remediated site, we do not understand the disturbance that will be created in setting the foundations for this proposed construction. We would require continuous testing before, during and after to ensure contaminants are not released into the area and specifically, the adjoining river.
- 9) Previous development options included a Bike/Walk path along the riverbank of the property to Route 17. This would be an integral part of a future expanded Bike/Walk path in Mahwah to tie the entire community into local public transportation options. We request that area be set aside in the plans to accommodate a Bike/Walk path along the river and this be incorporated into the development plans.

Devaney made a motion to reject the application citing the above concerns; seconded by Pfister. All members voted unanimously to reject the application.

SOIL MOVEMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Sadasivam, 56 Alcott Road, Block 97, Lots 6 & 7, E-BD-216-3564

The Environmental Commission reviewed a Soil Movement Permit Application to demolish an existing home and construct a new 4,600 square-foot home on the property.

Comments to Administrative Officer:

Please note: the applicant must replace two trees if six are being removed. Trees must be native and deciduous.

Devaney made a motion to accept the application with the tree replacements noted above; seconded by Pfister. All members voted to accept the application.

Mark & Mary McAuliffe, 202 Deerfield Terrace, Block 148, Lot 43.02, E-BD-216-3563

The Environmental Commission reviewed a Soil Movement Permit Application to construct a new home, pool, patio, covered patio, detached garage and cabana on the property.

Comments to Administrative Officer:

Please note: Of the 56 trees being removed, 14 replacement trees must be native and deciduous.

Coda made a motion to accept the application with the tree replacements noted above; seconded by Devaney. All members voted to accept the application.

TENANT APPLICATIONS

None received

Correspondence

- ANJEC emails

OLD BUSINESS

Mahwah Day – September 23, 2023

Members discussed ideas for Mahwah Day.

Pfister thanked the members of the public who were in attendance and made a motion to close the meeting to the public; seconded by Coda. All in favor.

There being no further questions or discussion, the meeting of the Environmental Commission was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. following a motion by Devaney; seconded by Pfister. All in favor. The next meeting will be held via remote video conference and in-person at the Municipal Building, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, New Jersey, and is scheduled for Wednesday, July 12, 2023 at 7 p.m.

J. Storms
Secretary