

HOLMDEL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Minutes ~ Regular Meeting

Wednesday, March 9, 2022– 7:30 p.m.

held via Zoom Webinar

Bill Kastning called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. and read the following **OPENING STATEMENT**: *“I hereby announce, pursuant to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided on January 14, 2022, to the Asbury Park Press and the Two River Times. Notice has also been posted in the entrance of Town Hall, filed in the Clerk’s Office, and posted on the Township’s website, www.holmdeltownship.com all pursuant to Section 13 of the Open Public Meetings Act.”*

Roll Call

Members Present: Ralph Blumenthal
Zachary Gilstein
Bill Kastning, *Chairperson*
Karen Strickland
Christopher Yonclas
Janet Jackel, *Alternate 1*
Mayor Buontempo, HEC Liaison

Absent: Randy Rauscher
Anthony Salerno
John Galasso, *Alternate 2*
Loretta Coscia, Secretary

Guests: Ben Matlack, PE, CME Associates, Township Engineer
Bob Mullin, PE, Colliers Engineering
Matthew Laconey, Rutgers – Water Resources Program
Joe Tetro, 280 Middle Road, Holmdel
Carole Balmer, 4 Spradley Lane, Middletown
Chiung-yin Liu, 3 Seven Oaks Drive, Holmdel

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of silence to honor military and police who have been wounded or killed in action

Environmental Commission Business

- Draft Minutes – January 19, 2022
Motion by Ralph seconded by Karen to approve the minutes, carried on voice vote.
- Rutgers Presentation – Matthew Laconey, of Rutgers Cooperative Extension
- Waackaack Creek Study
- Stream blockages/flooding Middle Road

Matt Laconey stated that they are part of Rutgers Water Resources Program. They had been contacted by Holmdel about flooding issues. Matthew shared screen showing Power Point slides to review his study on the flooding issues. One of the slides presented was a colored rendering showing the water elevation levels of the Waackaack Creek.

Matt screen-shared the following slides:

Causes of flooding

- Volume and flow of water filling up the floodplain
- Water downstream restricting water from flowing downstream
- Bridge or obstruction preventing enough flow from getting through, backing upstream

What can be done for Middle Road flooding?

- Is bridge or downstream the limiting factor?
- Reduce stormwater peak flow from sub-basins
 - Green infrastructure
 - Larger scale storage
- Enlarge Middle Road bridge opening through bridge reconstruction or reconstruct stream channels to provide more storage/flow capacity

Benefit of Complete Model

- Can go in and propose a change and see what happens
- Identify areas vulnerable to flooding proactively
- Comprehensive view of watershed

Zach asked if sending more water downstream would create an issue. Matt said during a massive storm event there is a lot of tidal surges, and it will back-up upstream as well. The question is to what magnitude it would make it worse, which is difficult to model.

Zach asked if they looked at any other comparisons such as making the opening under the bridge bigger, or if a basin was created upstream, what the impact would be? Matt said it is all he had time to do with this model.

Public – Questions

- Carole Balmer, 4 Spradley Lane, Middletown asked Matt if he took the CAFRA designations when he was doing the modeling. Matt was not familiar with CAFRA.

Chris said CAFRA delineations go to Middle Road. Bill said CAFRA exists in the basin, but Matt did not take it into account in his modeling.

- Joe Tetro, 280 Middle Road asked Matt if he knew what the elevation is on Route 36 deck of the bridge compared to Middle Road deck of the bridge? Matt said the top of Route 36 is higher than Middle Road. Joe believes a lot of the problem is that the stream flows differently than it did in the 1970's. If the water would go straight out it would alleviate a lot of the blockage.

Chris stated his analysis shows it is the same elevation.

Bob Mullin, P.E., Colliers Engineering, asked if there were any accommodations made from the storm surge from a Nor'easter? Matt said it was difficult to model, but he will try to

include in the final report. Bob Mullin advised that his firm would be doing the Stormwater Management Study for the township. He asked Matt to share some of this modeling data.

Janet asked about the detention up stream and whether any locations were identified? Matt said not specifically, but there are a lot of areas that are possible where there is not a lot of development.

- Carole Balmer asked if dredging a stream to create a larger capacity, you must go through the Monmouth County Mosquito Commission. Chris said they can only go 25 feet and remove debris, not dredge. A permit is needed by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Ben Matlack, P.E., Township Engineer, stated that he felt Matt did a really nice job. He asked what steps or any recommendations the Township can take to advance this study and to identify trouble spots? Matt said he will highlight certain areas that are affected by flooding events.

Ralph asked to what extent can Holmdel address the issues themselves, or do we have to involve Middletown and Hazlet and other downstream towns. Matt said there are potential middle stream areas where there is other undeveloped land that may be used for detention or retention. Ralph stated that some of those are Green Acres properties. He asked to what extent is it feasible in older residential developments to do anything? Matt said that is difficult as there is no space left to do anything. Part of the solution is to advocate for green infrastructure.

- Joe Tetro asked about storm surges. He said his house became an island as the water is not getting out fast enough. He believes the problem is more downstream. He put an application into Blue Acres referred to him by the Mosquito Commission.

Matt said the water is backing into the flood plain from the back of your property and the water going over the bridge is coming into the front of your property

Commission members agreed that this has was an exceptional presentation.

- Earth Day Table – Karen said Earth Day is on May 1. HEC has allocated \$500 and township extra money for it. As part of an HEC table, we need to decide what we would like to talk about (theme) and need volunteers to run it. Karen is coordinating the entire event and would like someone to man the HEC table. Ralph said he will be around for part of the afternoon, as he will be doing the morning walk with Larry Fink. He said that Jenni contacted ANJEC for available materials, that can be used by the HEC. Ralph said there have been topics discussed at our meetings such as stormwater issues, trails/trail walks. Some suggestions were Janet-HEC mission; Ralph-maintaining an open space list. Karen-promoting rain gardens. Bill- maintaining a septic system and provide a handout.

Karen said the hours are 12 to 5 and we will need the table covered. Zach will help. Bill said his organization may be participating, but if not, he will participate. Karen to send out a 90-minute time slots for HEC members to sign up.

- Audubon Society Bird Conservation Grant – Janet said that the grant was submitted, and we will not know until April 1.
- Trails – Ralph said FOHOS agreed to have a spring schedule of three walks: April 9 Daffodil Walk, May 1 Earth Day Walk and June 4 Ramanessin Greenway Walk. Would like the township to put this up on the website, as well as advise the Recreation Department. Janet and Karen to speak with Victor Stevens, Public Works about getting other trails in shape. Bill suggested that the flood studies could address this as well.
- Liaison – Mayor Buontempo has agreed to be the HEC liaison
- Turf Field – Bill spoke earlier today with the Board of Education Administrator as well as the gentleman who is responsible for maintenance of the trails for the Board of Education. They will send him a concept plan that he will share with the Commission. Bill said he did an aerial using NJ Map.2 showing the two lots associated with the school. Lot 4 and Lot 5.01 (5 is not part of the school nor is 6). Their intent is to put the turf field near the parkway, which will remove a ball field in the west. When their engineer develops specifics, they will share that with us. The storm regs will be followed. The turf field will be mounded and will have drainage underneath the turf part of the field. We do not want to impact a Category 1 stream on the northwest side of the property. Janet suggested a rain garden to capture some of the water so that it does not run into the stream. Chris said there is a rain garden where the old tennis courts were.

Public – Comment

- Carole Balmer said when they put in Roggy Field all that drainage and the subsurface soils beneath Roggy Field drained into the stream and created a lot of overflow. She suggested they check with the Board of Ed or engineer to check the subsurface soils for correct drainage.

At 9:10 p.m., Ralph recused for discussion of Zoning Board matter.

Zach said we sent a comment about our concern on the Dementia Center that they retain all their stormwater on site. Do we have feedback of whether their plan included their recommendations? Karen said she was at the last hearing and the applicant is submitting revised plans. The Board Engineer will review prior to the next public hearing.

On another note, Bill asked commission members how they felt about in person vs. Zoom meetings. Bill said he prefers in person meetings. Karen said she is okay with that. Chris will call in.

Public – Comments

- Chiung-yin Liu, she thanked the Commission for their service. For the turf field, she suggested the Board of Ed Administrator come to a Commission Meeting to hear concerns. Bill said now is not the right time, but there may be a time at a subsequent meeting.

- Carole Balmer feels Zoom is a viable option and would have more participation if it is utilized.

Regarding the watershed study, Chris said the budget is for 90K and he said we should look for a discount for the effort put into it. The scope of the work should also be considered. Bill stated that the study is township-wide, not just for the Waackaack Creek.

Adjournment

There being no further business at 9:20 p.m., **motion** to adjourn by Zach seconded by Karen and carried on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Loretta Coscia
Secretary

Proceedings Recorded
Minutes approved 4/13/22 (RB/KS)