

## Union Township Environmental Commission Minutes of the March 13, 2007 Regular Meeting

The March 13, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Union Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM.

The notice of meeting as published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier-News satisfied the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Act, and was also posted in the Municipal Building and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

- I. **Roll call:** Present: Bob Beylickjian, Alan Ford, Stephen Hurford, Brian Kirkpatrick, Robert Nargi, Sandy Stiger  
Absent: None  
Others: None  
Public: Tom Ricker, Michelle McBride, Frank Goldberg, Frank Mazza, Mike Sroka
  
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** Approval of the minutes from the February 16, 2007 meeting was moved by Mr. Ford, seconded by Ms. Stiger and approved by all members present. Mr. Ricker pointed out an error with respect to the Open Space Subcommittee that was corrected in the final version of the minutes.
  
- III. **Old Business:**
  1. Open Space Subcommittee – Mr. Nargi called for volunteers. Mr. Nargi also provided a copy of a January 2002 document describing the “Development of an Open Space Plan and Natural Resource Inventory” as a useful framework. Ms. Stiger volunteered to lead the committee. Mr. Beylickjian, Ms. McBride and Mr. Sroka also volunteered. Mr. Nargi indicated that Matt Severino was also interested. Mr. Nargi moved, Mr. Ford seconded and all members present approved the appointment of Ms. Stiger as chair.
  2. Well testing program – Ms. Stiger reported that she had spoken with SBWA staff, who indicated the program was run in November in 2006, and suggested a similar time frame in 2007.
  3. Stream clean-up – After some discussion about the nature of the cleanup (stream v. roadside), we decided to proceed with a stream clean-up effort on April 21, involving as many community groups, business and resources as possible. Ms. Stiger will spearhead this effort.
  4. Mr. Nargi reported on maps from the county (Kevin Richardson and Sue Dziamara) regarding land acquisitions. An updated map will be available soon.
  5. Mr. Nargi referenced the Renaissance Senior Center and the need to send comments regarding to the Union Township Planning Board. Mr. Nargi will draft the comments from UTEC, and Mr. Kirkpatrick will draft the comments with respect to other environmental issues. Mr. Hurford raised the issue of UTEC approval of such communications. Consensus was that the documents should be brought to UTEC for approval
  6. An Impact Statement Checklist was provided to the Commission and discussed. It was noted that the checklist is presently provided to applicants, but there was uncertainty as to whether it was being required. Mr. Kirkpatrick will determine how the Planning Board presently uses the checklist, and request that the checklist be required to be completed as part of the application process.
  7. Mr. Nargi reported on a letter from the Union Township Committee to NJDEP concerning Johnny’s Truck Stop requesting that DEP pursue plans for contamination on the site.
  8. Mr. Nargi reported that tree coverage indicates a 30% drop over 20 years based on aerial surveys, and presented mappings from 1972 and 1992. An updated mapping is expected soon. .
  9. Mr. Nargi reported on a communication from Mr. Jost, attorney to the Union Township Committee, indicating that draft minutes are exempt from disclosure under the Open Public Records Act (OPRA), but that minutes should be “promptly available to the public”, and case law indicates that this means two weeks. Mr. Jost’s note also indicates that there is proposed

legislation that would require posting of draft and final minutes, and taping of all public meetings. After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Kirkpatrick, second by Mr. Hurford, and approved by all members present to begin taping of all Environmental Commission meetings within the next three meetings and posting of non-approved minutes.

IV. **Correspondence:**

1. Email dated February 19, 2007 from Tom Ricker to Mr. Nargi requesting email addresses of Union Township Environmental Commission members (and others) to increase communication. Consensus was that communications to UTEC should come through the town offices.
2. Announcement of the April 11, 2007 New Jersey Clean Air Council Annual Public Hearing on Improving Air Quality.
3. Announcement of the South Branch Watershed Association Annual Dinner on March 23, 2007 (6:30 PM)
4. ANJEC letter of February 15, 2007 requesting a township resolution in support of renewing the Garden State Preservation Trust. After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Ford, seconded by Mr. Beylickjian and approved by all members present that the Environmental Commission request that the Union Township Committee adopt a resolution in support of the GSPT renewal. A model resolution is included.

V. **New Business:**

1. Ellen Cronan of SBWA was unable to attend and her presentation is deferred to a future meeting.
2. Steven Sousa of Princeton Hydro was unable to attend and his presentation is deferred to a future meeting.
3. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that there are several master plan paper roads in the township. He suggested that these roads be identified and considered for possible trail or other uses. The subject was referred to the Open Space Subcommittee.

VI. **Chairman's Report:**

1. Mr. Nargi reported on his attendance at the Hunterdon County Planning meeting on the Highlands Plan on February 21. Tom Borden, Deputy Executive Director of the Highlands Council offered to come and speak on the Highlands program.
2. Mr. Nargi reported that he had sent a letter to Anheuser Busch asking for their support in providing T-shirts for participants in a stream clean-up.
3. Mr. Nargi reported that he has solicited input from the Township Committee and Planning Board as to content for our upcoming newsletter for UTEC. Several options of items to be included were discussed, with several members offering to provide items for inclusion.
4. Letter of February 28, 2007 from the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance acknowledging Mr. Nargi's attendance at the open house for their new offices and providing a schedule of upcoming events.
5. Announcement from the South Branch Watershed Association of the March 22, 2007 (8 AM) Green Table meeting on "Land Conservation Status & Strategies."
6. The initial billings under the Sidney Brook grant have been developed. Some discussion followed concerning the need for UT to provide in-kind work in support of the grant. We need to provide approximately \$34,000 of services as part of the grant. Mr. Sousa is involved in the preparation of this material, and Mr. Hurford and Mr. Nargi will investigate further.

VII. **Committee Reports:**

**Equestrian Committee:** Noted that signage on Cook's Cross and Perryville Roads would improve safety. After discussion, this matter was referred back to the committee for additional mapping and other research on cost.

VIII. **Financial Reports:** None

IX. **Hearing of Citizens:**

1. Ms. McBride inquired about the possibility of a park and ride facility on Route 173.
2. Mr. Ricker inquired about new/additional members for UTEC.
3. Mr. Ricker asked whether items of correspondence could be posted along with the minutes. Mr. Nargi indicated that we would try to do so, especially with respect to resolutions (as with the GST resolution approved tonight).
4. Mr. Goldberg thanked UTEC for agreeing to tape meetings to assist residents.

X. **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Commission will be Tuesday, April 10, 2007 at 7:00 pm at the municipal building.

XI. **Adjournment:**

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kirkpatrick made the motion and Mr. Beylickjian seconded. All members present voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alan Ford, Secretary