

**Union Township Environmental Commission  
Minutes of the September 11, 2007 Regular Meeting**

The September 11, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Union Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:03 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, on the Union Township website and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

**I. Roll call:**

Present: Bob Beylickjian, Alan Ford, Brian Kirkpatrick, Robert Nargi, Sandy Stiger

Absent: Stephen Hurford

Public: Bill Harclerode, Beverly Harclerode, Scott Eichlin, Ellen Cronan,  
Michelle McBride, Frank Mazza

**II. Approval of Minutes:**

Approval of the minutes from the July 11, 2007 meeting was moved by Mr. Kirkpatrick and seconded by Mr. Beylickjian, and approved by a 5-0 vote.

**III. Old Business:**

The T-shirt discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

**IV. Correspondence:**

Mr. Nargi reported on a letter received from NJDEP concerning the 2007 certification noting that the Local Public Education included in the report was not sufficient. Since the report was prepared, we have released the newsletter with appropriate information and also had an information booth at the September Township Day, which should satisfy the requirements.

**V. New Business:**

1. Mr. Nargi reported on the Township Day activities, where a booth was set up, displaying environmental maps of the township and literature on environmental issues such as stormwater management, septic systems and well testing was distributed. The booth was visited throughout the day and considerable interest was shown in the mappings.
2. Ms. Cronan (South Branch Watershed Association) presented details of the well testing program offered for Union Township residents. Kits may be purchased at the municipal building beginning October 22, 2007, with drop-off scheduled for November 7, 2007 (and on November 12, if necessary). The testing is voluntary, and is confidential unless a waiver is signed by the homeowner participant.
3. Mr. Harclerode made a presentation concerning the issue of road noise. This material was included in Mr. Harclerode's letter of August 27 to the Township Committee. Possibilities include an ordinance banning on engine braking, vehicle modifications and excess noise, as well as enforcement of existing laws, acceleration of the Route 78 repaving schedule and encouraging traffic volume reduction. Mr. Kirkpatrick indicated and Mr. Mazza confirmed that the Township had initiated discussions and had met with the NJTPA about traffic planning issues, including noise issues. Mr. Harclerode provided a copy of the Hope Township ordinance. Mr. Ford moved and Mr. Beylickjian seconded a motion to form a committee to further development of these ideas and recommend appropriate action. The motion was approved 5-0.

**VI. Chairman's Report:**

Mr. Nargi reported that the newsletter was distributed and that many positive comments have been received.

**VII. Committee Reports:**

**Open Space Committee:**

Ms. Stiger discussed the need for professional services to obtain information on existing conservation easements in the Township. Mr. Nargi brought up the possibility of obtaining grants to identify and document conservation easements throughout the town. Mr. Kirkpatrick moved and Ms. Stiger seconded a motion to request that the Township Attorney prepare a Request for Proposal to obtain title search information on properties with conservation easements. The motion was approved 5-0.

**Equestrian Trails:**

Mr. Beylickjian reported that nine locations for signs were identified. The next step is to present a proposal to the Township Committee. Mr. Kirkpatrick moved and Ms. Stiger seconded a motion to make such a presentation, including a map identifying the locations, and a mock-up of the proposed signs. The motion was approved 5-0.

**Planning Board:**

1. Mr. Kirkpatrick reported that the Pilot hearings would be continued.
2. Mr. Kirkpatrick reported that an applicant was seeking approval for an addition that was located within 40 feet of a pond. A letter of interpretation (LOI) is desirable, as it would protect the property owner from future DEP action.
3. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that DEP had published proposed regulations that would permit a municipality to require applicants to identify wetlands and obtain a LOI before an application is deemed complete. He noted that there are provisions that allow the property owner to request that NJDEP perform the wetlands delineation for small areas (less than 1 acre).
4. Mr. Kirkpatrick stated that he would review applications and report to UTEC on his findings. He requested access to the UTEC office so that he could work there. Mr. Nargi stated that this was appropriate, and Mayor Mazza agreed.

**Property Management:**

1. Mr. Beylickjian reported that the property management committee had met and considered a number of options for the properties. Most of the discussion centered on the Hoffman Park buildings.
  - a. The main house is critical. Mr. Beylickjian has been working with a roofer concerning roof, gutter and fascia repair and replacement, and expects a quote next week.
  - b. The property management committee recommended that the red house be razed. Mr. Beylickjian is obtaining a quote.
  - c. The property management committee recommended that the storage shed also be razed. Mr. Nargi indicated that the county might wish to use the building for storage. It was suggested that a site visit with the county to look at possibilities would be useful.
  - d. The possibility of using the lower barn area for equestrian activities was discussed, including an appropriate ring and pasture. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that the County and USDA provide financial incentives to plant native and warm season grass species that could support pasture, hay production and provide better grassland bird habitat.
  - e. Mr. Nargi noted that JCP&L has indicated that the steps into the generator building are difficult to climb when reading the meter. JCP&L has been estimating power usage. It

**DRAFT – NOT YET APPROVED**

was suggested that either the steps be repaired or the meters moved to the building exterior.

- f. Mr. Nargi noted that the pool area would be fenced and brush cleared by township road staff.
- g. The white apartment building would be rented, with the idea of providing on-site security.
2. Mr. Beylickjian noted that the Douglas and Milligan properties needed to be considered, including a possible subdivision or sale. Ms. McBride suggested that we look at what actions other towns had taken and uses for the properties. Mr. Kirkpatrick suggested that we learn what restrictions exist as to the possible actions on each of the properties. Mr. Mazza noted that the Township Committee would discuss authorizing the Township attorney to review contract documents and deeds of Township lands to evaluate potential future uses.
3. Mr. Kirkpatrick suggested that we issue a RFP to discover what possible interest there might be in using these properties. This should wait until we have reviewed the restrictions on use and disposition.

**VIII. Hearing of Citizens:**

1. Mr. Mazza noted that he had received a request to deal with the issue of grass clippings and the lack of an adequate disposal method in the township. He asked UTEC to consider a program such as used in Bloomsbury, where a voluntary composting program, making low-cost bins available, was provided to residents. Mr. Mazza also indicated that the Township has a wood chipper that is generally not used on weekends. Mr. Kirkpatrick indicated that dumping of brush and grass clipping along Township roads occurs. Mr. Kirkpatrick asked if the Township could consider setting up a program similar to High Bridge and Milford where residents could bring in their brush cuttings to chip into mulch.

**IX. Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Commission will be Tuesday, October 9, 2007 at 7:00 pm at the municipal building.

**X. Adjournment:**

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Mr. Kirkpatrick, seconded by Mr. Beylickjian, and approved by a 5-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alan Ford, Secretary