

Union Township Environmental Commission  
Minutes for Tuesday August 24, 2010 @ 7:00 PM

Our notice as published in the HC Democrat and the Courier News satisfies the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Act. This notice is also posted on the Township website, and a copy is filed with the Municipal Clerk.

Roll call: Present: Chuck La Tournous, Bill Harclerode, Sandy Stiger, John Wingler, Michele McBride, and Steve Hurford. Chuck Neary and Josh Boyle notified the Chair in advance that they would be unable to attend. Kathy Corcoran arrived at 7:10pm.

Review of Application: The purpose of this special meeting was to review an application for a convenience store at Block 13 Lot 11.01. Documents and reports from our Engineer and Planner were available in the UTEC office for review during the past few weeks, as well as the drawings for the project. The Engineer deferred to UTEC as to whether or not an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required for the project.

Kathy Corcoran, representative to the Planning Board, stated that an EIS is a standard checklist item for the Planning Board. She was concerned with traffic. Some environmental impacts of the project will be minimal, since the parking lot size will not be increased. However, the quantity of visitors will increase if a convenience store is built. Bill Harclerode noted that the septic system might not be adequate for the higher level of traffic. The County Board of Health would determine if improvements are required. There will not be extensive food service; packaged food products will predominate. Michele mentioned that there is extensive trash around and behind some of the other convenience store / service station type buildings in town; she was concerned about trash in the wetlands and critical wildlife habitat areas. Steve noted that a service station can be more of an environmental hazard than a convenience store due to storage of waste oil and antifreeze,

etc. Runoff will go into the Mulhockaway Creek. Steve stated that the plan notes that no changes will be made to the stormwater system since the size of the parking lot doesn't change; however, John noted that the number of cars entering the area could quadruple; increasing the amount of dripped oil, etc in the parking lot and subsequent quality of stormwater runoff. Steve stated that cars leaking oil and/or leaking radiators would have an adverse stormwater impact for the existing use. Kathy stated that an EIS would evaluate the impacts of existing vs. potential uses. Bill stated that lighting fixtures were not described in the plans. Steve stated that in the past, UTEC would submit a list of concerns to the Planning Board, and the PB would determine if an EIS was required. There was a good deal of discussion about the best way to respond to this application. Some members felt that a list of environmental concerns should be drafted and submitted, others felt that a EIS should be requested, along with a list of environmental concerns. Michele and Kathy discussed current traffic problems at the Perryville Road light. Chuck was concerned that the wetlands might be disturbed during the construction process. Bill noted that this might be a carbonate rock area and that the planning board geologist would need to address it. Michele suggested that she type up a list of concerns for the Planning Board for review. If the concerns could not be addressed without an EIS, UTEC would not support a waiver. Chuck made a motion to develop the list for the PB, Michele seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. There was significant discussion about how UTEC should work with applications going forward. It was suggested that a subcommittee be made to review applications and report findings to UTEC. Bill stated that all new applications will be brought to the Commission meetings to for review. Kathy felt that a subcommittee, reviewing in advance, would help streamline UTEC meetings. Chuck was concerned that there might not be time for UTEC to meet and discuss the application as a group if information from UTEC is needed quickly.

Additional Agenda Items – Michele asked if she could discuss several additional issues with UTEC. She asked if UTEC members had reviewed Pilot's November, 2008 aquifer test results and had several questions about those results. Michele mentioned that November, 2008 had above normal rainfall in NJ, according to Rutgers, and wondered if the results of the aquifer test would be different if they were in a below normal rainfall period, like August 2010. Michele also noted that Pilot was in a subwatershed that has been classified as a 'deficit subwatershed' by the Highlands Council, and wondered how the additional water that Pilot wants would effect this deficit situation. Kathy offered to bring up the questions for the hydro geologist at the next Pilot meeting.

Michele showed a revised copy of the Recycling List with hyperlinks to provide additional information. Bill noted that this was an earlier version of the recycling list; Michele will update to include items such as eyeglasses and cell phones. Steve was concerned about disposal of latex paint cans; Chuck wondered if Freecycle could be added to the list. Bill asked to have the list forwarded to Matt Severino prior to publishing.

Michele asked Chuck if the Easement Outreach and Inventory project was needed to meet the Sept. 15 deadline for Sustainable Jersey. Chuck replied that it was needed. Michele stated that she would pull the project together in time for the deadline. About 250 easements have been identified. About 80% of the deeds are on file at the municipal office and have been scanned into the database. Michele asked if Chuck and John could help her develop a map showing all of the easements. They will get together to do it in coming weeks. A property inspection form has to be developed, and an outreach and education letter for the public. Sandy stated that a letter also needs to be developed for new property owners so that they are alerted by UTEC that an easement is in place on their property. Grants can be applied for to pay for letter mailing and inspections of easements.

Bill stated that anti-idling signs (10) have been received and will be distributed within the community. He also noted that there was grant money available for a riparian restoration project for the Sidney Brook with the NJWSA. Five sites have been identified; the NJWSA will come to our next UTEC meeting to review options for the buffer project. Michele mentioned that Skip Jonas, a former UTEC Chair, might be available to help lead this project and enlist volunteers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.