

**West Deptford Environmental Commission**  
**Minutes**  
**17 February 2014**

**Present:** Dave Sileo, Dave Keller, Ed Komczyk, Ernest Kraus, Bob Waller, Miriam Reichenbach, Sam Cianfarini and Public: Gina Carola and Carl Ford.

**Call to Order:** Dave Sileo called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Ernest moved and Dave Keller seconded the motion to accept the minutes. The minutes were amended to indicate who made and seconded the motions to elect the Chairperson and Vice-Chair. Additionally, President and Vice-President were changed to Chairperson and Vice-Chair. Minutes approved as amended.

**Old Business**

ERI Sub-committee Report: Dave Keller reviewed the pre-proposals received from Heyer, Gruel & Associates, Princeton Hydro and DRVPC. Much of the information provided by the three firms would be the same, though the “bells and whistles” would differ. There was extensive discussion about the content and delivery of the information we need, the merits of the various firms, the costs involved and whether or not to write up an RFP. While creating an RFP may slow the process, it would insure that the commission is receiving the same information from each firm, making it easier to compare the cost/final product from each company.

Dave K reminded the group that the three (3) firms which submitted pre-proposals are listed on the ANJEC web site.

Bob asked if there are any new ERIs from this region. Paulsboro, Deptford and Swedesboro are all recent ERIs.

Sam noted that no matter how the commission decides to move forward, it is the Township Committee which must vote to allocate the funds.

Dave K suggested that we partner with the WD Historical Society to gather some of the necessary information for the ERI. Sam asked about including GSI tracking that the township might use to its benefit.

The sub-committee will meet to create an RFP (the shopping list). Tentative date: 24 February, 2014.

Adopt a Park: no report. Still waiting to hear from the Mayor.

Open Seats on Commission: Dave Sileo reported that the police officer who had expressed an interest is unavailable to serve. Gina Carola feels she hasn't enough time to commit to the commission. Carl Ford is interested in serving. Dave K expressed interest in having Carl join the group. Richard Geiger may be interested; Sam will contact him and explore the notion.

There is a question regarding the number of alternates. This information should be available in the by-laws.

Solvay Updates: There is a meeting on Tuesday, 18 February at Paulsboro H.S. with representatives from the Riverkeepers, the DEP, Solvay and the Department of Health to discuss the current groundwater contamination issue. Sam reminded the group that if one of us chooses to speak at this gathering, to please speak as an individual, not as spokesperson for the commission.

Sam informed the group that local well #3 (by Greenfields Swim Club) is now shut down and the township is using water from wells #5 and 8. Solvay was asked to test private wells in the area; they have made no commitment to do so. The township committee made a formal request that DEP demand that Solvay do the testing. No response to that query yet. Additionally, the Committee asked that DEP set maximum contamination levels for drinking water. This was followed by another lengthy discussion about what is not happening locally. Dave K reminded us that the current issue is only one of Solvay's groundwater issues. There are legacy issues that have yet to be addressed.

Earth Day/Arbor Day/West Deptford Day: Earth Day is 22 April. Dave S would like to focus on storm water basin seeding. Checkpoint Industries is not able to partner with us at this time. We should look at other basin sites. There was protracted discussion of what to do and how to accomplish it.

- Look at other storm water basins

- Acquire donated seeds/purchase seedlings (Columbus area)

- Utilize Watershed Ambassadors (contact Mike Hogan, SJLWT)

- Partner with local schools/teachers

- Establish wildflower program utilizing open space in the twp. (at schools, industrial parks, housing developments, etc.). Ask CAP industries to participate.

- Watch the “seed bank” program at Pitman Library for future possibility

- Examine EPA web site for additional activities to involve school kids

- Composting projects i.e. pumpkin smash, recycle/compost mums, poinsettias, etc.

The Commission will form a sub-committee to examine composting and recycling issues.

Dave S asked about the possibility of using local high school students to digitize the collection at the SJEIC (WDFPL). Need to check if the library is interested; are the materials already catalogued; can these items be linked to the existing web site, etc.

Bob, along with Dave S, will work on agricultural aspects of activities. In addition to the seed bank, they will investigate farm-to-table possibilities, a community garden, etc.

Funding Grants: ANJEC has a \$1500 grant for community projects. Dave S will submit our application. Also, the Commission will ask the local industries involved with CAP to participate by funding a project.

Geiger Property: Ed spoke with Richard Geiger regarding deeding the property to the township. There is a meeting on 26 February with Mr. Geiger, members of the E.C., the township administrator and solicitor, Christine Nolan from SJLWT, and Sam to discuss how best to handle this donation. Members of the EC should look for an email from Ed containing all pertinent information regarding the property. Note: the deed to this property is restricted.

Local Ordinances: There should be an item on this week's twp. agenda that will propose banning smoking within 25 feet of any public building. There was some discussion regarding also banning smoking close to private businesses. That issue is much more difficult to tackle.

Public Comment: Gina Carola requested the twp. to become more sustainable. After lively discussion regarding lessening our carbon footprint, utilizing solar panels, establishing rain gardens, composting, grass cutting, creating vegetable gardens, and numerous other ideas, Sam suggested the EC examine ideas and make recommendation to the Township Committee. The Sustainable Jersey (<http://www.sustainablejersey.com>) web site offers many forward-moving examples of possibilities.

Carl informed the group that many of the local home owners' associations prohibit things such as vegetable gardens, composting, bird feeders while mandating lawn watering. Dave K suggested that perhaps some of these groups would give up a piece of open area for a wildflower planting.

#### **New Business**

Minutes: Ernest asked that our minutes be sent only to members of the Commission. .

Meeting Dates: Should we hold meetings on evenings of recognized holidays? Dave S will look for alternative dates in case of future conflicts.

Chairperson Report: Dave S reviewed the update web site and requested that members examine the site and make suggestions for changes and/or additions.

Vice-Chair Report: Dave K has not yet looked into the township mowing areas designated as "do not mow".

**Meeting Adjourned** at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Miriam Reichenbach, secretary