

WWT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

August 8, 2024

The August 2024 meeting of the WWT Environmental Commission was held on Thursday, August 8, 2024 via Zoom with Ephraim Buhks calling the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, place and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Members: E. Buhks; E. Gordon; S. Parratt; I. Singh; L. Katz
Liaison: F. Guzik Advisor: D. Parris Council Liaison: Andrea Mandel
Guests: Agriya B., Girl Scout
Sunrise Movement, Mercer County Chapter members
Andi Ichsan Sjamsu, Drive Electric

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Agriya B., a Girl Scout, gave a brief status update on her project to install small outdoor libraries and benches in the meditation garden near the Rain and Pollinator gardens at WW Community Park. Based on suggestions received from EC members at a previous meeting, she created a website for residents to access and obtain additional information on the garden and educational aspects. F. Guzik offered to include a link to her website on the township EC website. S. Parratt advised her that he observed some potential water damage to the library structure and suggested she research solutions to remedy the concern and prevent future damage. E. Buhks thanked her for providing the update and invited her to continue providing progress reports at future EC meetings.

Mercer County Chapter of Sunrise Movement is a political advocacy organization focused on climate change that was started in 2023 by West Windsor High School junior S. Arunagiri. She shared a presentation on the national campaign as well as their local chapter, which focuses on increasing community awareness, advocating for local environmental policy by transitioning to renewable energy and encouraging the reduction of transportation emissions. One main focus is on inspiring the youth population to advocate for a greener future. They hope to accomplish this by collaborating with local environmental organizations in future events such as West Windsor Peace Day and the Watershed Institute's upcoming conference. E. Gordon encouraged them to continue exploring concerns regarding local recycling practices, educating residents on acceptable materials, current procedures, and campaigning for improved programs to expand opportunities. F. Guzik encouraged them to also participate in West Windsor's Community Day in September. E. Buhks thanked them for their presentation and attendance.

Andi Ichsan Sjamsu, co-founder of the West Windsor Drive Electric Week, stated they are now participating in their seventh year of National Drive Electric Week and are requesting to have the Environmental Commission as an official sponsor of their event. Sponsorship would include having the Environmental Commission identified as a co-sponsor on the event documentation and the EC sending an email notification to publicize the event. E. Buhks suggested EC members, township staff and A. Sjamsu coordinate on how the sponsorship and collaboration can be accomplished prior to the event.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November, 2023 S. Parratt motioned; I. Singh seconded;
Minutes were approved as presented.

December, 2023 S. Parratt motioned; I. Singh seconded;
Minutes were approved as presented.

CONTINUING BUSINESS: Project Review/Update

Community Park Rain and Pollinator Garden – S. Parratt provided an update on the current status of the project. Both rows of the recently planted trees are doing well, and he will complete the planting of the remaining ones this fall. The garden itself is thriving due to the recent rainstorms and continues to perform as anticipated with no signs of flooding along the pathway.

Community Solar Update – L. Katz stated will continue to monitor the Community Solar Project and the State's recently conducted request for comments. Once that information becomes available in the coming weeks, he will provide an update with EC members. The Sustainable Jersey conference will be held in September, and he is requesting to attend on behalf of the Environmental Commission. F. Guzik responded that the EC operating budget could be utilized to cover the cost of EC members interested in attending. E. Buhks is also interested in attending the conference and will collaborate with F. Guzik.

NJDEP Rare Plant and Fungi Species of Greatest Conservation Need – E. Buhks reminded EC members of the recent request for public comment from NJDEP Fish and Wildlife on their proposed list of Rare Plant and Fungi Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) regarding plants and fungi being added to the NJ SWAP. E. Gordon shared the information he gathered after reviewing the proposed list and the response that was submitted on behalf of the commission concerning West Windsor Township specifically.

NJDEP Endangered & Nongame Species List – E. Buhks reminded EC members of the recent request for public comment from NJDEP proposing amendments to the Lists of Endangered and Nongame Wildlife in the Division of Fish and Wildlife Rules. D. Parris reported that he reviewed the document provided by F. Guzik and drafted a written response, which he circulated to EC members for review. No additional comments or revisions were received, and he submitted the document to the NJDEP as presented. E. Buhks requested D. Parris share the written response with F. Guzik to be posted on the EC website.

Mosquito Commission Treatment Update – E. Buhks stated that F. Guzik shared information and documentation on mosquito control treatments currently utilized in Mercer County. E. Gordon gave a presentation on the information he gathered on the topic, specifically on the efficacy of the products and application processes. There was a group discussion on potential environmental concerns of the current products used and their potential to harm wildlife or humans. F. Guzik stated the Mercer County Mosquito Commission can be contacted to investigate resident complaints, observed areas of stagnant water and address concerns as deemed necessary. E. Buhks thanked E. Gordon for his research and presentation to EC.

Planning Board – A. Baig was unable to attend the meeting. F. Guzik provided an update on various topics and projects addressed at recent Planning Board meetings. Planning Board Resolution 2024-R-04 was approved to authorize the Planning Board to execute a settlement agreement with consent order between CP-Princeton Junction LLC (the owner of the "Acme Woods"), the Township Council and the Planning Board to settle litigation over the permitted uses in the R-1/C District and RP-7 District. Ordinance referral from the Township Council for Ordinance 24-15 to amend and supplement the R-1/C District to add Day Care Centers as a principle permitted use and revise bulk standards; the RP-7 District to add Veterinary Clinics to the permitted uses and the parking standards was discussed. An application from Woodstone Commercial WW LLC, PB24-01, proposed a 2-story preschool and commercial building to be located in the vacant lot on the corner of Canal Point Boulevard and Meadow Road was approved. The project may be constructed in two phases with the preschool being the first phase.

Township Council Update – A. Mandel reported the retirement of Gay Huber, Township Clerk, at the end of August 2024. Deputy Clerk Allison Sheehan will be assuming the role of Township Clerk and Joei Godin, the current secretary in the Clerk's office, has taken and passed her exams to become the new Deputy Township Clerk. The Township met with NJ DEP on the concerns addressed within the Stormwater Resolution and overall flood prevention. Discussion included developing a group study with several regional municipalities to apply for potential grant funding, if available in the future, to bring in consultants and begin developing, planning or discussing implementing watershed improvement plans, management plans, etc. Collaboration

efforts and further discussion, planning, and opportunities will continue to be explored and addressed whenever possible and reported back to EC.

NEW BUSINESS:

West Windsor Township Community Day – F. Guzik reported that Community Day 2024 will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2024 from 12-4pm. The Shade Tree Commission will be participating again this year and has reached out to the NJDEP Parks and Forests Division to request having one of their demo trailers be set up. EC is welcome to share the table with the township council and Shade Tree, as previously done in the past. Girl Scout and Boy Scout groups, FoWWOS, and any other organizations are welcome to coordinate their various projects and displays again. A. Mandel stated electric vehicles will be promoted and on display again as well. Any available EC member is welcome to participate if interested.

No Mow Meadow Lawns – F. Guzik presented a concern recently brought to his attention by the Health Department. Several residents have been experimenting and encouraging a “No Mow Lawn” concept throughout the community. However, others have expressed concerns of the potential drawbacks or hazards related to these projects such as proper maintenance and upkeep, proximity to sidewalks, interference with site distances, nuisance complaints involving rodents, ticks and other health concerns, etc.. E. Buhks thanked him for bringing the issue to the attention of EC members. It is a topic that should be researched and placed on an upcoming agenda for further discussion.

There being no further business, L. Katz motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by S. Parratt.

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Tomaro, Administrative Secretary
WWT Environmental Commission