

WWT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

July 10, 2025

The July 2025 meeting of the WWT Environmental Commission was held on Thursday, July 10, 2025 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; L. Katz; I. Singh;
Liaison: F. Guzik Advisor: D. Parris; Council Liaison: Andrea Mandel
Guests: D. Dobromilski, Consultant

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 2024 L. Katz motioned; E. Gordon seconded;
Minutes were approved as presented.

CONTINUING BUSINESS: Project Review/Update

Sustainable Jersey Recertification 2025 – D. Dobromilsky provided an update on the current status of the application and stated that the township has compiled a total of 315 points to date. A total of 350 points needs to be submitted and approved in order to obtain the Silver level certification. He believes that with the completion of anticipated actions such as removing email addresses from the EC roster and updating approved resolutions, the total compiled should be 385 points by the submission date. He provided an overview of the current completed actions and the revised points and extra points or actions currently being worked on. The next submission will be made on July 31, 2025 and review comments should be received by mid-September.

Diversity Report – D. Dobromilsky presented a report on the diversity of township boards and commissions, comparing volunteer demographics to community census data. He noted there may be disparities in age, gender and race representation, but there has been progress over the past nine years, particularly in gender balance which improved from 70% male in 2016 to 62 % male in 2019. The report included recommendations for increasing diversity, such as promoting civic opportunities and enhancing application visibility, though D. Dobromilsky emphasized that appointment decisions prioritize qualifications and availability over demographic representation. A. Mandel stated the report is on the township council agenda for review and approval at the July 14, 2025 meeting. D. Dobromilsky stated, once approved, the report will be included in the Sustainable Jersey Recertification application.

Planning Board – A. Baig reported the PB held two public hearings at the April 2, 2025 meeting to adopt an Amendment to the Land Use Plan Element and an Amendment to the Princeton Junction Redevelopment Plan of the Township Master Plan. The Land Use Plan Amendment concentrates on a small part of the township, specifically near Princeton Hightstown Road and Wallace Road, consisting of the former bus depot site. The amendment ensures consistency between the Townships 2020 Land Use Plan Element and a new redevelopment plan prepared for the site. The Princeton Junction Redevelopment Plan amendment will keep the RP-9 district intact while changing the permitted uses. The goal is to convert the bus depot site into an area that would better serve the public, consisting of commuter parking for the Princeton Junction Train Station, which can be utilized at alternative times for community functions and allowing better pedestrian access for crossing the train tracks.

Township Council Update – E. Buhks stated he will attend the next township council meeting and present a report on board representation trends, emphasizing positive community engagement rather than specific numbers. A. Mandel reported the Historical Society and other organizations and groups are working together to plan the 250th anniversary of the United States of America in 2026 including a presentation to honor the logo contest winner. There was a proclamation for Disability Month and several members of numerous organizations whose clientele have various disabilities attended. There will be a presentation on Summer Safety given by the EMS at the next meeting. The capital project bond ordinance will be introduced at the next meeting and slated for approval at a meeting in August.

Gas Leaf Blowers – E. Gordon reviewed the topics addressed in his memo that was sent to the township council and the mayor for their consideration on the issue. The Environmental Commission would supply all the necessary data that was gathered from other local municipalities and organizations. A. Mandel explained that the next step is for the Environmental Commission to provide a document agreeing with the recommendations and outlining possible implementation options, which would then be developed into a draft ordinance by the administration.

Natural Lawns – F. Guzik confirmed that staff had been directed to move forward with preparing a first draft ordinance addressing the maintenance of managed natural landscapes and circulated it amongst staff. The goal of the ordinance is to provide regulations and definitions to properly identify common features and set up regulatory penalties or violations should a problem occur with adhering to the ordinance. Comments have been received and will be utilized in the preparation of a second draft. Once the document is ready, it will be shared with the Environmental Commission for review and feedback.

F. Guzik also shared information about a flyer for an upcoming webinar addressing upcoming NJ PACT REAL rules aimed at addressing climate change, which will require existing developments to demonstrate compliance with stormwater management rules.

D. Parris reported that he is continuing to develop educational programs at the Scheck Farmstead, including getting new demonstration specimens.

AI Tools for Environmental Issues – I. Singh reported that he has been researching how AI is being used in various situations, including environmental sciences. He would like to give a presentation on the topic at a future Environmental Commission meeting.

Community Solar Update – L. Katz stated he had recently seen that Princeton had been approved for a new community solar program for their middle-income housing.

Meeting Cancellation – After some discussion, it was determined to cancel the August meeting to accommodate several planned EC members' vacations and scheduling conflicts during the summer months.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Tomaro, Administrative Secretary
WWT Environmental Commission