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**VOORHEES TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES****3/8/2022**

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Mr. Ed Hale called the meeting to order and stated it was being held in compliance with the “Open Public Meeting Act” and had been duly noticed and published as required by law.

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**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Ms. Brown, Ms. Schwartz, Mr. Pike, Mr. Hundal, and Mr. Hale

**Absent:** Mr. Rashatwar

**Also, present:** Ms. Allison Rooke, Engineer, CME; Ms. Jennifer Gaffney, Environmental Commission Secretary

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**MINUTES**

Ms. Schwartz made a motion to approve the minutes from January 11, 2022, meeting, Ms. Brown second the motion, all committee members approved with one (1) abstention.

**Ayes:** Ms. Brown, Ms. Schwartz, Mr. Pike, and Mr. Hale

**Abstentions:** Mr. Hundal

**Nays:** None

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**NEW BUSINESS****REVIEW CME’S DRAFT OPEN SPACE RECREATION PLAN (OSRP)  
DISCUSS CME’S 2013 NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY**

Mr. Hale asked committee members if they reviewed the OSRP draft from CME. The members stated they did. Mr. Hale stated that he was not pleased with the draft. Ms. Schwartz asked specifically what Mr. Hale was looking for.

Mr. Hale stated that there was no ranking analysis. In order to get funding from the state and the county, there needs to be a ranking and he was looking for something along the lines that they previously had.

Ms. Schwartz stated that the report’s purpose was not a ranking system, it’s an environmental resource inventory. Mr. Hale stated that would not meet their needs.

Mr. Hale asked if anyone has an old copy and that he could not find it online. Ms. Schwartz stated that she would look through her old files and pull them out for digitizing.

Ms. Schwartz continued that historically there was a ranking system that Cheryl Atkinson that was based on her work practices at EPA, ranking each parcel depending on variables that the EC determined to be important. For example: A parcel would get more value based on whether or not it serves or is close to an Open Space vs. a parcel that has no proximity to an Open Space.

Ms. Brown stated that she had copies that she believes she has discarded and mentioned that the Township should have the copies, and she believes that they should be viewable online. Mr. Hale stated that as an addendum to the Master Plan they should be viewable online.

Ms. Schwartz planned to get Ms. Gaffney the copies to be sure that they are digitized and available.

Mr. Hale stated that Ms. Rooke of CME was pulled into the draft after it had been started with other people in the office.

Mr. Hale stated that everyone should sit down and review the old vs. the new, they will then sit down with Ms. Rooke and review any proposed changes.

Mr. Hale requested an RFP from Ms. Rooke for a Natural Resource Inventory, as the current one is 8-10 years old.

Ms. Schwartz asked if they had heard anything back about the figures for the Compensatory Tree Fund. Mr. Hale stated that he had not received anything back from Mr. Spellman prior to his retirement.

Ms. Brown suggested a work session to review the OSRP with Ms. Rooke. Commission discussed getting together with each other and reach Ms. Rooke via Zoom. Mr. Hale suggested once the copies are digitized Ms. Brown can take scheduling from there.

Mr. Hale opened the meeting to the public.

Dennis Gormley  
11 Country Lane

Mr. Gormley addressed committee regarding the proposed truck and train route for transportation of liquid natural gas (LNG) that will run through and adjacent to Voorhees Township highways from PA to Gibbsbtown. Mr. Gormley stated that he asked for Township Committee pass the resolution that other towns have passed opposing to the use of local roads and rails for this purpose. When he appeared before Township Committee, they indicated for him to reach out to Environmental Commission.

Mr. Gormley continued repercussions of an accident that would cause a leak would be devastating as there is no proven way to extinguish a fire of this chemical. He added that many other county towns and committees have passed a resolution opposing this proposed route.

Mr. Hale asked what the Environmental Commission could do for Mr. Gormley. Mr. Gormley indicated that his hope with the items that had been emailed and distributed to the commission would assist in educating them on becoming another town that would like to pass a resolution opposing the use of local roads and rails as well.

Mr. Hale stated that the commission would review the documents and discuss during the next meeting on April 12, 2022.

Mr. Hale asked if Cherry Hill has signed on to oppose as well, Mr. Gormley stated at this time he does not believe so.

Mr. Hale asked if there was an alternative route that the group he represents has proposed. Mr. Gormley stated that they did not have one as they believe it should be prohibited due to the dangers and safety risks.

Christina Ehlers  
4086 Hermitage Drive

Ms. Ehlers stated that she is across the street from Connelly Park and wanted to see if there is anything that can be done about the beautification of the park appearance from Centennial Blvd.

She stated that there is a Nissan that has been abandoned in the lot, it did not have license plates and the window appears to be broken into.

Ms. Ehlers expressed that Connelly Park being one of the township's treasures. If there was no way to beautify it, she was hoping that maybe some bushes could be put up by the road to make it a little more aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Hale indicated for Ms. Ehlers to reach out to Township Committee with regards to improvement, come to them with ideas and suggestions. Ms. Ehlers stated that she was interested in putting a Community Garden in the area. Mr. Hale asked her to reach out to them and then they will reach out to Environmental Commission.

Ms. Brown asked if Ms. Ehlers would be interested in spearheading a Community Garden. Ms. Ehlers stated she would consider it. Ms. Brown stated that she is a Camden County Certified Gardener and she there are resources that help plan and implement putting in a community garden. Ms. Brown asked for Ms. Ehlers email Ms. Gaffney so that they could connect.

Joseph Bouvier  
211 St. James Avenue, Merchantville, NJ

Mr. Bouvier followed up on Mr. Gormely's earlier comments. Mr. Bouvier stated that he is a part of the Merchantville Green Team. He continued giving more of an overview with regards to the fracking facility and the route. Mr. Bouvier continued on with more information specific to the project.

Mr. Hale reiterated that the board would review the documentation that their group supplied and look into the matter, discuss it, and if they feel collectively that the request is warranted they will reach out to Township and make the suggestion.

Kathy DeAngelo  
11 Country Lane

Ms. DeAngelo echoed the statements previously stated by her husband, Mr. Gormely. She stated that her concerns with the LNG transportation proposal is that the Army Corp of Engineers report says that there isn't a method to extinguish a fire if there were an explosion. She stated that she is very concerned as a resident for the township and surrounding areas.

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Ms. Brown made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, Ms. Schwartz second the motion. All members were in favor. Public portion of the meeting was then closed.

Mr. Hale asked for the topic be put on the next agenda so the Board can discuss further. He indicated that the next meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2022.

With no further business to discuss, Ms. Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Schwartz second the motion. Meeting was adjourned.

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Jennifer L. Gaffney, Zoning Board Secretary

Voorhees Township

*Minutes prepared by Jennifer Gaffney. The minutes are intended to reflect the basic comments and action.*

*Verbatim transcripts of all electronic recordings can be available upon proper request and payment.*