

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2012

MINUTES OF THE RP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
February 23, 2012

Chairman James Ruff called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m., it having been duly noted that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which was sent to The Record and the Newark Star Ledger on the 28th day of December, 2011. Members present were: James Ruff, Peter Garvey, Harry Menta, Steve Quinn and Linda Quinn. Also present at the meeting was John Anlian.

The minutes of the January 26, 2012, meeting were approved.

Old Business: Steve Quinn will be working on the illustrations for the interpretive signs. Kevin Avery and Harry Menta will assist in the text for the signs. It might be a good idea to put up a sign as the project is going on at the nature preserve. John Anlian, Jim Ruff, Steve Quinn and Peter Garvey took a ride to Teaneck to see some signs that were just installed.

Invitations to Earth Day 2012 were also sent to the following: Teaneck Creek Conservancy, Overpeck Preserve, Flat Rock Brook Nature Preserve, Ridgefield Nature Preserve and the Puffin Group. Risky Business Band is available for April 28. Jim Ruff and some other members stopped by The WildLife and spoke to them about participating in Earth Day. They were very receptive to participating in the activities.

The Wanda Canoe Club will be bringing canoes. There will be no boat rides this year as the dock was destroyed in the October storm.

Earth Day will be held on April 28, 2012, and will run from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. High tide is 3:00 p.m. this year. John Anlian will check with Alan O'Grady about whether or not it would be a problem to hold both Earth Day and the scouts' garage sale on the same date. The Environmental Commission has no problem with both being held on the same date.

Madelaine Cappuccio will be asked to check on what shows are available for this year. The Commission needs to get a schedule together for the day.

A letter will be sent to the Commissioners from the Environmental Commission regarding the gravel road that was installed at the nature preserve. It will be signed by all members.

New Business: A discussion was held on the February 21 article in The Record entitled Bergen Creek Becomes Draw for Regattas about rowing teams that plan to use the Overpeck Creek for future meets and practices. The Environmental

Commission felt that some type of response was in order to at least let people know that there are nesting bald eagles, which are an endangered species in NJ.

The increased use of the teams would have an environmental impact that people might not realize. The teams will use the creek on the weekend when recreational users that are county residents might want to use the creek. The county residents have waited a long time to use the creek and this might curtail their usage of the creek. These teams also use power boats which will create noise and water pollution as well as disturb the nesting eagles. The Environmental Commission was told that no motorized vessels would be used in the park but crew teams use motorized vessels, which is inconsistent with what was told would be used in the park. There is a concern as to who will issue the permits for this usage and if motors would be allowed.

Jim Ruff had made calls inquiring about the use of motors but no one could give him an answer. There is a sign posted in the park that no motors are permitted. The Environmental Commission was always under the impression that the park was for the use of recreational boating (kayaks and canoes). The park was built for the people who waited a long time for the park and now special interest groups seem to be using it. Park property should not be used for private groups. Such usage will disappoint any county resident that may come to the park for recreational use and not be able to gain access to the water.

Fishing is improving. People are constantly using the park for fishing and the fish will disappear if motor boats are permitted and teams are constantly practicing. Usage by teams will prevent private residents from enjoying these type of private activities. Harry Menta will draft an editorial to be sent to The Record.

Eagle Scout Project – John Anlian advised that Commissioner MacNeill and his family did some clearing of the area behind their house and ended up with poison ivy. The Commission does not think it is a good idea for the scouts to remove any weeds without adults present to give guidance. It was thought that a professional might need to clear the area for the safety of all involved. John Anlian will email Nick Gerken to advise that it is not a good idea for the scouts to go in this area until a professional clears out the poison ivy.

There will be a talk given on coyotes at the library March 10. People must register to attend this talk.

The next meeting is scheduled is for Thursday, March 22, 2012.

The meeting ended at 9:20 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca