

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012

MINUTES OF THE RP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION March 22, 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, Kevin Avery, Peter Garvey, Harry Menta and Linda Quinn. John Anlian also stopped by the meeting.

The minutes of the February 23, 2012, and special March 16, 2012, meeting were approved.

Old Business: Steve Quinn is 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.

March 16, 2012, Special Meeting: It appears that public trust is the key issue here. Tom Curry did not show up at the Saturday meeting. There was a short television story on the eagles and NYRA at 6:00 p.m. today on NBC.

The Environmental Commission wants to make it clear that all meetings are public meetings. Anyone can be invited to attend. Anyone can attend. John Zuzek is an enforcement agent for the state. He is supposed to impartially enforce the law.

The Commission feels that the best thing to do is to keep calling the hotline because the complaint will be recorded then.

The Commission also notes that no notification was given about the work being done by the NYRA. PSE&G always sends notification before doing any work. Although John Zuzek called it a "take permit", it appears that the NYRA does not follow rules and is getting away with it.

Jim Ruff drafted a resolution to urge the Mayor and Board of Commissioners to send a letter of concern to the Office of the Bergen County Executive urging the County to take the necessary action to ensure the free and open access of all facilities at the Overpeck County Park to all users, and that this letter specifically requests action to both protect the federally-mandated buffer zone of 660 feet for active bald eagle nests, and to defend the riparian rights to the Overpeck Creek, which is a Public Trust Waterway. Copies of the letter should be sent to the Office of County Counsel and the Bergen County Parks Director, Ronald Kistner as well as the surrounding towns and their Environmental Commissions. (Teaneck, Leonia, Palisades Park, Ridgefield).

A motion was made by Peter Garvey and seconded by Harry Menta that the Environmental Commission pass the resolution urging the Mayor and Board of Commissioners to write the above-mentioned letter to the County Counsel and Bergen County Parks Director. All were in favor of this motion.

John Anlian will draft a cover letter to go with the signed resolution.

Earth Day:

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.

Vouchers have been signed and returned from: Risky Business Bluegrass Band, Tenaflly Nature Center and The Wildlife. We still need to get vouchers back from: Snakes-N-Scales, Wallaby Tales and the facepainter. Lenape Lifeways is unable to participate this year.

The show schedule is as follows:

11:30 Wallaby Tales – Exotic Animal Show pam@eyeswild.com \$295

1:00 – 2:00 Snakes-N-Scales – Snake Show bill@snakes-n-scales.com \$350

2:30 – 3:30 Tenaflly Nature Raptor Program \$158

The Wildlife - All day live educational wildlife program with live bats and educational wildlife exhibit stand. \$250

Risky Business Bluegrass Band – Continuous Music \$550

Also present: Hudson River Fisherman, Wild Dog Foundation (coyote talk) – would very much like to participate but not able to confirm yet, Bergen County Audubon Society (Don or Beth), Wanda Canoe Club will definitely have canoes, Hackensack Riverkeeper will participate but not sure of availability of canoes at this time. We still have not heard back from the facepainter even though a voucher was sent to her. Jim Ruff will check with the scouts about handling the food. \$300 is budgeted for food.

Two new banners have been ordered for Main Street. The cost is being split with the Shade Tree Commission. They will read “Ridgefield Park Celebrates Arbor Day/Earth Day” with a smaller removable location and date banner.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 26, 2012.

The meeting ended at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca