

Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board
Meeting October 7th, 2020 online via Webex

In attendance:

Officers Present - Bill Reinert – Chairman, Mike Hogan – Vice Chairman

Members Present - Stephen Fielder, Dick Colby, Lisa March

Members Absent - Heather Warburton, Ken Sooy, Jill Miles

Freeholder Representative – James Bertino - absent

County Staff - Greg Brookins, D.H.P.W - present

Secretary - Eric Husta – D.D.P.R. – present

Roundtable Discussion topics:

Bill Reinert discussed his recent conversations with Jack Sworaski, Director of Camden County Division of Environmental Affairs. Mr. Sworaski was inquiring about a meeting with Atlantic County officials to discuss the possibilities of regional bike trail connections.

Bill also mentioned a recent Press article written by Chris Bonsall regarding funding to complete Bikeway West. He also discussed his recent positive experience with Stockton University Webinars

Steve Fiedler made mention of Bill’s recent rocket launch photograph he took in Somers Point. The group also discussed the southward movement of the spotted lantern fly. Eric Husta mentioned the SLF monitoring that had been done in Weymouth Furnace Park by representatives of the NJ Department of Agriculture. No flies were captured but the NJDA estimates the spotted lantern fly will be in this area before the end of the year.

Steve also discussed the current ATV situation in Galloway and mentioned the local police have made arrests and issues citations. Discussion was had regarding the new signage on the Forsythe properties as well as the Smithville pit project where meadows and trails are being designed and a wooded area is being retained along the rim of the project. Steve also mentioned the debut of the documentary, “Pine Mud” which chronicles ATV damage in the Pinelands as well as the newly resurrected Friends of Batsto newsletter.

Dick Colby mentioned the upcoming hike in Estell Manor Park to view the signage related to the historic Bethlehem Loading Company. The hike was scheduled for Saturday, October 10th, at 9 AM. This was followed by a brief discussion of the Egg Harbor Township Nature Preserve.

Greg Brookins discussed county “no mow zones” and the potential for grant funding to be spread down to municipalities to support their creation.

Lisa March updated the group on her two new dogs. This was followed up by discussion on voting by mail in ballot.

Mike Hogan discussed a few of his recent walks including a walk in Estell Manor Park in August. He updated the group on a bald eagle’s nest in Camden County as well as a recent excavation in the Oldman’s Creek Preserve area which turned up some rare old clamshell material finds.

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Eric updated the group on the status of current construction projects underway in Estell Manor Park. This including a new ADA compliant ramp and walk system at the Nature Center, expansion of the Veterans cemetery, a new restroom facility in picnic area 2, and a new paved exercise trail.

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Our next meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, November 4th, 2020 at 7 PM at the Canale Training Center in EHT or via Webex.

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive
Jerry DelRosso, County Administrator
Diana Rutala, Dep. County Administrator
Maureen Kern, Chairperson - Board of Freeholders
James Bertino, Board of Freeholders – PEAB Representative
Greg Brookins, Dept. Head Public Works
All Advisory Board Members