

CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

AUGUST 25, 2023

Chair Scarafile called the meeting of the Chesterfield Township Environmental Commission to order at 10:05AM. The Open Public Meeting Act Statement was read and compliance noted.

Present - Sarah Dyson, Rachel Dekovitch, Roseann Greenberg, Nancy Scarafile, Jane Ryan, Suruchi Batra, Denise Koetas-Dale Liaison, Tom Sahol Township Administrator.
Absent - Shreekant Dhopte.

DISCUSSION

Chris Linn, from DVRPC, was present to go over all of the questions and concerns related to the Environmental Resource Inventory, that is being updated, on the chapters that were given to the EC to review.

Mr. Linn acknowledged that the Township History was short and brief. Usually, the township provides the writeup. It is typically not part of the ERI. He asked for more information to add, like when was Plattsburg name changed to Sykesville. Ms. Scarafile said that the township has a history book in the Crosswicks Library. Ms. Dekovitch asked if a Historic District map and historic registry be included. All of the history questions will be sent to the Historical Society for comment, clarify and sign off on.

Crop land and pasture land are not separate in the DEP's report. There are 240 farm properties. Many are horse farms. Ms. Greenberg commented that a good source for a better breakdown of the different types of farms in the township can be found in the Farmland Assessment forms. Can get from Glenn McMahon. Mr. Linn will also use the Federal Ag Seances Report. Ms. Koetas-Dale asked what percent of farms are preserved. In the Open Space section, Mr. Linn asked for the updated map on which farms were TDR or County preserved.

Climate Change. Based on a 30 year cycle, Mr. Linn will use the 1990-2020 report.

Soils. % Slope. Will use DEP's updated version. Township zoning ordinance labels slopes exceeding 15% as Environmentally Sensitive Areas. Mr. Linn asked for the map. Use the 2017 updated Master Plan for soils. Under Soil Types, Ms Dyson wants to change the word "unlimed" to "soil that hasn't been limed". Under Soil Erosion, Ms. Dekovitch commented that Acid Producing Soil, which is different from not being limed, can cause erosion problems when exposed to the air. Should high light where these soils are.

Hydrology and Water Resources. Mr. Linn stated that hydric soil, found in wetlands, hold water.

At 10:54 Mr. Sahol had to leave the meeting.

Drinking Water. Mr. Linn will incorporate the information that was sent to him on Monday. There are no public wells and 7 non-community wells for institutions. Which aquifer that private wells are in are not publicly available. Permits held by the county's Health Dept. tell how deep a well is dug. Wells are tested when homes are sold. 238 wells were tested to report containments in the water to the DEP; all in the Potomac-Raritan-Magothy aquifer.

Sewer. Ms. Koetas-Dale asked Mr. Linn to check if Old York Country Club has it's own sewer treatment plant because the developer has applied for the permit. It will only service the warehouse and other buildings on the property. Ms. Koetas-Dale added that the reason that OYCC got the Redevelopment Plan was because the septic system failed.

Natural Vegetation. Ms. Koetas-Dale told Ms. Greenberg to send the itree Tree Canopy Cover benefits to Mr. Linn to add to the ERI. Ms. Ryan stated that they did a flora and fauna document before the gas pipeline construction. The National Heritage Plants Database has rare plant species. Ms. Dekovitch asked that the habitat that rare plant and animal species could exist should be included.

Landscape Project Priority Habitats. Has a section on animal and plant species. Ms. Dekovitch asked the connecting habitat be add to the ERI because there is state legislation pending about this. Mr. Linn asked for lists of common species of birds and animals. Can use neighboring town lists. Animals mentioned were white tail deer, red fox, mink, beaver, coyote, and bog turtle. Rare animals listed are Pink Streak mussel, bog turtle and several birds. Important bird areas, from the Audubon Society, should be listed. On the wetland and forrest section, Mr. Linn has a list of plants. Ms. Koetas-Dale wants the Shade Tree Advisory Board to look over the list. Mr. Linn asked about animal control. Deer are controlled by hunting and in 2021, the disease Blue Tongue wiped out a major portion of the population. Geese are controlled with 10 to 20 foot riparian buffers around ponds and retention basins.

Historic Registry. The Master Plan lists the 3 areas listed on the National Historic Registry, they are Crosswicks, Chesterfield and Sykesville. From the Historic Preservation Committee, Mr. Linn wants historic resources map, rules and regulations, historic preservation ordinances, and locations of historical significance.

Utilities. Above ground utilities are the major electric distribution lines. Under ground are the Southern Reliability Link gas line and compressor station, other gas lines, phone and fiberoptic cables. Mr. Linn needs to talk to Mr. McMahon.

Document all open space and preserved farms, land types for conservation and development constraints are already summarized in other sections. Ms. Dekovitch

asked if Green Acres will be listed in the Open Space chapter. Mr. Linn said yes and all the parks and resources available.

Review. Mr. Linn did a review to make sure he covered everything he needs in his notes. Types of farm land uses. %slope info. Change language on unlimed soil. OYCC sewer treatment plant. Ms. Koetas-Dale ask him to comment on the volume of discharge into the creek. Need more info on tree and plant species. Animal species. National Heritage Database on rare plants and animals. Historic resources and open space. Have HPC amend the next draft on historic info and add "Houses of Note". Underground pipelines and cables. Ms. Dyson added that the Pipeline Task Force did air and water testing for a baseline. History chapter. Township census changes. Ms. Scarafile asked how the kids being moved out of the correctional facility and people moving into Old York Village has affected the census. Ms. Koetas-Dale added that due to the correctional facility closing it is now a redevelopment area. How many residents are being served by public water. Ms. Greenberg asked if the Flood Plain Area Map will be updated because the DEP new rules added 2 feet on July17, 2023. Mr. Linn said that it is a FEMA map and will not be updated. Now that Chesterfield is a tier A, Ms. Koetas-Dale would like to know what the base line elevation is.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Dyson second by Ms. Scarafile to open for public comment, all were in favor, motion carried. Hearing none a motion was made by Ms. Dekovitch second by Ms. Scarafile to close public comment, all were in favor, motion carried.

Ms. Koetas-Dale asked when do we have a public meeting about the ERI. Mr. Linn said it would be after they have completed all the text.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Dyson second by Ms. Dekovitch to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 12:37PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Roseann Greenberg, Secretary Pro Tem