

Minutes of a Meeting of the Tenaflly Environmental Commission
Municipal Center
September 23 2010

Present

Jim Coyle, Dave Cavilla, Joe Lavin, Jeff Miller, Bob Beutel, Eileen Pleva, Nina Seiden, Joe McDermott.

Eileen Pleva called the meeting to order at 8:06 p.m.

Minutes.

Decision was made to postpone the minutes of the July meeting until the next meeting.

Old Business

Brief discussion was had of the approved grant for \$10,000 covering the upcoming natural resource inventory.

The meeting was joined by Mayor Rustin and members of the Transportation Committee to discuss and clarify the potential Light Rail Project.

Howard Seiden noted the project is on hold at this time. Joe McDermott explained that Tenaflly is awaiting a response from the DOT as there seems to be a compliance issue with the document turnaround time. The Transportation Committee has requested an extension of 180 days for document review as there is concern Tenaflly will not be able to review the document in the required 45 days.

Howard Seiden reported the current Hudson River Rail Tunnel Project is on hold for 30 days for review as per Governor Christie. The construction of this tunnel affects the viability of the "1 seat ride" from Tenaflly to Manhattan.

Eileen Pleva discussed with the transportation committee that TEC does not possess the ability to review the documentation that will be returned from the DOT. Eileen recommends the town hires an outside firm to review the information as it will likely represent an enormous workload. Mayor Rustin noted that budget issues drive the timing of when to hire consultants and as this project could take another decade we need to avoid rushing in and being "too prepared too soon".

Joe McDermott was asked by Mayor Rustin if the town has potential advisors in place to review the documentation.

When questioned by the Mayor, Bob Beutel expressed his concern that the rail project will annex the town compost facility. This site cannot be replaced as it is grandfathered under current DEP composting regulations.

Mayor Rustin mentioned the town is doing the best it can under the circumstances but is at a disadvantage as it is up against big government at its worst.

Police Chief Michael Bruno stated the town must continue to be prepared the rail project.

Discussion was had about:

- Whether the DEIS plan may be in limbo until the timing for its release is opportune
- If rail is financially self sufficient. Currently only 45% of the cost is the best fares could be expected to cover
- Estimation of the additional expense that will be incurred by the Tenafly Police
- Long term recurring (operating) costs the town will incur
- Cost of fencing, traffic signals & crossings that could potentially bankrupt Tenafly
- Station and train depot security and crime management

Jim Coyle asked what would Tenafly do if the DEIS plan was presented to Tenafly in the very near future. Mayor Rustin said the town is preparing a list of who the plan would be distributed to. A hierarchy would exist as to who reviews each component- based on their level of involvement and expertise. The town would immediately ask for an extension of the 45 day review period. Tenafly has funds ready to retain consultants for DEIS review.

Mayor Rustin added that of all the towns along the proposed rail corridor- Tenafly is the most prepared. After observing previous rail meetings, Leonia is now beginning to prepare for what lays ahead.

The joint meeting was adjourned

New Business

Eileen Pleva discussed the wildlife in Tenafly forum that was a success despite a low turn out.

Sustainable Tenafly is planned for November 13th by Jim Coyle. Eileen Mentioned we should consider pushing it back to Earth Day 2011 (April 22).

Joe Lavin mentioned we should try to plan the event so as to gain additional Sustainable NJ points.

Potential locations could include the McCandless Room or a school auditorium.

Eileen asked for ideas for the upcoming town newsletter and volunteers to research grants that could be used for further project funding. Joe Lavin suggested a newsletter article on backyard composting.

Discussion of website maintenance was postponed for the next meeting.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence to be discussed

Meeting was adjourned at 9.47PM

Respectfully submitted by David Cavilla