

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2017

Vice Chairman Dave Kreck called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 6:34 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act at the tea house amphitheater in the Wenonah Conservation Area.

ROLL CALL	PRESENT	ABSENT
Scott Barnes (Chair. / Planning Bd. Rep.)		X
Sharon Ceravolo	X	
Maria Ceravolo	X	
Bob Bevilacqua	X	
Rich Dilks (Sec.)	X	
Dave Kreck (V. Chair.)	X	
Julie Ream	X	

Associate Members Present: None.

Public Guests Present: scout Tyler DeMaise, Don Sparks, Anne Marie Sparks.

The minutes of the August 9 meeting were approved. : (Motion: Bevilacqua, Second: Ream, AIF)

Vice Chairman's Report- Dave Kreck

Tyler DeMaise Eagle Scout project. Tyler addressed the Commission stating he wished to do his Eagle Scout project in the conservation area and suggested installing trail rails and other trail improvements. Dave suggested Break Back Run Trail is in need of improvements including trail rail replacements and other structures such as boardwalk repair and steps. He said this was a good opportunity to get entire trail into good condition. Dave said a first step would be to do a trail walk through with Tyler to identify projects and sites. Bob and Rich wished to participate as well. Dave will schedule with Tyler in the near future and invite other Commission members to come along. Tyler said he still needs to confer with the other scouts in his troop and with adult leaders on the feasibility of the project and procedures to follow. He said he hopes to begin the work no later than 6 months from now and then to complete the project as soon as possible.

Mad Hatter's Tree Party Oct. 22. Rich reported the joint event with the nature club would again be held on Sun. Oct. 22 from 1 to 4 PM on the Eldridge Trail and at the tea house. This year the walking route will include the entire Comey's Lake Loop with 3 stations before guests reach the tea house and 2 stations on the loop trail bluffs after the tea house. A dulcimer player at Comey's Lake and a beaver station at the first bridge (using Julie's beaver poster) are also planned.

Woman's Club Friendship Dinner Nov.13. Scott had received and shared with the Commission an email from Jennie McQuaide inviting the members of the WEC (along with the American Legion and Lion's Club) to the Friendship Dinner on Nov. 13 at the Methodist Church. There will be a post dinner program, "Cultivating Respect for Insects and Other Pollinators". Participants are asked to RSVP with Jennie by Nov. 1.

Wenonah Fall Festival. Oct. 28. Sharon said the Green Team will have a table there. It was agreed the WEC would likely also have a table and could to share space with the Friends to promote Tall Pines. A final decision will be made at the Oct. meeting.

Near Term Projects

Beaver Activity. There were no new developments concerning beaver activity. The beaver pond on Eldridge Trail is again at near maximum level since the beaver repaired the dam. It was reported a great egret has been seen at the beaver dam.

Trail Maintenance..

Dave said he and John Forren recently walked the entire trail system and cleared trails of obstructions. There are still downed trees at several locations. It was suggested that some “easy step over” trees might be left in place to discourage dirt bike and ATV riders.

Eldridge Trail. In good shape generally. Julie suggested some trail leveling could be done at some locations.

Comey’s Lake. The vandalism to the interpretive sign at the lake is not really legible now that Julie cleaned the plastic surface.

Indian Trail. Julie noted the homeowner at the end of Indian Tr. has cleared large numbers of trees from his property but none are currently causing problems in the conservation area.

Wenonah Lake. Maria said there still seems to be some overflow at the bridge north of the lake. The new bulkheads are in good shape and she will monitor the degree of overflow and erosion. Maria said there was still one board on the trail she plans to replace.

Garden Trail. Sharon said the garden area is in need of weeding. She and Maria plan to have a work party there next Sunday morning.

Glen Trail. Dave said the trail is clear but the holes left by the fallen trees still need to be filled.

Mantua Creek Trail. Some holes need to be filled in at Clay Hill. There are also holes on the east side of the RR tracks but they are not now a serious impediment to hikers.

Break Back Run Trail. Some trail rails need replacing. This could be addressed by Tyler DeMaise’, Eagle project. The log trail blockage left by a borough hired tree service behind 106 S. Jackson Ave. has been cleared.

Camel’s Back Loop. Maria cleared the west side and Bob said he has cleared the east side of the loop (where the poison ivy is) and the entire loop is open and walkable now. The stream has caused major erosion on the road/trail from E. Elm. Bob has spent considerable effort to construct a bulkhead with interlocking durable plastic sheets that are anchored by underground wooden supports. Bob said additional work to combat erosion needs to be done on the bank where the stream turns and goes under the bridge. The inflow stream from the Rt. 553 storm drain also is in need of erosion control.

Hanisey’s Landing. Bob reported most of the stones have been removed from the water near the kayak launch, deepening the water there. A group, possibly including scouts is need to lift the dock up and secure it so the new floats can be installed. This could possibly be done in Nov. when Bill Ceravolo would be available to assist. Bob also has the new signs to direct people to the kayak launch via Hayes Ave.

Fallen Tree Report.

Mantua Creek Trail. A tree east of Clay Hill and one west of the boardwalk were removed by a volunteer.

Monongahela Brook Trail. There is one tree west of S. Marion Ave.

Tea house. A tree (ironwood) is down blocking the trail just behind the amphitheater.

WEC Bench. Our bench is now installed on the southwest corner of Monroe Ave. at Mantua Ave.

Work Parties.

1. Sharon has suggested she, Maria and Rich meet on Sun. 9/17 at 9AM at **Camel’s Back Loop** to assess the possibilities of landscaping and doing native plantings there. Immediately following, Sharon & Maria are leading a work party to do weeding and clean up at the **Garden Trail**.

2. **Teahouse.** A work party is scheduled for Sat. Oct.7 at 9AM to clean and spruce up the area prior to the Mad Hatter's Tree Party.

Sustainable Jersey. Sharon reported Bill Klaus informed her our application was rejected. Apparently there are more points needed or requirements to fulfill. Sharon will get more details and then report to us.

It was noted new owners have moved into the Macintyre house on S. Princeton. It was suggested we sent the conservation area neighbors letter to the new owners. Sharon said she would do that. Also we should send the letter to the new owners of the house overlooking Comey's Lake when they move in.

Trail Markers. Maria reported she looked at several companies and designs for small tree mounted trail markers. They are generally a small disc about 3.5 " in diameter and attached to a tree by a small nail or tack. The possibilities she found were:

1. Plastic generic discs, 100 for \$120.
2. Customable metal discs at \$4.75 each
3. The Das Co. offered plastic trail blazers at \$1.60 a piece in orders of 50 to 500. They would be customizable by color, design and text. Comments generally favored this option. Maria will continue to research.

T-Shirts. Maria also said customized WEC t-shirts for us to wear at public events and on work parties would be available from Custom Ink for about \$20.

Bob noted he has two additional cedar posts for our use.

Princeton Hydro. Rich said both Dilks Pond and Comey's Lake were in good shape. He said last week he noticed some algae on Comey's Lake and contacted PH. They agreed to send a crew out that week. Rain did flush the algae from the lake. The final vouchers for both lakes have been submitted to the Borough for payment.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account.

Deposits: none.

Expenses:

\$88.25 to the Woman's Club of Wenonah for the cost of the concrete slab for the WEC bench.

Current balance: \$8,545.17

MEETING ADJOURNED at 7:35 PM. (Motion: S. Ceravolo Second: Bevilacqua AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Rich Dilks, Sec.