

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
March 12, 2014

The March 12, 2014 meeting, of the Bass River Township Environmental Commission, was called to order at 7:05 P.M. and opened with the flag salute.

Ed Truitt said the Environmental Commission is being held in conformance with the "Sunshine Law" and the Open Public Meetings Act.

The following members were present: Ed Truitt, Kenny Rose, Henry Gomez, and Carol Bitzberger.

The minutes of the February 12, 2014 meeting were made available to all members. A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Kenny Rose and seconded by Ed Truitt. The motion was carried.

A summary of the February Planning Board meeting was given by Henry Gomez. Again, the main topic of conversation involved the resolutions Viking submitted as the board had requested. It was also reported, by a member of the public, that styrene gas in the air should be a major concern of the planning board. A discussion of fire drills was also discussed and the planning board was not in favor of making that a condition in their approval for a permit. Because of the environment issues, the Environmental Committee agreed to write a letter to the Planning Board, before their meeting, identifying our concerns. Since the Planning Board met on March 20th, the Environmental Commission agreed to draft a letter and distribute it to each member and get their comments incorporated before the letter was sent out. This was handled by email, fax, and telephone conversations. The final letter was reviewed and approved by all before it was sent.

The status of the NJDEP Hotline signs was again discussed. A trial sign, using a sticker the NJDEP had sent to us for display, was posted at the end of Amasas Landing Road. Another member went to look at it, and it had been torn down. This will continue to be discussed at the next Environmental meeting.

The status of the Burlington County Inmate Cleanup for Bass River is still in progress. Burlington County does not have this program in their jails. We have made contact with the person in charge of the NJ State Inmate Clean-up program. The name is Lt. Calewchi at 609-292-4036, ext. 5444. He should respond to the secretary of the Environmental Commission in a couple of weeks. This will be on-going.

Contact was made with Steve Luell to find out what kinds of water tests we will be conducting in May. Steve emailed: *"We will be sampling the benthic macro invertebrates (insect larvae, crayfish, worms, etc.) that live in the stream. The presence and absence of different types of macros are used to indicate the health of the waterway, much like how coalminers brought*

canaries with them into the mines to use as an early warning sign for poisonous gases. I will also bring a small test kit I have for pH and dissolved oxygen.”

The following correspondence was received, read, and reviewed by the Environmental Board:

- Copy of a Styrene Gas Complaint submitted to the Burlington County Board of Health, dated 1/15/2014

It was discussed that this complaint was dated back in January, and it is already the month of March. Was there any way we could copies of these materials any earlier? The commission decided to add this to our letter to the planning board and commissioners.

There was no news about looking into grants. This will be an on-going activity.

It was suggested by Carol Bitzberger that a poster be designed and sent to the Month Bass River Newsletter. This will be worked on.

The meeting was opened to the public at 7:50 pm. The topic of styrene gas was brought up, and that this should be investigated. Also, there was concern on the additional building coverage Viking has proposed. There was concern for the volunteer fire department if a fire ever happens at Viking. The Board emphasized that we would write a letter on our environmental concerns to the Planning Board and the Board of Commissioners.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 8:45 p.m. by Ed Truitt and seconded by Henry Gomez.

I hereby certify these minutes to be true,

Carol A. Bitzberger
Secretary of the Environmental Commission

To: Mayor Deborah Busby-Cope
Mayor Bass River Township
PO Box 307
New Gretna, NJ 08224

March 17, 2014

From: Bass River Township Environmental Commission

Dear Ms. Busby-Cope,

This month's meetings of the Environmental Commission brought up a couple issues we feel need your attention. The first one was a two month old complaint as follows:

- A Copy of a Complaint received by the Burlington County Board of Health, dated 1/15/14, concerning odors that may be styrene gas emitted from Viking Yacht during the fiberglass application. The Board of Health advised that the Viking site is a major facility and outside their jurisdiction. They will advise the state via the NJEMS.

Whether or not this odor is styrene gas does not matter. An odor is an odor. We would like to point out that the township's Ordinance 17.20.040 states: ***"Odor. No emission of odorous gases or other odorous material in such quantity as to be offensive at the lot lines or beyond shall be permitted"***. This is the third official complaint the Environmental Commission has received during the past several months. This odor has also been detected by numerous residents in the area at one time or another. Since this odor has been smelled and detected beyond the lot lines of Viking Yachts, this violation should be addressed by the Bass River Enforcement Officer. This is an environmental concern as well as a town ordinance and we feel it should be enforced. Do you have the same concerns?

The second issue that was brought up during the public comment section again concerned Viking yachts. It dealt with building coverage. Under the ***Bass River Schedule of District Regulations (Ordinance 89-8 Article VII), the ZONE or DISTRICT (HC HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL (NON PINELANDS)*** the maximum building coverage is **20%**. This seems to be a zoning issue but our concern is runoff to the river. Bass River is a highly sensitive area and should be treated as such. Science says water needs to percolate in order to filter out pollutants. The larger the surface covered (building or impervious coverage), less percolation happens, which results in more pollution. It is a simple formula. We understand Viking Yachts is a key part of Bass River Township but so is the Bass River. Everyone should be held accountable to established local laws.

On a side note, the reports we have been receiving have been several months after a report has been written. We need timely information to be an effective commission. We hope our comments are read and taken under advisement.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Edwin Truitt
Chairman of the Bass River Environmental Commission

cc: Board of Commissioners
cc: Land Use Board Members