

**TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING**

DATE: Wednesday, July 5, 2023
TIME: 6:30 PM
LOCATION: Zoom communications platform (referenced herein as “Zoom”)

ROLL CALL

Ms. Duarte	Present
Ms. Moreen	Present
Ms. Neibart	Present
Ms. Spirig	Present
Mayor Monaghan	Present

Also, present:

Mr. John M. Mills, Esq.
Mr. Jason Gabloff, Township Administrator
Ms. Karen Orgera, Acting Township Clerk

SALUTE TO THE FLAG LED BY MAYOR MONAGHAN

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE- READ BY MAYOR MONAGHAN

Adequate Notice of this special meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to the Observer Tribune and Daily Record on June 23, 2023, was posted on the bulletin board in the Township offices, and filed with the Township Clerk.

LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHWAP)

The State Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) provides funding to assist eligible households to pay for their water and sewer bills. The program may also be able to help address tax liens due to water and sewer arrears. Residents can find more information and the LIHWAP program application at waterassistance.nj.gov.

LISTENING SESSION – PROPOSED MOSLE FIELD LIGHTING

Question and Answer Session on the Environmental Impact Study

Ms. Emily Bjorhus and Mr. Michael Rehman of Princeton Hydro, engineering consultants who conducted the Environmental Impact Statement study for the proposed installation of permanent lighting at Mosle Field, were present to assist in addressing questions concerning the EIS study presented at the June 26, 2023 Township Committee meeting.

Mayor Monaghan first opened questions to the Township Committee. He asked that discussion on the EIS study should be limited to the study and not hypothetical scenarios or other business.

Ms. Spirig asked for clarification concerning the height of the proposed light poles the EIS study was based on. Ms. Bjorhus responded that the study was conducted for six (6) 30-foot-high light poles and for four (4) 60-foot-high light poles.

Ms. Moreen commented that she, as well as some residents she heard from, expected the study to compare impacts utilizing three lighting scenarios: no lights, continued use of the existing temporary lights, and proposed use of permanent lighting options. Mayor Monaghan confirmed that the focus of the study was directed to assess environmental impacts, if any, of the proposed project.

Having no further comments or questions from the Township Committee, Mayor Monaghan recognized Mr. John Kaplan, Esq., attorney representing several residents in the neighborhood surrounding Mosle Field.

Public Comments

Mayor Monaghan recognized Mr. Kaplan to speak and asked him to put on the record names and addresses of the 10 Mendham Township households his law firm represents.

Mr. Kaplan stated that his law firm represents the following Mendham Townships residents in this matter: Mr./Mrs. Millea of 1 Carriage Hill Drive; Mr./Mrs. Reitano of 3 Carriage Hill Drive; Mr./Mrs. Goodrich of 4 Carriage Hill Drive; Mr./Mrs. Barber of 5 Carriage Hill Drive; Mr./Mrs. Carnes of 6 Carriage Hill Drive; Mr./Mrs. Kraus of 10 Carriage Hill Drive; Mr./Mrs. Lusardi of 18 Carriage Hill Drive; Mr. Uanis & Mrs. Hemsey of 4 Hunters Glen; Mr. Hong of 10 Hunters Glen; and Mr. Coury of 87 Mosle Road.

Mr. Kaplan sought clarification on the scope of the EIS study conducted by Princeton Hydro. Mr. Rehman responded that Princeton Hydro focused on the type and spectrum of lighting and its potential lighting impacts on wildlife. Ms. Bjorhus further noted that the study presumed there would be no additional increase in the hours of lighting to be used nor additional months of use at Mosle Field and a comparative study was made with respect to the type, spectrum, and glare of the lighting concerning the proposed installation of four (4) 60-foot-high light poles, six (6) a 30-foot-high light poles, or the existing portable lighting. Analysis of the study was restricted to the fields, parking area and wooded area.

Ms. Bjorhus confirmed that the study was based on the LED direct downward lighting, having lower light levels and would be international dark sky association certified. Mr. Rehman clarified that the study was a "desktop" study and not a ground study in the field.

Mr. Blaine Rothauser, a senior ecologist specializing in rare species (flora and fauna), was retained to review the EIS study and assess light disturbances on wildlife. He noted that six bird species of special concern are present in the area and disputed the study's conclusion that the three species of bats would not be affected. Mr. Rothauser also noted that the fall season when the field lighting would be used, is important to migratory birds and complex ecological systems.

Mr. Rehman confirmed that the proposed project would not change the environmental characteristics of the wooded areas or field and the proposed lighting would not have an impact on the environ.

Mayor Monaghan opened the meeting for public comments.

Frank Zammataro, Corey Lane, Mendham, NJ commented that he represents Mendham Alliance for Preservation and Conservation (MAPC) and sought whether lower light poles, generally, would have a lesser impact on wildlife.

Ms. Bjorhus responded that research performed for the study confirms that lower light poles would attract fewer bugs and bat species drawn to light, while taller light poles that projecting a larger lighting cone and glare would attract more insects drawn to the light and bats that feed on those insects. Using shorter light poles with warm spectrum lights that are downward facing would have minimal impacts to the surrounding wooded environs and wildlife.

Mr. Kaplan inquired whether the EIS study considered environmental impacts should the proposed field lighting be used more than for three nights a week from September to November.

Mayor Monaghan stated that the proposed lighting project would not expand evening use of Mosle Field and would not increase traffic in the area and cautioned that discussion on the EIS study is to be limited to the study and not future hypothetical scenarios.

Seeing and hearing no one else wishing to be heard, Mayor Monaghan asked for a motion to close public comments.

Ms. Duarte made a motion to close the public comment period seconded by Ms. Neibart. A voice vote was taken with all members present voting in favor, no one opposed.

Mayor Monaghan then read pre-submitted questions from residents:

Brian Boden of Walsingham Road, Mendham, NJ: "Did Princeton Hydro use a subcontractor?"

Michael Rehman responded: No.

Martin Slayne of Indian Hollow Road, Mendham NJ: "Did Princeton Hydro visit the site?"

Michael Rehman answered: No

Jordon Orlins of Westminster Road, Mendham, NJ: "Don't be silly. Put the lights in."

Allison Griffin: of East Main Street Mendham, NJ: "There's no information about Kelvin colored temperature. The township needs to understand the importance of picking the right lights."

Emily Bjorhus: We agree with Allison, and the project is compliant under the Dark Sky Association conformance to what she is recommending.

Matthew Messina of Brockden Drive, Mendham, NJ: "What would happen if the town banned lights and reforested the playing fields. How much would that cost."

Mayor said the question was "irrelevant."

Matthew Messina: "What is the environmental impact of the Hillendale townhouse project versus adding permanent lights?"

Rehman: "We can't answer that question. Out of our scope."

Committeewoman Duarte asked: "What can be gained from doing a field study and would you draw a different conclusion?"

Rehman: "We do not believe a field study would change our conclusions."

Committeewoman Duarte: "What about banning lights, would you see a change in wildlife?"

Rehman: "What's best for wildlife is no fields, no lights and reforestation."

ADJOURN

Having no further business to conduct, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Spirig and seconded by Ms. Duarte, with all members present voting in favor, no one opposed.

The special meeting of the Mendham Township Committee was adjourned at 7:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Distributed: 07/20/2023
Approved: 07/24/2023

Karen Orgera
Acting Township Clerk
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM