

Pinelands residents give recommendations to persevere the Pinelands

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MAYS LANDING -- A public hearing was held tonight in Mays Landing as members of the Pinelands Commission listened to concerns and recommendations from Pineland residents on possible changes to the Comprehensive Management Plan which regulates land use and protects natural environment in the Pinelands National Reserve.

People signed up and then spoke up Wednesday night at a public hearing, expressing ways that the Pineland's Review Committee of the Pineland Commission can preserve the Pinelands.

"We want openness we're looking forward to that, we wish to have the Pinelands hear us and that's what's important and this is a good start," said Richland resident Mark Demitroff.

"Well I appreciate the opportunity to speak with the Pineland Commission to let them know what my concerns are as a resident, citizen, and taxpayer," Mullica Township resident Mary Hunt.

Wednesday night's hearing was part two of a four part public hearing review where the Pinelands Commission listened to the concerns of Pinelands' residents and accepts recommendations on ways to improve the Pinelands' Comprehensive Management Plan which regulates land use and protects the natural environment in the Pinelands, against issues such as new development plans that residents may have a problem with.

"It's the public, well we work for the public so therefore we want the public to have a role in anything that we do we can't know everything," said Pinelands Commission chairperson Candace Ashmun.

According to many residents that spoke up, the problem doesn't lie with the bylaws of the CMP, but making sure the Pinelands Commission regulates and enforces them.

"If we followed the CMP we wouldn't have this problem, and if it's been so successful it's held as one of the greatest plans in the country it's the only national reserve why we would want to change something that worked so well is bewildering," said Demitroff.

"I think it's a known fact the state likes to do what they want to do. It's a shame there's not enough people around that are willing to voice their concerns greater, but I tell you I will be an advocate for my town," said Estell Manor Mayor Joe Venezia.

The Pinelands Commission will be accepting recommendations until September 28th.

Public comments will be accepted until September 28th and can also be sent by email to info@njpines.state.nj.us.