

South Plainfield Environmental Commission
Official Minutes - December 11, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

Notice having been filed with the Courier News and S.P. Observer, Chairwoman Dorothy Miele called the Environmental Commission meeting to order in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act at 8:05 pm.

Present: Dorothy Miele, Debra Leporino, Danielle Hurst, and John Ferguson

Alternate members present: Adam Butrico and Jordan Mandel

Associate members present: Kathleen Benton and Lisa Roseo (secretary)

Others: Dr. A. Tempel (environmental specialist)

Absent: Tom Walsh (e), Jon Dean and Brian Bythell

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 13, 2019 meeting were reviewed and all were in favor of approval.

3. INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

- There were no members of the public present.

4. BUDGET - Dr. A. Tempel

- O&E (FY2019) (\$2,375) Since the last meeting we spent \$34 on business cards. YTD spent = \$599.75. Balance = \$1,775.25.
- Clean Communities - (2019 grant \$50,329.53) Spent since November meeting = \$2,420 on: \$945 on sign enforcement and litter removal salary & wages; \$475 for litter can maintenance; \$1000 for two Spring assembly programs in the high school next month. Spent YTD = \$15,982.10 since 8/15/19. The balance = \$34,347.13.
- Signs Trust Fund – Spent \$0. The balance = \$595.12.
- Harris Steel Tree Fund – Since the last report we spent \$0. Deposits = \$0. Current balance is \$31,653.78.

5. COMMITTEE and LIAISON REPORTS

A. Council Liaison - Mr. J. Dean

- There was no report.

B. Planning Board Liaison - Mr. R. Houghton / Mr. B. Bythell

- There was no report.

C. Site Plan Review - Mr. A. Butrico / Mr. J. Mandel

- Dr. Tempel said three revisions came in for review; she commented on the W.7th Street mixed use application. The applicant only submitted a floor plan and architectural elevations. Dr. Tempel cited the recycling section of our ordinance: the applicant needs to show on the floor plans where the internal storage area for recyclables will be located. Adam and Jordan will review whether our previous comments were addressed on the other two site plans and come back next month with comments.

D. ERI -

- There was nothing new to report.

E. Clean Communities - Dr. A. Tempel

- Dr. Tempel reported that Kevin Kober cleared 224 storm grates, labeled 20 storm drains, collected 23 bags of litter plus 610 lbs. of heavy debris. Kevin also removed 125 lawn signs and 17 utility pole signs

during November.

- On 12/3 Kevin notified Dr. Tempel of truck tires 'for sale' that were chained to a utility pole on New Brunswick Avenue. Dr. Tempel sent a letter telling the resident to move them by 12/6 or she will refer it to John Abbruzzese for enforcement.
- The High School booked Dave Street for two assembly programs in January.
- Adopt-a-Spot - Dr. Tempel will get together with Debra to review the status of all contracts. Some have lapsed. They will be invited to renew.

F. Land Use - Dr. A. Tempel

- Green Brook Flood Control Project - John Ferguson and Dr. Tempel attended the December meeting. The Upper Basin was again discussed. It was confirmed that the original plan (two detention basins upstream) with channel modifications of the Green Brook and Stony Brook is no longer feasible. Without the detention basins, the channel modifications would relieve flooding in the upper basin towns but make it worse downstream. They are not allowed to protect one area while increasing flooding in another. So the commission is seeking permission from the USACE and Congress to do a full General Reevaluation Report to examine alternatives.

G. Forestry - Mr. J. Schmidt

- Community Forestry - Kathleen Benton looked into the tree planting grant and confirmed the project has to be in a flood plain or streamside. The application would have to be submitted by 12/13. SPEC will consider this grant in the future, if available, for the area between Station 9 and the end of Highland Avenue in HAW.
- Dorothy reported that she said yes to Dr. Tempel to accept the tree seedlings from the State for distribution. Dorothy said maybe Kathleen's students can hand out the saplings at a Boro function. Dr. Tempel will check on the deadline to order. The trees have to be distributed within 10 days of receiving. We may need to coordinate a separate event if the pickup date doesn't fall within ten days of any Boro event.
- Dorothy mentioned that the seedlings from the largest Oak tree (Salem Oak) in New Jersey will be distributed to every municipality in the state for Arbor Day 2020. Acorns were collected and planted prior to the tree falling. 1200 seedlings will be available. The Salem White Oak was 600 years old when it fell.

H. Highland Avenue Woods / Public Education - Mrs. D. Miele

- Dr. Tempel reported that two coyotes were seen in HAW. One purportedly chased a resident who was walking their dog.
- Dr. DeVito repaired part of the deer fence.

I. Historical Sites Preservation - Mr. L. Randolph

- There was nothing to report.

J. Pollution - Mr. A. Butrico / Ms. D. Hurst

- Adam reported there is a state bill that might come into affect mid-January. It will ban retail plastic bags, Styrofoam containers, straws and paper bags. Straws will be available upon request at restaurants. Paper bags might be available for a fee. Dr. Tempel mentioned there is controversy on this issue. It is thought that paper bags should not be sold because it will vastly increase the number of paper bags being used. So instead of plastic waste, you'll have paper waste. Yes, they can be recycled, but currently the recycling markets are down.

K. Green Team - Mr. T. Walsh

- Dr. Tempel reported the Green Team invited a Sustainable Jersey representative, Kim Hoff, to set up a table with information about the BPU sponsored residential energy efficiency program at the Mayor's Wellness Blood Drive. Dr. Tempel explained some details about the energy audit and rebates offered by the BPU. It was beneficial that the Mayor and Councilman White were there and spent some time speaking with Kim Hoff and Bob Longo. The Mayor said the Boro will support a campaign to promote

the programs to the public. Dr. Tempel mentioned that she isn't sure our last minute publicizing on Facebook and TAPinto will be enough to be awarded Sustainable NJ action points.

L. Public Information & Technology -

- Dr. Tempel reported SPEC's Facebook page carried 10 posts reaching 4,390 people.

M. Stormwater Advisory Committee- Mr. T. Walsh

- There was no report.

N. Environmental Specialist - Dr. A. Tempel

- Dr. Tempel said she and John Ferguson attended the 'Destination 2040' stakeholder workshop. Middlesex County is getting ready to rewrite their Master Plan. There were 10 different stations facilitated by representatives from Rutgers and Middlesex County Planning Division. Attendees were able to choose two topics they wanted to participate in. They discussed what their vision for the county is and how to get there. Participants sat in on those two stations/topics to discuss specific ideas about how the county can advance those visions. Dr. Tempel and John both sat in, at different times, on Sustainability & Community Resilience and Environment & Natural Resources. The County has done substantial outreach with pop-up meetings at public events.

O. Chairwoman's Report - Mrs. D. Miele

- There was nothing new to report.

6. INCOMING / OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

- A list of correspondences is attached

7. OLD BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

- Kathleen reported her Environmental Science students placed 300 decals on storm drains. Also, a veteran's group asked if the students can grow Poppy plants from seed in the new greenhouse.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. The next reorganization and regular meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2020 at 8:00 pm in the Borough Hall Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Roseo
Environmental Commission Secretary

ACRONYMS

ANJEC	- Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
BOA	- Board of Adjustment
CAG	- Community Advisory Group
CBA	- Clean Business Association
CCAB	- Clean Communities Advisory Board
CFMP	- Community Forestry Management Plan
DOT	- Department of Transportation
DPW	- Department of Public Works
EIS	- Environmental Impact Study
EPA	- Environmental Protection Agency
ERI	- Environmental Resources Inventory
EWA	- Edison Wetlands Association
FEMA	- Federal Emergency Management Agency
FOW	- Friends of the Woods
GBFCP	- Green Brook Flood Control Project
HAW	- Highland Avenue Woods
KCS	- Known Contaminated Sites
LEEDS	- The Lead in Energy and Environmental Design
MCDSWM	- Middlesex County Division of Solid Waste Management
MCUFAC	- Middlesex County Urban Forestry Advisory Committee
NJCF	- New Jersey Conservation Foundation
NJDEP	- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
NOV	- Notice of Violation
OEM	- Office of Emergency Mgmt.
OTOSP	- Oak Tree Open Space Parcel
PRP's	- Potentially Responsible Parties
ROSI	- Recreation and Open Space Inventory
ROW	- Right-of-Way
SPBA	- South Plainfield Business Association
SPEC	- South Plainfield Environmental Commission
USACE	- United States Army Corp of Engineers