

South Plainfield Environmental Commission Official Minutes – February 13, 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, Tom Walsh, Debra Leporino, Danielle Hurst, and Brian Bythell (planning board liaison)

Alternate members present: Jordan Mandel and Adam Butrico

Associate members present: Kathleen Benton

Others: Dr. Alice Tempel (environmental specialist) and Lisa Roseo (secretary)

Absent: John Ferguson and Jon Dean (council liaison)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 9, 2019 meeting were reviewed and all were in favor of approval.

3. INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

- Tom Benton was in attendance to observe.

4. BUDGET - Dr. Tempel

- O&E (FY2019) (temporary budget \$500) Since the last meeting we spent \$425 on ANJEC dues. YTD spent = \$425. The balance = \$75. Shortly we should be asked to submit a budget request.
- Clean Communities - (2018 grant = \$45,915.07) - Since the last meeting we spent \$1,200.69 on: \$729.69 on sign enforcement/storm drain cleaning/litter removal salary & wages and \$475 on litter can maintenance. YTD spent since October = \$9,772.15. Balance = \$36,142.92.
- 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 \$36,786.28.

5. COMMITTEE and LIAISON REPORTS

A. Council Liaison - Mr. J. Dean

- Dorothy asked Dr. Tempel if she heard from Jon Dean about the Longwood property for sale off of Park Avenue that we discussed last month. Dr. Tempel has not.

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

- Brian said there hasn't been a planning board meeting since Rich Houghton reported last month. The next meeting will take place on February 26 where the BOE is set to give a presentation on the Crossroads @Durham site plan. Brian said the applicant has been pretty agreeable to the recommendations/changes asked of them so far.
- Dr. Tempel reported that M&M Realty (Crossroads @Durham) has started work on the site without permits. The town found this out when representatives from Texas Eastern came to the Boro for assistance in getting in touch with M&M Realty. Texas Eastern found two gas shut-off valves across from the site on I287 that were inundated from heavy rains. They tracked the flood of water to a conduit running under the highway that was coming off the property. The applicant had removed some trees and vegetation in an area and did not put up a silt fence. With no erosion control, a sea of mud ran off the property. If they had needed to shut the valves off, they would not have been able to. Len Miller called the NJDEP and Freehold Soil Conservation. Freehold issued a stop-work order. Brian Bythell said they are also doing some deconstruction work within the building.

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

- Atlas Evaluation & Inspection (801 Montrose Ave.) - As discussed last month, the applicant wants to construct an office, storage, lab/warehouse addition and detached mobile testing lab. Adam Butrico visited the site. He said they have not started any lab work yet. They have begun phase I, which is bringing the detached mobile trailer on site. They are working on their hazardous/chemical waste management plan. They have done some demolition work on the front of the building. Dr. Tempel will ask Dominic Demico, construction officer, if the applicant was issued a permit for the trailer. SPEC will ask that the applicant have a hazardous management plan in place prior to approval. Adam is meeting with them next month and will inquire about the flooding near their truck loading docks.
- Trans American Trucking Svcs.(115 Skyline Dr.) - this is an existing trucking operation. The applicant is proposing accessory maintenance and storage building. They are requesting several waivers. The proposed maintenance building will internalize existing vehicle maintenance operations. The building will be built on existing impervious surface area. No vegetation is proposed to be removed; it looks like there are no existing trees. Dr. Tempel read they had clear-cut the property last year. The applicant said they sought a tree removal permit and were mistakenly advised the permit was not necessary. They were ordered to pay into the tree fund. SPEC had no environmental concerns.
- DCD Capital (401 Durham Ave. & 120 McKinley St.) - applicant proposes to construct a self-storage facility and billboard. The existing homes on the site will be demolished. The lot is located on the right of the I287 N. off-ramp in front of Progressive Insurance. The self-storage building will be four-stories. The proposed billboard will exceed the Boro's ordinance of no more than four billboards within a linear mile. They will be removing 21 trees. Dr. Tempel will review their proposed tree removal/replacement plan. SPEC will ask for a solid waste narrative. Will ask if they have estimated the types and amount of solid waste material they will generate to calculate the size dumpster needed.

D. ERI - Ms. D. Leporino

- Debra reported she continues to work identifying the vacant privately-owned land. She will review this with Dr. Tempel soon.

E. Clean Communities - Dr. A. Tempel

- There was a CCAB meeting on 1/30. Set May 4th as the big spring cleanup date. There were good ideas suggested for publicity and better use of social media to promulgate our messages and solicit volunteers. Dr. Tempel sent out a press release and info to the usual media outlets. She also sent an email blast to 165 volunteer litter contacts.
- CBA spring mailing is scheduled for March 14. Kathleen and Jordan will help stuff envelopes. Debra volunteered to take on the Glitter Award program.
- Dr. Tempel asked Kathleen Benton if she and her students are planning on attending the May 24 Conference for NJ Cleanup. Kathleen said yes.
- Dr. Tempel said Dave Street did two presentations at the High School for the environmental sciences classes and environmental club. Dave developed the program specifically for High School students.
- Enforcement - Kevin Kober removed 26 lawn signs and 21 pole signs during January.

F. Land Use - Dr. A. Tempel

- Wetlands - received a notice of application by an Indonesian church to fill a small isolated wetland to build a church and parking lot off Park Avenue on Clark Lane. This is on a wooded lot behind St. Stephens Church.
- Green Brook Flood Control - Dr. Tempel said there is nothing going on that will impact South Plainfield for awhile.

G. Forestry - Mr. J. Schmidt

- There was nothing new to report.

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

- Dorothy said Dr. DeVito walked the deer fence perimeter and cleaned off some downed branches. The fence is secure.

I. Historical Sites Preservation - Mr. L. Randolph

- There was nothing new to report.

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

- There was nothing new to report.

K. Green Team - Mr. T. Walsh

- Tom reported the Green Team had a short meeting on 2/11 to speak with Jill Ryan and associates. They discussed a plan to video tape some of the students who received a reward for the Sustainability in NJ contest. The video will be on the Green Team Facebook page in hopes to enhance the team's profile in the community. The project is nearing the reporting deadline for the Sustainable NJ grant.
- Dr. Tempel reported that she sat in on the High School Green Team meeting. The students presented their report on which Sustainable Schools Actions they thought they could implement for certification points. Kathleen explained the team decided to focus on replacing the old water fountains with hydration stations. Some of the fountains had already been shut due to high lead levels. Kathleen is working on a Sustainable Schools grant for \$10,000. The grant calls for a match. She asked SPEC members if it would be reasonable to ask Jack Morris (M&M Realty) if he would have an interest in providing the matching portion of the grant. Members felt that it wouldn't hurt to ask. Jack Morris helped the High School in the past with the use of a generator.
- Kathleen reported she got the information on the proposed High School green house project. The grant will be \$5,000 a year for two years and the district will spend \$7,000 a year for two years. The grant detail shows the greenhouse to be 8 x 16. Kathleen said the plan is to hold classes in there, so it will have to be larger. The details are in the planning stages.

L. Public Information & Technology -

- Dr. Tempel updated SPEC's profile page on Facebook.
- Dr. Tempel has been using our Facebook page to post recycling information. There is new information that residents need to be educated on. We have to decide if we want to sign up for more educational campaigns. If we do, we have to buy a package of three campaigns. The cost would be approximately \$3,000 and come out of the tonnage grant.

M. Stormwater Advisory Committee- Mr. T. Walsh

- Dr. Tempel said the non-point source pollution 'tip card' which was supposed to be mailed with the sewer bill, will be in a subsequent mailing.

N. Environmental Specialist - Dr. A. Tempel

- There was nothing additional to report.

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

- There was nothing new to report.

6. INCOMING / OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

- A list of correspondences is attached.
- Dr. Tempel read an email received from Larry Randolph. To summarize: Larry is happy to see that the issue of quiet train crossings is moving forward. Larry said the billboard people will argue with our town ordinance by stating 'First Amendment' rights. The state does not have any limit on signs per

mile, just distance between signs. Also, the state and federal laws allows billboard people to cut down whatever trees on the land that they control and adjacent public land that, in their unchallenged opinion, interferes with operation, maintenance, and viewing of the billboard.

7. OLD BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2019 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
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