

South Plainfield Environmental Commission

Official Minutes - June 12, 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 8:01 pm.

Present: Dorothy Miele, Tom Walsh, Debra Leporino, Danielle Hurst, John Ferguson, Jon Dean (council liaison) and Brian Bythell (planning board liaison)

Alternate members present: Jordan Mandel and Adam Butrico

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

Others: Dr. Alice Tempel (environmental specialist)

Absent:

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 8, 2019 meeting were reviewed and the following corrections were made:

On page 1, under Call to Order, Adam Butrico should be listed as an Alternate member.

On page 1, under Call to Order, John Dean should be Jon Dean.

After the corrections were made, all were in favor of approval.

3. INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

- Tom Benton was in attendance.

4. BUDGET - Dr. A. Tempel

- O&E (FY2019) The final budget was adopted = \$2,375. Since the last meeting we spent \$23.80 to reimburse Chris Cioffi for boosting Facebook ads. YTD spent = \$457.80. Balance = \$1,917.20.
- Clean Communities - (2018 grant \$45,915.07) Since the last meeting we spent \$1,453.00 on: \$875 on sign enforcement and litter removal salary & wages; \$475 on litter can maintenance; \$103 for Adopt-a-Spot signage. Spent YTD = \$20,393.21. Balance = \$25,521.56. The balance is to be spent by 6/30. Dr. Tempel said we will ask for an extension. The 2019 grant was announced, but we have not received the check yet.
- Signs Trust Fund – Spent \$0. The balance = \$595.12.
- Harris Steel Tree Fund – Since the last report we spent \$7,995 for Dog Park plantings. Deposits = \$4,900 from Hawkeye Developers (Park Ave. subdivision) in lieu of tree planting. Current balance is \$33,573.78.
- Sustainable Jersey PSE&G Capacity Building Grant (\$2,000) - Spent since May: \$0. Balance = \$500

5. COMMITTEE and LIAISON REPORTS

A. Council Liaison - Mr. J. Dean

- Jon said the Boro is moving forward with tree plantings at the Dog Park. Also getting bids for tree plantings in Willow Park and in front of Boro Hall.
- DPW has started street sweeping and using the sewer vac truck again.
- Dorothy asked Jon if he approached the Mayor & Council about applying for open space funds to purchase the Longwood Estate property off Park Avenue. He said he mentioned it, but the idea wasn't taken up for discussion. He will mention it again.
- Jon received a letter from a resident about an ordinance banning plastic bags in stores. Dr. Tempel

forwarded Jon an ordinance that was adopted by a shore town. Dorothy proposed setting up a sub-committee to research the pros and cons. Dorothy, Adam, Jordan and Danielle volunteered to research it independently and then meet to discuss. Dorothy will forward them the information Dr. Tempel had provided Jon as a starting point. Dr. Tempel mentioned the bags are recyclable; supermarkets collect them. Treks is supplying a steady market for the bags. Can we find a way to collect the bags or provide drop-off sites? Dr. Tempel said in the broader picture, the bags are small compared to industrial strength recycling. But still, if there is a portion of the plastic bag waste stream that can be captured and used for other purposes, then great.

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

- Brian said there are no meetings scheduled for June. Prior meetings have been focused on the M&M Realty at 1111 Durham Avenue (Crossroads) site plan. The affordable housing units have been dispersed throughout four buildings. Dr. Tempel asked if any progress has been made on the storm sewer capacity testing. Brian said the test study still needs to be done. The Mayor & Council and developer agreed that the Boro will fund the test study. Each party will share the expense of whatever improvements/repairs might be needed. It is possible that PARSA could shut down the development if the system cannot be improved sufficiently.

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

- Michael Pedersen (305 Hillside Ave.) - applicant wants to subdivide a single lot into two single lots. Each lot will conform to size. There were no environmental concerns.
- JBL Electric (3001 So. Clinton Ave.) - current contractor's storage yard. There are trailers on site they propose to upgrade. The stream that runs into HAW is on their property. SPEC will ask that they are made aware they are upstream from HAW and ask they use integrated pest management and clear the tree blockages in the stream. Will also request a landscaping & recycling plan and anti-idling signs. We will ask what will be stored on site because part of the property borders the stream and lies in a floodplain. Jordan and Adam will take a look at the site.
- Keystone Community Living (Front St.) - they want to expand their parking lot. They will be increasing runoff without mitigating. Dr. Tempel suggested we can request they use pervious pavers for the parking expansion. Members agreed. Jordan and Adam will go on site to check their tree removal plan.
- 2271 Hamilton LLC (7th Street/Trinity St.) - (revision) apartment and retail complex proposed. We previously commented on this application: 35 parking spots are required, but only 22 proposed; the overflow parking might end up on Trinity Street. Asked for a recycling plan and 'anti-idling' signs. We will issue the same comments because the revision does not address them.
- Panzarella Contracting (New Market/So. Clinton) - applicant proposes to replace existing garage with a larger garage. They claim a 4000 square feet reduction in impervious surface; 98% impervious. SPEC will ask for clarification. They are proposing a fuel tank on site, which Fire Prevention will insure containment of. Jordan and Adam will check out the site.

D. ERI - Ms. D. Leporino

- Debra and Dr. Tempel met on 5/31. Debra identified every privately owned vacant parcel from the 2015 spreadsheet and compared it to the 2019 tax list. She is working on deleting the lots from both the spreadsheet and the map that are no longer vacant.

E. Clean Communities - Dr. A. Tempel

- Spring Cleanup - the weight ticket showed 1.02 tons of litter was cleaned. Lisa has volunteered to help create 'Certificates of Appreciation' for the volunteers.
- Dr. Tempel sent out a press release with the cleanup results and the High School National Honor Society post-cleanup photo; they won the #trash tag contest.
- Dr. Tempel said two high school students took video of some cleanup volunteers in the field, picnic activities and an interview of some Green Team members. Kathleen Benton sent Dr. Tempel a link to the video. The video was posted on SPEC's Facebook page. Dr. Tempel asked how we can put

the video on SPTV. Adam explained the programming is done through the high school. The programming is viewed through local cable channels. We can ask the video be shown at specific time slots. Kathleen said she can email Mike Estrada and ask how to upload the video.

- Dr. Tempel sent requests for quotes for the new litter can contract. She recommended Pinto Brothers be awarded the contract.
- Scheduled a CCAB meeting for Tuesday, July 16 @ 7:00 pm at Sherban's Diner.

F. Land Use - Dr. A. Tempel

- John and Dr. Tempel attended the June GBFCC meeting. Dr. Tempel said they are currently working on flood walls and levees in Middlesex Boro and then moving into Greenbrook. Those segments are much larger than the Bound Brook projects, which took 15 years to complete. John said with the amount of money they receive from the state and federal government each year, the project will take a very long time to complete.
- Dr. Tempel reported that Rob Bengivenga reported the privately-owned lot that fronts on New Market between Highland Avenue and South Clinton is being cleared with no permits in place. Jon said he spoke with John Abbruzzese about this two weeks ago. They are dumping debris in the back of the lot. John Abbruzzese informed them they have two weeks to clean it out. In the process, they have mowed trees down. Dr. Tempel said Len Miller, DPW director, is looking into whether soil has been imported illegally.

G. Forestry - Mr. J. Schmidt

- OTOSP - Dr. Tempel reported the Eagle Scout project was successfully completed. Dr. Tempel invited Jim Schmidt to join her and the scout for the walk through. Jim was happy with the outcome of the project. They noticed the Hazel shrubs are being overgrown by vines. Dr. Tempel will try to find the time to cut the vines back.
- Jon Dean and Dr. Tempel are talking about planning another street tree planting on the other side of Franklin Avenue for the fall.
- Dr. Tempel did a final inspection on the Park Avenue Estates development. The developer ended up paying \$4,900 into the tree fund for 14 trees that were not approved for removal.

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

- Dorothy reported two high school students pulled out some heavy weeds from the berm in front of the nature center yesterday. The Boy Scouts come in when they can. We can't consistently get volunteers to weed the berm. Dr. Tempel offered to spray Round Up. Jon said he has a granular product he can put down. It will not affect the shrubs and ornamentals.
- Jordan said he removed several trees that were blocking trails where he was able to access.

I. Historical Sites Preservation - Mr. L. Randolph

- There was nothing to report.

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

- Adam said there is nothing new to report from Mickey Gross, Middlesex County Health Dept.
- Received notice from an environmental consultant regarding site remediation at Galaxy Circuits on Somogyi Court. This is listed as a KCS. It is an ISRI case, so presumably the owner want to clean the site so it can be sold.

K. Green Team - Mr. T. Walsh

- Tom said the video project is complete. It will be unveiled on 6/26 @ 5:00 in the public library. Green Team members, students and teachers that participated, as well as the public, are invited.
- Dr. Tempel said she and Councilman White had a conference call with a gentleman from 'Business View' magazine, a Canadian publication. They are doing a series that focuses on operations in different states. One issue will be about New Jersey, focusing on economic development and sustainability. They want to use South Plainfield as one of the municipalities. They are interested in what we are doing towards sustainability, particularly the Mayor's Wellness Committee and the Buy Local program. They

will be setting up more in-depth interviews.

- Tom will obtain the DEA report from the Boro's 'Drug Take Back' day. That information goes toward Sustainable NJ action points.

L. Public Information & Technology -

- There was nothing new to report.

M. Stormwater Advisory Committee- Mr. T. Walsh

- Dr. Tempel said the NPS tip cards will go out with the sewer bills in early July.

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
- Received notice of two applications for wetlands permits / delineations.
602 New Market Avenue - want to build a 189,000 sq. ft. warehouse / office building on the former Staats Auto Body site. Need verification of the flood hazard area.
1111 Durham Ave. (Crossroads @ Durham) - need their permit to get the wetlands area delineated.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- Kathleen said the students have started placing the decals on the storm drains. The green house was ordered. The Wellness Fair at the high school was very successful.
- Debra said she will be planning a toiletry drive to coincide with our fall litter cleanup. Some high school students made phone calls to CBA members to update the list. Debra will start working on the 'Glitter Award' program.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- John said his office, Middlesex County of Emergency Management, will be open with information on hazard mitigation planning, storm water management, flood insurance ratings etc. This will take place at the Sayreville Fire Academy on 6/21.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 10, 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