

South Plainfield Environmental Commission

Official Minutes - November 11, 2020

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 7:42 pm. This meeting took place at the Highland Avenue Woods Nature Center.

Present: Dorothy Miele (phone in), Tom Walsh, Danielle Hurst, John Ferguson, Debra Leporino and Rich Houghton (planning board liaison)

Alternate members present: Jordan Mandel

Associate members present: Lisa Roseo (secretary)

Others: Dr. A. Tempel (environmental specialist) (phone in)

Absent: Adam Butrico (e) and Pete Smith

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 14, 2020 regular 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 (FY2020 = \$2,225) Since the last meeting we spent \$0. YTD spent = \$577.45. Balance = \$1,647.55.
- Clean Communities - (2019 grant \$50,329.53) Spent since October 14 = \$2,507 on: \$996 on sign enforcement and litter removal salary & wages-including \$73 for Wednesday parks litter patrol; \$475 for December litter can maintenance. Spent YTD = \$45,847 since 8/15/19. The balance = \$8,051. The 2020 grant = \$45,370.37; it is not yet available to spend.
- Signs Trust Fund – Spent \$0. The balance = \$595.12.
- Harris Steel Tree Fund – Since the last report we spent \$0. Deposits = \$1,480 from Panzarella in lieu of planting 4 trees on Adeline Avenue subdivision. Current balance is \$33,134.

5. COMMITTEE and LIAISON REPORTS

A. Council Liaison - Mr. P. Smith

- There was no report.

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

- At the last two meetings: Hawkeye Development (Longwood Estates) was adjourned to 12/8. JRB Properties on Shevchenko was approved. Glopak on Case Drive was also approved. Bridgepoint on New Market Avenue was approved. Bridgepoint agreed to put in a left-hand turn lane coming from west to east. 10 - 15 electric poles will be moved. Experts agreed the retention basin will not make the flooding any worse.

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

D. ERI -

- There was nothing to report.

E. Clean Communities - Dr. A. Tempel

- Dr. Tempel said the 2020 grant has not been put into the budget yet. She will try and get Glenn Cullen's attention on the matter.
- Dr. Tempel made 'Certificates of Appreciation' or 'Thank You' cards for all the fall litter cleanup participants. There were approximately 13 groups.

- Dr. Tempel said Debra suggested putting the Adopt-a-Spot program flier on the Borough website. Dr. Tempel asked the webmaster to add a link to the flier on the Adopt-a-Spot page. We also included the CBA Standards booklet.
- Debra noticed that the contact information on the back of the Adopt-a-Spot Guidelines is outdated. Debra had the webmaster at Zumu do the update. Dr. Tempel asked members if they want to have new 'Adopt-a-Spot' fliers printed with the updated information. We currently have on hand about 100 professionally printed glossy fliers with the outdated information. Dorothy asked what is in the budget. Dr. Tempel is fairly certain we have the funds. The current budget we are using (2019) has to be spent by 12/31/2020. We also will have the 2020 budget to use. All members were in favor of having 200+ new fliers printed.
- Dr. Tempel reported she edited and printed the Adopt-a-Spot renewal letters for eight groups whose contracts are 2nd and 3rd quarter renewals. Debra added there are some people/groups that have not sent back their renewals. She will mail out again for the 4th quarter. They will be informed that is their last chance to renew and if we do not receive their paperwork, it indicates they are no longer interested in keeping their spot.
- Dr. Tempel said Patti Feeney Trenchak emailed her questions about PPE litter for a TAPinto article. She wanted a quote from the Green Team; the article was published on 11/9.
- Holy Savior Academy applied for funds to have The Illusion Maker do two virtual live assembly programs. Dr. Tempel approved it.

F. Land Use - Dr. A. Tempel

- Green Brook Flood Control Project - There was a virtual meeting on 10/7. Work continues in Middlesex. Everything else is status quo.

G. Forestry - Mr. A. Butrico / Mr. J. Schmidt

- On 10/20, Dr. Tempel met with Councilwoman Faustini, Glenn Cullen and Len Miller at Willow Park. They marked out locations for the redbuds and the dogwood by Boro Hall. This has been pending since June 2019 when the funds were encumbered. Len Miller is supposed to check with Custom Landscape about when DPW can plant. As far as Dr. Tempel knows, he has not yet.
- Dorothy asked if the trees that died in the dog park will be replaced. Dr. Tempel said they did not actually die; they did come back in the spring.
- Dorothy asked whatever happened to the tree plantings that were supposed to go in by the soccer fields on Kenneth Avenue. Dr. Tempel said the organization never submitted a proposal.
- Dr. Tempel reported that she was asked separately by Len Miller and Glenn Cullen about the Salem Oak sapling. Dorothy said it seems the offer might be a dead issue. No one ever got back to her or the Boro. We'll see if it re-emerges in the spring.

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

- Dorothy said there was nothing new to report.

I. Historical Sites Preservation - Mr. L. Randolph

- There was nothing new to report.

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

- Danielle mentioned that Dr. Tempel sent an email to SPEC members about Governor Murphy signing the 'single-use plastic ban.'

K. Green Team - Mr. T. Walsh

- Tom submitted his 'Clear the Drains' article to The Observer, TAPinto SP and the Boro webpage. He will send the article to Dr. Tempel for posting on the Green Team webpage. The next meeting is on 11/19.
- Tom reported that Chief Parker forwarded from the DEA, the numbers from the drug take back initiative. 71 members of the community dropped off 99 lbs. of prescription drugs. The drop-off was set up outside which was more visible to the public.

L Public Information & Technology - Dr. A. Tempel / Mr. C. Cioffi

- Dr. Tempel reported on October's Facebook page - 6 posts, reaching 8,642 people with 377 engagements and 15 shares. Dr. Tempel said we are reaching a fair amount of visibility.

M. Stormwater Advisory Committee- Mr. T. Walsh

- Dr. Tempel reported on the State's new regulations modifying their storm water management program. It is a big change. Towns have to amend their storm water management ordinances to require green infrastructure BMP's (best management practices) by March 3, 2021. She explained that when developing a site, green infrastructure includes retention basins, rain gardens, infiltration back into the groundwater etc. Other new regulations relate to how many square feet of impervious surface will be added, whether the storm water needs to be treated as well as detained depending on the use of the site. The environmental community is urging commissions to get involved to push for stricter regulations within their towns. One that Dr. Tempel thinks important is requiring redevelopment projects to follow the same new procedures/regulations. Currently these sites do not have to put in storm water detention if they are not increasing their impervious surface. We can justify this request because there is too much flooding now; only requiring new builds to follow these stricter regulations may not make the flooding worse, but it will certainly not reduce it. All SPEC members were in favor of making that specific recommendation to the Mayor & Council. Dorothy asked how we should go about ensuring the Boro look at the specifics of the State's new regulations. SPEC will reach out to Councilman Pete Smith and ask if this is already being addressed. Dr. Tempel will reach out to Len Miller, Boro Engineer, and also email Pete Smith.

N. Environmental Specialist - Dr. A. Tempel

- There was nothing additional to report.

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

- Dorothy mentioned that she saw and killed a Spotted Lanternfly in her backyard a couple weeks ago.

6. INCOMING / OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

- A list of correspondences is attached

7. OLD BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

- John reported that he attended a virtual meeting for the update of the new coastal study. He explained the new data is being compiled from 50 past storms to predict how our coastline will be affected. Because of COVID, the new flood maps that were supposed to come out in 2023, might not be completed until 2025. There is a lot of scientific calculations going into this new study.
- John said Lake Devoe in Spotswood will be dredged soon. Hopefully that will alleviate flooding in Spotswood, Jamesburg, Monroe, Helmetta, Old Bridge, East Brunswick, Sayreville and South River.
- Debra reported the 'Diversity Committee' had their first meeting. Councilwoman Faustini introduced the committee, presented the mission statement, and went over a few goals. The committee will be meeting bi-monthly.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2020 @ 7:30 pm in the Highland Avenue Woods Nature Center - 115 Sylvania Place.

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
LOI	- Letter of Interpretation
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