

**South Plainfield Environmental Commission**  
**Official Minutes - October 14, 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 7:30 pm. This meeting took place at the Highland Avenue Woods Nature Center.

**Present:** Dorothy Miele (phone in), Tom Walsh, Danielle Hurst, John Ferguson, Adam Butrico, Debra Leporino and Brian Bythell (planning board liaison)

**Alternate members present:** Jordan Mandel

**Associate members present:** Lisa Roseo (secretary)

**Others:** Dr. A. Tempel (environmental specialist)

**Absent:** Pete Smith

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 9, 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 = \$1,645.55.
- Clean Communities - (2019 grant \$50,329.53) Spent since September 12 = \$2,196 on: \$1,246 on sign enforcement and litter removal salary & wages-including \$305 for Wednesday parks litter patrol; \$950 for October and November litter can maintenance. Spent YTD = \$39, 838 since 8/15/19. The balance = \$10,558. 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 = \$0. Current balance is \$31,653.78.

**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**

- Brian said there was no meeting last night due to potential COVID exposure. The board was supposed to hear the Glopack and Bridgepoint applications. The next hearing will be on 10/26.

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

- Project One Auto Sports (375 Metuchen Rd.) - Former Itran Rubber location. Jordan reported that the applicant proposes an automobile online sales and on-site service facility. The plans indicate the autos will be stored indoors. There will be no physical changes to the building. Applicant wants to waive an EIS and landscaping & recycling plans. They did not provide a traffic impact study. A portion of the site has groundwater contamination, possibly due to the close proximity of the Cornell-Dublier (C-D) site. The NJDEP website shows several monitoring wells on the site. Dr. Tempel questioned if the contamination might be from the prior use of the site. Jordan and Adam said the NJDEP Geoweb site shows the plume originated from the C-D site. Jordan stated his biggest concern is the service aspect of the business. Will they be performing fluid changes and car maintenance etc. Dr. Tempel asked about the condition of their landscaping. Adam said half the property is forested. SPEC will ask them to improve their landscaping and display Anti-Idling signs if applicable.
- GP Harmon Recycling (200 Helen St.) - Jordache building. Applicant proposes a Class A recycling

facility. They will occupy 80,00 sq. feet of the 793,00 sq. foot building. They are asking for waivers of an EIS, traffic impact study, recycling & storm water management plans. There is some groundwater contamination of benzene that originated from a leak of the nearby Buckeye pipeline valve site. They will be adding two truck scales to measure truck tonnage. The plan shows approximately 70 inbound and outbound truck trips per day. That works out per day to about 140 truck trips / 12 hrs. = 12 trucks per hour; handling approx. 162,000 tons of cardboard per day. Most of the traffic will be peak time 6 am to 4 pm; they will be operating 24 hr. a day. Tom asked if there is room for the trucks to pull off the road while waiting in queue to weigh in. SPEC will request an EIS and Anti-Idling signs.

- Socha Enterprises (111 St. Nicholas Ave.) - Former PNC Bank. Applicant is proposing flex warehouse/office building. The building will be divided into ten separate warehouse/office spaces - approx. 1,300 sq. ft. each. They are asking for multiple waivers; claimed they should not need to submit because PNC did not at the time of their application. Jordan noted the impervious surface will drastically increase from 21,775 to 32,592 sq. feet. The plan shows removal of all existing storm water drainage systems. They requested a waiver for a storm water report and showed that the water will drain via roof leaders to an inlet on St. Nicholas Avenue. They will be removing 3 large pine trees and 22 shrubs. SPEC will request Anti-Idling signs.

#### D. ERI -

- Dr. Tempel reported she discovered the Boro, in 2008, adopted a resolution designating certain blocks & lots as official open space. Seems our Council Liaison at the time did not inform us. We can supplement our index. We will have to check to make sure the lots haven't been sold.

#### E. Clean Communities - Dr. A. Tempel

- Dr. Tempel reported a successful fall cleanup on 10/3. She thanked Debra and Jordan for their assistance. Approximately 100 volunteers filled 95 bags at 20 spots.
- The Executive Director of the Clean Communities Council is retiring after 30+ years. Dave Street phoned Dr. Tempel to say none of the schools are prepared to have Clean Communities assemblies at this point; not even virtually. Schools don't want to expose their students and computer systems to an external video source due to potential hacking.
- Adopt-a-Spot - Debra is working on the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter renewals. The SPCBA email address is up and running. Debra said she is working up marketing information for potential mailings or requests for info. There were people who did not send back their renewals. Debra will be informing them that their signs will be removed.

#### F. Land Use - Dr. A. Tempel

- Dr. Tempel reported Mike Serillo (New Jersey Door Works) wants to put a warehouse on the land behind 1213 New Market Ave.; between Highland Avenue and the Nature Reserve. A bit of wetlands buffer extends onto this property because of the wetlands area around the stream. They have met informally with the NJDEP and have delineated the 100 year flood plain & wetlands line along the stream in HAW. They are considering excavating to increase flood storage area in the back of the property and bring the dirt up front to elevate the building above the floodplain. They will be removing a big patch of habitat that our reserve wildlife has been using. The applicants engineer was interested to hear about the tree removal/replacement requirements. Dr. Tempel told him SPEC would be concerned about impacts to the Nature Reserve. Will this bring more truck traffic?
- The Middlesex Water Company is applying to the NJDEP for a LOI on their property.

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

- OTOSP - Dr. Tempel reported that she, Danielle and Lisa met on 10/8 to spray the re-sprouted sweet gums with Roundup. We'll see what it looks like in the spring.
- Adam spoke about the Bacterial Leaf Scorch affecting Pin Oaks in particular over the last few years.

#### 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**

- Adam said if New Jersey signs the 'single-use plastic ban' into law, it will be the strictest ban in the country. Adam mentioned a study that accompanied the legislation stating 80% of litter contains some plastic. There will be an 18 month grace period from when the bill is signed. Adam said restrictions will ease in over a 5 year period.

**K. Green Team - Mr. T. Walsh**

- Dr. Tempel said Bob Longo did a tutorial on the Sustainable NJ site. At the last meeting members discussed the action pledges the Mayor & Council adopted; a lot of work has to be done. Also talked about the bamboo ban and Longwood Estates.

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

- Dr. Tempel reported on September's Facebook page - 5 posts, reaching 3,518 people with 121 engagements and 13 shares. The Green Team Facebook page had 3 posts, 2 shares.

**M. Stormwater Advisory Committee- Mr. T. Walsh**

- Tom said he will send the article he wrote on fertilizer laws to Dr. Tempel to post on the Green Team page. The fertilizer laws are designed to cut down on water pollutants and algae. Tom will also send a 'Clear the Drains' article to the usual media outlets.
- Dr. Tempel mentioned New Jersey's storm water rules have been amended. Effective next year, the Green Infrastructure Best Management practices are going to be required to be used unless the developer can show it is impracticable to use them. Dr. Tempel is trying to find out if the Boro realizes they need to amend their ordinances to conform to these rules. Pete Smith told Dr. Tempel he will take the information to the Mayor & Council. John said there are webinars available with that information. He mentioned the State (NJDEP) offers 0% / low-interest loans through the NJEIT (New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust) for some projects.

**N. Environmental Specialist - Dr. A. Tempel**

- Dr. Tempel mentioned that Dan Morley, a former member, passed away recently. Dorothy said Dan was an original member of the FOW back in 1997.

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

- There was nothing additional to report.

**6. INCOMING / OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE**

- A list of correspondences is attached

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

- Debra said the first meeting of the 'Human Relations Committee' is 10/29.
- John mentioned FEMA-region II will be meeting on 11/10 to discuss their Coastal Study and new FIRM (flood maps) that they hope to complete by 2023.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for November 11, 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