

Minutes of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission meeting, March 20, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM, and the Sunshine Law notice read. The roll was called. Present: W. Andrews, J. Clyde, C. MacIvor, D. Pydeski, A. Schmidt, and D. Triggs; and Council liaison T. Chase and guest M. Lauko. Absent: A. Vernick (medical procedure), P. Walitsky.

Chair's report: there are no site plans to be reviewed, but three letters concerning wetlands determination.

The minutes of the meeting of March 6 were approved with two minor corrections.

Web site: The Information Technology department is still working on posting past minutes and agendas on the EC page of the township web site. Commission members should review their biographies for updates (a print-out of the web page was passed around for corrections). The resolution on the compressor should also be posted, for a time on the township's home page and more extendedly on the EC page.

Sustainable Jersey: T. Chase reported on the Green Team meeting which took place March 8. The main topic was a presentation by Chris Obropta, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, on assessment and reduction of impervious surface. His group has assessed impervious cover in 54 towns in the Raritan watershed, including Franklin, and made recommendations for projects to reduce it, including pervious pavement or rain gardens at East Franklin fire house, Pine Grove Manor School and Conerly Road School.

The Green Team will work on various actions, but will not attempt recertification this year.

Another topic brought up at the Green Team meeting by C. MacIvor was idling by school buses. A. Schmidt suggested diesel particulate filters for buses, if possible. He reported that Union County checks for idling vehicles at locations where they have been reported, **outside business hours**. This is a voluntary, **grant-funded** program, and only eight counties do it, but not Somerset County. T. Chase reported that the township does not want to purchase electric vehicles because its mechanics do not have expertise in repairing them; indeed, the township is trying to minimize the makes of vehicle bought by the township in order to reduce the variety of parts kept on hand. A. Schmidt wondered whether manufacturers of electric vehicles might subsidize training of mechanics in their maintenance for municipalities which purchased several. D. Pydeski brought up that snow is not shoveled off the sidewalk on the southwest side of Easton Ave.; who is responsible for doing this?

Other business: W. Andrews is using the 2015 annual report for the 2016 report, has nearly finished it. Then he will turn to 2017 goals. Vacancy on the commission: M. Lauko is interested, though also interested in other township committees, Shade Tree in particular.

The EC resolution against the Transco compressor having been sent to FERC and endorsed by a Council resolution, next steps were discussed. T. Chase outlined the sequence of action. The Commission would like to visit the site.

J. Clyde reported that an announcement of the April 29 stream clean-up is in the township newsletter, to appear around April 1. We will be working with Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association as in previous years. J. Clyde will have to leave the clean-up early to go to eastern Long Island, his son Michael will supervise. J. Clyde has contacted Public Works for pick-up of what is collected.

The deer seminar is still not arranged, W. Andrews has had difficulty in getting a response from the Division of Fish and Game. T. Chase suggested working through Cathy Blumig. W. Andrews is in contact with Watershed Ambassadors for a rain barrel workshop, though no date has been selected.

The meeting was opened to the public. M. Lauko presented a news article concerning littering and its prevention. D. Triggs commented that there should be signs against littering in Middlebush Park, and more trash cans. M. Lauko also asked about the status of the New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) plan to dredge the D&R Canal from Kingston to East Millstone. T. Chase explained the plan, which has been reactivated since those conducting the clean-up of the American Cyanamid site in Bridgewater have finally endorsed the plan to use dredged material as a cap over the contaminated soils. D. Pydeski asked how the township uses the \$150,000 in Clean Communities funds it has received. T. Chase explained that in 2017 it is to be used for purchase of a truck designed to pick up and empty trash barrels, rather than transporting the full barrels. It has also been used to subsidize the township newsletter, which carries information about the township recycling center, leaf pick-up, etc. C. MacIvor complained about plastic litter blowing from over-filled recycling containers. Those with a lot of recyclables should request a second container from Somerset County.

After closing the public session, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.