

Minutes of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission meeting May 16, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM, and the Sunshine Law notice read. The roll was called. Present: W. Andrews, J. Clyde (arrived 7:15 PM), C. MacIvor, A. Schmidt, D. Triggs, A. Vernick, and P. Walitsky; and Council liaison, T. Chase.

Chair's report: one letter was received concerning application for a general wetlands permit at 199 Pierce St. Michèle Samarya-Timm has invited the Environmental Commission to the Childcare Garden at 939 Hamilton St., tomorrow (May 17) at 10 AM. The rain barrel workshop just finished.

Minutes: the minutes of May 4 meeting were approved as submitted, after a question about the name Common Ground (for the garden at Pine Grove School). W. Andrews submits the minutes to Jennifer Gamba, who makes ten copies and puts them in the EC mailbox – but they haven't been there for the last two meetings (the Clerk's Office kindly made copies for tonight). He will inquire why they haven't appeared in the EC box.

Web site: nothing new; but A. Schmidt's request to Justin Heyman to have agendas and approved minutes put on the web site has not been answered.

Members of the public being present, the meeting was opened to them at this time. Andrea Harangozo introduced herself as a pulmonary care physician who is completing an Environmental Stewardship course at Rutgers. She was encouraged to apply for the open position on the Commission. Justin Beslity, Watershed Ambassador for the Lower Raritan, introduced himself; he came to hear what we are doing. J. Clyde described plans to scout Mile Run between DeRussey's Brook and Easton Avenue this fall for next spring's stream clean-up. Mr. Beslity replied that unfortunately he will be gone by then; he will leave a note about this for his successor. Samantha Bernstein, Watershed Ambassador for the Millstone River, also introduced herself. She is based at Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association.

T. Chase reported on the latest Green Team meeting, and submission to him of materials for several Sustainable Jersey actions.

T. Chase reported that Common Ground has a new coordinator, Constance Parker. The new fence for the expansion of the Naaman Williams Park garden and the new raised beds are expected to be installed this week.

W. Andrews surveyed accomplishments on the list of New Business. The Pledge to Support New Jersey Wildlife Action Plan was passed by Council. The 2016 National Mayors' Challenge for Conservation has been publicized through the township web site and the newsletter. The rain barrel workshop had 15 people registered, 13 of whom showed up; one woman took home three barrels. Rutgers Cooperative Extension is no longer supplying barrels, but they are available from businesses which receive food materials in food quality 55 gallon barrels – sometimes free, sometimes for a charge.

P. Walitsky displayed the EC banner, to be hung at the Commission table at Franklin Day. He has obtained from Philips Electric a donation of 100 LED bulbs. Various brochures should be available at the Commission table – that describing the Commission, the Conservation Easement brochure, perhaps (if they are still available) Water Dept 6" rulers with small holes advertising how much water can be lost by leakage through such holes in a year.

W. Andrews will contact Division of Fish & Wildlife personnel for a fall seminar on deer.

A. Schmidt suggested nominating township farmers, as a group, for the Environmental Stewardship award in the fall – especially organic farmers. T. Chase noted that the new Cooperative 518 on Rte 518 farms organically.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 PM.