

Minutes of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission September 16, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM and the Sunshine Law Notice was read. The roll was called. Present were: W. Andrews, C. MacIvor, A Schmidt, P. Walitsky, T. Chase, R. Razani, J. Johnson, S. Jaracz. Absent: D. Pydeski

Chair Discussion. Preparation for Franklin Day (September 28th). Flyers from Stony Brook Millstone Watershed, Rutgers, Electric Car Group, NJDEP and Environmental Commission will be available. Stan Jaracz will have his electric car on display. We will partner with the Franklin Women's Club if they do obtain the 600 LED bulb donation from Signify (Philips).

Website Some updates needed.

Two plans were submitted for review. Both were revisions of previously reviewed submissions.

Odin Pharmaceutical-Expansion will result in removal of trees with no replanting possible. Besides payment to Tree Fund, Commission recommends consideration of a "Green Roof" (Roof Top or wall gardens). We also recommend Solar Cells for roof or for parking lot (as neighboring property has proposed).

Muslim Foundation submitted changes to existing plan but did not follow EC recommendation to use a different weed killer (rather than Glyphosate herbicide.) We still believe that the detention pond should have a protective barrier. (There is no mention of such in the revised plan).

Discussion of Sustainable Jersey. Councilman Chase attended a "listening session". Randy Solomon was the speaker. They are looking for changes in program. Our adaption of Idle Control for Police Cars was one topic. Councilman Chase suggested reforestation for a possible inclusion in the Sustainable Jersey portfolio. Other items for points were determination of Municipal and Community Carbon Footprint. R. Rezani believes may be some literature on this. She will research.

Some Townships (including Hillsborough) have now included a Sustainability Officer in their Municipal structure.

Previously discussed issues:

Encouraging Boy Scout "Green Activity" Should be a Merit Badge in their Portfolio. Ms. Robin Suydam (Member of the Public) volunteered to look into this for the EC.

Compressor Station Activity: NJDEP continues to reject proposals and Transco continues to respond with modifications and additions asked for. It was noted that the Penn East Pipeline was denied permission to obtain state land by eminent domain. (Different situation than the Compressor Station project)

One use plastics proposals-. Sixty-five NJ municipalities have enacted different variations. Councilman Chase has written State Senator Robert Smith about this but no answer yet. The EC needs research on

various proposals (J. Johnson) The EC will consider a possible ordinance after research is completed. ANJEC is conducting a survey. Highland Park will be contacted. Their ordinance phases in after 6 months of charging customers for bags.

Discussion followed concerning the responsibility of property owners to clean up trash and litter from their properties. C. MacIvor's article in Franklin Times on disposal of prescription drugs won praise from all.

Arnold Schmidt noted that we are still waiting to hear from Township about noise code enforcement and response to complaints and coordination with the County Health Department and the County CEHA agency. Do we have police officers that are certified by Rutgers to use noise meters? Do we have a noise meter that has been calibrated at a certified lab within the last 12 months?

The Shade Tree Commission does consider tree protection from deer foraging.

Under New business:

Arnold Schmidt indicated contact with Michelle Smith of the NJDEP about presenting a Seminar on Coyotes. April 6 will be the best date. Stan Jaracz discussed a slide show on Spotted Lantern-flies to be presented by George Hamilton of the NJDEP.

Public Discussion: Ms. Robin Suydam presented her observations and suggestions for future EC discussions and possible actions.

Ms. Suydam suggested that Township churches could be centers for the sustainability movement with Franklin Township. They do need help in understanding State resources like Direct install which could help their finances and the environment at the same time.

Franklin Township should budget for a Sustainability Officer. WAWA should help with litter in vicinity of their establishment. Clean up of Three Mile Run area near Route 27 railway crossing deserves attention; there is a large amount of litter present. This could be a Boy Scout project. She also pointed out that speeding impacts the environment (emissions, waste of energy). She especially pointed out Skillman Lane where speeding is endemic.

Ms. Suydam further suggested that Signify (Philips) be approached about the possibility of them making LED lamp Donation to Franklin Food Bank which is a 501c(3) and serves the a significant number of Franklin Township residents. Concerning the wooded areas in the Township, Ms. Suydam pointed out that trees are a great asset to our community and the planet. We need to encourage property owners to keep the trees on their property. She suggested that the Township offer a Woodland Assessment grant to owners who pledge to preserve wooded areas (similar to a Conservation easement).

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Paul Walitsky
Vice Chair Environmental Commission