

Minutes of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission meeting December 16, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM, and the Sunshine Law Notice read. The roll was called. Present were: W. Andrews, S. Jaracz, J. Johnson, D. Pydeski, and A. Schmidt; and Council liaison T. Chase. Absent: C. MacIvor (excused; she informed the chair that she would be out of town), R. Razani, P. Walitsky.

Chair's report (1): two letters concerning wetlands interpretation, and one for footprint of disturbance (for a Verizon wireless facility) were received.

The minutes of the meeting of Nov. 18 were approved with one small change.

The meeting was opened to the public. Mr. Raghupathy introduced himself as a candidate for membership. He has not been able to get the Citizen Leadership form.

Six plans were received for review. Three were resubmissions, of which two had revised their plan in accordance with the EC's previous comments, and one simply added application for a variance. One of the others was for a temple at 620 S. Middlebush Rd, where a previous proposed temple had given up following a DEP requirement for a packaged sewage treatment plant rather than a septic system. This application also proposes a septic system.

Web site/e-mail: D. Triggs sent to J. Johnson his suggested text for an automatic reply to e-mail to the EC's address, which she read to the meeting. All approved; she will send it to Bob McQueen for implementation.

Chair's report (2): W. Andrews reported that several senior groups have asked him for a presentation from the EC on a plastic bag ban. He requests development of an EC position before making a presentation. The township web site will show the cancellation of the Dec. 2 meeting.

T. Chase should ask Mark Healey whether new developments should be required to put utility lines underground. J. Johnson will call Bob McQueen about proper protocol for updates to the EC web site page and in social media. Township clerk Ann Marie McCarthy is holding all corrections until January, when other changes on the township web site will be made.

New(ish) business: review of the ANJEC model ordinance banning plastic bags waits to see whether the Legislature will pass Bob Smith's bill. If not, we will discuss this at the next meeting.

T. Chase should obtain job descriptions for Sustainability Officers, in aid of an EC request that Franklin appoint one.

Bob Vornlocker proposes that township public charging stations should charge users, as the electricity cost is now about \$350/month. Does this include the charging stations for township vehicles?

Giveaway of indigenous tree saplings at Franklin Day 2020 (as the Shade Tree Commission does at Arbor Day): the EC could do this alone or with the Shade Tree Commission.

Spring clean-up, Seeley's Brook by the Easton Ave. Shoprite, April 18: the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership will participate, along with the Watershed Institute. This is an opportunity to count plastic bags collected prior to a ban, as suggested by ANJEC.

S. Jaracz reported on the NJ Spotlight meeting on electric vehicles, the proposed state legislation, and the first meeting of the Central Jersey chapter of the Electric Vehicle Association. He will be liaison to this. T. Chase reported that the township will install new charging stations at Middlebush Park and the library. S. Jaracz complained that Middlebush Park is a poor place for a charging station because it will not be used during the winter. The best place to charge is at home, but this is not available to residents of multi-unit housing.

List of past Environmental Stewardship awardees: does Dave Triggs have this?

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 PM.