

## **Minutes of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission virtual meeting April 5, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM, and the Sunshine Law Notice read. The roll was called. Present were: W. Andrews, S. Jaracz, J. Johnson, D. Pydeski, M. Santiago, A. Schmidt, R. Suydam, P. Walitsky; and Council liaison T. Chase.

Chair's report: Replacement of C. MacIvor will be left to whoever makes the choice.

The minutes of the meeting of March 15 were accepted, as amended in response to members' comments.

e-mails: from Wyland Foundation, calling on us to participate in the Mayors' Challenge for Water Conservation. There was no interest in pursuing this. From Madison Menkevitch of East Brunswick, calling on the EC to support an end to fracking and fracking infrastructure. New Jersey already bans fracking within its borders; there was no interest in endorsing a nationwide ban. From Sofia Lopa, asking the EC to oppose the proposed liquid natural gas terminal at Gibbstown, NJ. R. Suydam explained the problem and asked the EC to pass a resolution against it.

Amy Spears sent her resumé. She wants to do an internship, for the Rutgers Environmental Stewardship, with the EC. What needs to be done, procedurally, to take her on? T. Chase suggested contacting Mark Healey, who has had Rutgers interns. Ron Russo, Olcott St., sent an e-mail wanting to help the EC.

Social media: is there something the EC can post via the township's Facebook page? Perhaps something about Transco's request for an extension for building its NESE project (though the deadline for comment to FERC has passed). R. Suydam and J. Johnson will work on something.

The meeting was opened to the public. There were two attendees – Franklin Reporter and Mary Van Nest. Neither had any comments. The meeting was then closed to the public.

Plan reviews: P. Walitsky summarized three applications. Hamilton St. Development (before the Zoning Board), proposes to demolish an existing building and build a nine unit apartment building. The EC requests porous pavement in the parking lot. Sterling Pointe had in its original site plan submission (2002) proposed two apartment buildings. The ground was cleared, but the buildings were never built. The environmental review is the original, dating from 2002; shouldn't they submit a new review? The Center School, 2 Riverview, proposes installing 456 solar cells, on the roof and over the parking lot. They would take out 11 trees, but plant 18 new trees. The EC applauds. Two additional applications are to be heard further in the future: 730 S. Middlebush (the lot where the Clive Dunn house burned down while under renovation): they want a second driveway, to Mattawang St. behind the lot. 3 Corwen Court wants to install an in-ground pool, 97 feet long, on an already undersized corner lot, with pavers around it. They claim the impervious surface will only be 37.5%, where 40% is permitted, a 10% increase. The 1600 sq. ft. increase would require green stormwater management infrastructure under the new stormwater ordinance.

R. Suydam reported that, per Dini Chacko of ANJEC, since the township has an Environmental Resource Inventory the EC is supposed to be notified as soon as plans are available for review. At present we are not notified, constant checking of the Planning Board and Zoning Board web pages is needed. W. Andrews will ask Mark Healey about this. J. Johnson asked whether she can go directly to Mark Healey with questions.

R. Suydam described the EC's report to Mark Healey about the stormwater management ordinance. She is not satisfied with the thresholds for stormwater management measures for

minor and major developments, which are the DEP's default thresholds, not the lower thresholds recommended by the Watershed Institute.

The status of the revision of the EC's web page was reviewed. Member biographies are now complete. Should the EC put out a survey of residents' desires for environmental quality? First, the EC would like to know the *township's* goals and objectives. Needed for the web page are the annual reports for 2019 and 2020 and the EC's current goals and objectives.

R. Suydam reported on environmental commission site plan checklists – she sent examples from Ramsey and Evesham townships. Having the checklists completed would aid EC review. Evesham's checklist, established by ordinance, is three pages long; Ramsay's is 7 pages. ANJEC has training on site plan review on its web site. Mark Healey would have to buy in on this extension of township requirements. R. Suydam will write to him, sending the Ramsey and Evesham checklists as examples.

A. Schmidt and R. Suydam met with Ellen ?? and Bob Hudak of the Shade Tree Commission about common concerns, especially updating and strengthening the Shade Tree Ordinance. More conversation is needed to identify possible changes.

S. Jaracz reported on plans for the April 17 clean-up at Naaman Williams Park. Heather Fenyk of Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership, co-sponsoring the clean-up, has expressed concern about having the clean-up when New Jersey's cases are high. S. Jaracz suggested getting the mayor's opinion; T. Chase will do this.

The meeting was opened to the public, for any further comments. There were none. The meeting was closed to the public, and adjourned at 9:10 PM.