

**Franklin Township Environmental Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 19, 2012**

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM, and the Sunshine Law notice read. The roll was called. Present were: W. Andrews, J. Clyde, D. Pydeski, A. Schmidt, A. Vernick. Absent were: T. Biercz (who had not been informed of his appointment), C. MacIvor, D. Triggs, P. Walitsky. T. Chase, Council liaison, arrived at 7:15; J. Walker, ex-member, arrived at 7:45.

Victory Chase, Cable TV Committee liaison to the volunteer videotaping project, appeared to ask permission for the April 28 clean-up to be videotaped, for practice in taping an outside event and possibly for showing on the township TV channel. It was suggested that the March 31 rain barrel workshop might also be taped for practice. Waivers, allowing use of the videotape on township TV, are easy for adults (might be a second line on the waiver indemnifying the town against injury during the clean-up): for children, individual waivers must be signed by the parents. J. Clyde moved, it was seconded and approved to welcome taping by the Cable TV volunteers. J. Clyde may scout the vicinity of the Blackwells Mills dam for a reported focus of debris.

James Vassanella, Councilman, asked if the Environmental Commission would express a formal opinion on the proposed ordinance allowing a digital billboard. Since only a bare quorum of the Commission was present, and J. Clyde had to leave soon, discussion of this was moved up on the agenda. A. Schmidt presented a position paper stating the case against the digital billboard. J. Clyde stated that the safety/distraction issue and the effect of illumination on houses across I-287 were prime environmental concerns. He moved that the chair write a letter to the Mayor and Council expressing these concerns. A formal resolution addressed to the Council could be presented at the next meeting. A. Vernick suggested that A. Schmidt prepare a resolution of opposition to the digital billboard ordinance, based on his position paper. J. Clyde's motion to this effect was passed unanimously. (He then left.)

Chair's report: three reports of hazardous substance release were received.

The minutes of the meeting of March 5 were approved. Web site: the rain barrel workshop and the clean-up are posted on the township web site. An article on the clean-up will be in the township newsletter.

Two plans were reviewed, one for a ten story hotel on Davidson Ave.

Sustainable Jersey: a plan for review and payment of the township's utility bills by NJ Energy Tracking System, heard by the Council's Land Use Committee, would facilitate determination of the municipal carbon footprint, a Sustainable Jersey action, and help determine whether the energy efficiency of municipal buildings could be further improved.

Community gardens: J. Walker reported that he had not been able to contact the principal of Pine Grove School due to parent-teacher conferences, to ask whether he/she knew of other possible supervisors for the garden there,. Nor has he been able to reach Gene Unger. He will make a presentation on the Naaman Williams Park garden to the Council on March 27, in the formal hearing on shifting the Community Development Block Grant funds to it.

He has gotten a call from the County Health Dept. about the ground water contamination in Franklin Park, but has not been able to talk with Patty Elliott or Michèle Samarya-Timm, who are familiar with the problem. County inspection of the Raceway gas station did not find a problem discharge, not being guided by Walker's knowledge of the suspect drainage pipe. Testing of well water in the Central Ave. area is needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.