

South Plainfield Environmental Commission

Official Minutes - April 10, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

Notice having been filed with the Courier News and S.P. Observer, Chairwoman Dorothy Miele called the Environmental Commission meeting to order in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act at 8:03 pm.

Present: Dorothy Miele, Tom Walsh, Debra Leporino, Danielle Hurst, Adam Burtrico, John Ferguson, Brian Bythell (planning board liaison) and Jon Dean (council liaison)

Alternate members present: Jordan Mandel

Associate members present: Lisa Roseo (secretary)

Others: Dr. Alice Tempel (environmental specialist)

Absent:

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the March 13, 2019 were reviewed and the following correction was made: on page 2, under Clean Communities, the last line should read.....quite awhile as the lone CBA member. After the correction, all were in favor of approval.

3. INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

- There were no members of the public present.

4. BUDGET - Dr. A. Tempel

- O&E (FY2019) (temporary budget still in effect-\$500) Since the last meeting we spent \$0. YTD spent = \$425. Balance = \$50.
- Clean Communities - (2018 grant \$45,915.07) Since the last meeting we spent \$2,167.32 on: \$770.12 on sign enforcement and litter removal salary & wages; \$475 on litter can maintenance; \$322.50 for car litter bags; \$599.70 for a color display ad in The SP Observer. Spent YTD = \$16,137.75. Balance = \$29,777.32.
- Signs Trust Fund – Spent \$0. The balance = \$595.12.
- Harris Steel Tree Fund – Since the last report we spent \$0. Deposits = \$0. Current balance is \$36,786.28.
- Sustainable Jersey PSE&G Capacity Building Grant (\$2,000) - Spent since March: \$1,500 to consultant for Green Team website construction & videography. Dr. Tempel said the video needs some editing before going public. The report to Sustainable Jersey for this project is due at the end of the month.

5. COMMITTEE and LIAISON REPORTS

A. Council Liaison - Mr. J. Dean

- Jon reported he spoke with Chris Cioffi whose brother saw people using chainsaws on the OTOSP. Jon called Dr. Tempel who said there is an Eagle Scout candidate who is supposed to be doing a thinning of the Sweet Gum trees. Jon said it seemed they were cutting in a wide area that included some large trees. Dr. Tempel is concerned they may have cut beyond the area that was agreed upon. Jon asked them to halt until the area/trees could be confirmed by Dr. Tempel. Dr. Tempel said she will go to the site.
- SPEC asked Jon if he consulted with the Mayor & Council about possibly purchasing the Longwood Estates property off of Park Avenue. He has not, but is aware that neighbors are in favor of keeping it as open space. Dr. Tempel said there are ways for the property owner to get a tax deduction by donating

the difference in market value vs. what is taken in by the sale. The owner might be able to work that out through the NJCF. Using Middlesex County Open Space or Green Acres funds might also be an option. Dorothy explained that a specific plan for use and management of the property/buildings has to be in place. She said there are ways the property can be utilized as an asset for the town. She believes public sentiment would be in favor of some historic preservation in town. One of the houses on the property dates back to 1895. Dr. Tempel said it could be an ideal location for the SP Historical Society. Dorothy is in favor of the town investing in a cultural center which can house musical, art, public speaking events etc. John Ferguson added the county has been making a push to invest in cultural resources. Jon said he will broach the Mayor & Council.

B. Planning Board Liaison - Mr. R. Houghton / Mr. B. Bythell

- Brian said there is nothing new to report at this time.

C. Site Plan Review - Mr. A. Butrico / Mr. J. Mandel

- Insite Real Estate Investment Properties (KinderCare Learning Center) (2301 Park Ave.) - applicant wants to convert the old Rite Aid building to a child care center. They will be renovating the interior. Adam and Jordan looked at the site. Adam gave a verbal review on the submitted plan narrative. Dr. Tempel wonders whether the new owners have the O & M manual that was created when the detention basin went in or will they develop their own. She explained there will be new state storm water management permit requirements. Towns will have to keep a file/index of all the privately-owned storm water management facilities. So KinderCare will probably be required to register with our Boro engineer and certify the maintenance yearly. Those regs have not been set up yet by the Boro yet. For now SPEC will comment that the applicant should follow state guidelines. SPEC will ask that the existing landscaping be renovated and 'No Idling' signs be installed.
- T-Mobile (4701 Stelton Road) - applicant proposes installing cell tower antennas on the Holiday Inn roof. They need a waiver for one antenna because it exceeds 50 feet in height. There is an existing generator on the roof. SPEC will verify whether they need an air permit from the NJDEP.

D. ERI - Ms. D. Leporino

- Debra said she and Dr. Tempel continue to make progress.

E. Clean Communities - Dr. A. Tempel

- Spring Cleanup - Dr. Tempel did an email blast to Scout contacts and past volunteers. She hasn't received many responses yet. Dr. Tempel asked members if they can volunteer to make phone calls to past participants. Danielle and Lisa volunteered.
- Chris Cioffi sent info about the #trash tag challenge. He suggested we can also incentivize people to participate in the Spring Litter Cleanup by offering prizes for best cleanups/photos in a few categories. Chris will line up the prize donations. Dr. Tempel said in order to be eligible for a prize, participants need to post their photos to #trashtag and #litterfreeSP.
- Adopt-a-Spot - Kevin Kober applied to adopt the Timber Creek Landscaping spot on the South Clinton Avenue extension. Dr. Tempel told him his application will be reviewed by the CCAB Steering Committee.

F. Land Use - Dr. A. Tempel

- Green Brook Flood Control Project - Dr. Tempel said John Ferguson also attended the 4/3 meeting. John said money is being designated, but currently not for this area. Dr. Tempel said there are levees proposed for Spring Lake Park, behind Boro Hall along the Cedar Brook and along the tributary in HAW. The whole overall project was designed in the mid-90's. HAW was established in 1992, but the USACE didn't know about it; a previous plan included a housing development. The Boro isn't in favor of levees in Spring Lake Park or HAW. Putting them in HAW would change the ecosystem.
- The applicant for the proposed doctor's office on New Durham Road wants to donate a conservation easement on the eastern portion of the site which is impacted by wetlands on the adjacent Traditions development to the Boro. There are wetlands in the transition area. Our planner questioned who will be

responsible for monitoring and maintenance. Jon said the easement is a right-of-way which the Boro would use if necessary anyway. The applicant is obligated to maintain it and not encroach upon it. SPEC suggests we decline the donation.

- Dr. Tempel reported a resident who lives on Baker Avenue next to the tributary that flows through Walnut Street Park into the Bound Brook, called several times to complain about litter. The recycling crew has been out there three times in response. Apparently she wants the banks leveled because the water sits on top. She is trying to get John Obryk, Health Officer, to contact the county to go in with heavy equipment to regrade so the water flows into the stream. However, the area is wetlands, so John Obryk will tell her the Boro cannot do anything.

G. Forestry - Mr. J. Schmidt

- Dr. Tempel met with Len Miller, Christine Faustini, Jon Dean and the new Recreation Dept. director at the Dog Park. She drew up a tree planting proposal that Jon Dean thought was good. Will go out for prices.
- Jon Dean asked the commission if they approve of him donating his time and resources to re-landscape around the Putnam Park sign at the corner of Park and Oak Tree. Members said that would be very nice.

H. Highland Avenue Woods / Public Education - Mrs. D. Miele

- Dorothy mentioned there is a large tree that needs to be cut down and downed trees that need to be cut up. Maybe DPW can do it.

I. Historical Sites Preservation - Mr. L. Randolph

- There was nothing to report.

J. Pollution - Mr. A. Butrico / Ms. D. Hurst

- Adam said he reached out to Mickey Gross from the Middlesex County Environmental Health Division. They will now be exchanging dialogue.

K. Green Team - Mr. T. Walsh

- Tom reported our video is being edited and will soon be up on the Green Team website.
- Dr. Tempel said the next Green Team meeting should deal with finishing the Capacity Building Grant. We have to get back to pursuing the actions we've initiated in the past that are idle. She said the Green Team is getting more exposure through social media, but it has not translated to people volunteering yet. Hopefully, the video will help.
- Tom mentioned he is consulting with Kathleen Benton and colleagues on the proposed high school greenhouse. He joined them to meet the gentlemen who's in charge of the North Plainfield Middle School greenhouse. Tom will relay the information to our superintendent, Dr. Noreen Lishak.
- Chris Cioffi is working with DPW to mark-out for additional 'No Idling' signs at Riley School.

L. Public Information & Technology -

- Dr. Tempel discovered that the storm water advisory page had vanished from the Boro website. It was put back by the webmaster.

M. Stormwater Advisory Committee- Mr. T. Walsh

- Dr. Tempel met with Len Miller and Rosario Santos of T&M about the new NJDEP requirements for the Tier A storm water discharge permit. Many new requirements. She and Tom will work together to achieve the new 12 pts. worth of education activities needed.

N. Environmental Specialist - Dr. A. Tempel

- There was nothing additional to report.

O. Chairwoman's Report - Mrs. D. Miele

- There was nothing new to report.

6. INCOMING / OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

- A list of correspondences is attached

7. OLD BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

- CBA - Dr. Tempel said Kathleen Benton brought in some students to make phone calls to businesses to update the member list and ask for tonnage reports that were not yet submitted.
- Debra spoke of her idea to have the CBA sponsor a food and or toiletry drive to benefit our social services department that would coincide with our litter cleanups; possibly the fall cleanup. It would also raise awareness for the CBA. This can be discussed at the next CBA meeting.
- Debra reported she spoke with Marge Reedy about making 'Christmas in July' a litter-free event. That committee will be meeting tonight. Debra said the Labor Day picnic will also be a litter-free event as she is organizing those festivities.
- John reported he attended the last ANJEC Conference. He also reported his office in Emergency Management will be going for their new updated multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan. Currently trying to get municipalities together to look at mitigation projects and get those projects into FEMA for funding. John mentioned the county is working on their Master Plan to 2040. The county will do outreach to get residents' input on areas such as transportation, land use etc.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2019 at 8:00 pm in the Borough Hall Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Roseo
Environmental Commission Secretary

ACRONYMS

ANJEC	- Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
BOA	- Board of Adjustment
CAG	- Community Advisory Group
CBA	- Clean Business Association
CCAB	- Clean Communities Advisory Board
CFMP	- Community Forestry Management Plan
DOT	- Department of Transportation
DPW	- Department of Public Works
EIS	- Environmental Impact Study
EPA	- Environmental Protection Agency
ERI	- Environmental Resources Inventory
EWA	- Edison Wetlands Association
FEMA	- Federal Emergency Management Agency
FOW	- Friends of the Woods

GBFCP - Green Brook Flood Control Project
HAW - Highland Avenue Woods
KCS - Known Contaminated Sites
LEEDS - The Lead in Energy and Environmental Design
MCDSWM - Middlesex County Division of Solid Waste Management
MCUFAC - Middlesex County Urban Forestry Advisory Committee
NJCF - New Jersey Conservation Foundation
NJDEP - New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
NOV - Notice of Violation
OTOSP - Oak Tree Open Space Parcel
PRP's - Potentially Responsible Parties
ROSI - Recreation and Open Space Inventory
ROW - Right-of-Way
SPBA - South Plainfield Business Association
SPEC - South Plainfield Environmental Commission
USACE - United States Army Corp of Engineers