

South Plainfield Environmental Commission

Official Minutes - August 14, 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 8:02 pm.

Present: Dorothy Miele, Tom Walsh, Debra Leporino, John Ferguson, and Brian Bythell (planning board liaison)

Alternate members present: Jordan Mandel and Adam Butrico

Associate members present: Kathleen Benton and Lisa Roseo (secretary)

Others: Dr. Alice Tempel (environmental specialist)

Absent: Danielle Hurst and Jon Dean (e)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June 12, 2019 meeting were reviewed and all were in favor of approval. The minutes of the July 10, 2019 meeting did not need approval as they were unofficial due to lack of a quorum.

3. INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

- Tom Benton was in attendance.

4. BUDGET - Dr. A. Tempel

- O&E (FY2019) (\$2,375) Since the last meeting we spent \$0. YTD spent = \$497.93. Balance = \$1,877.07.
- Clean Communities - (2018 grant \$45,915.07) Ended with a balance of \$4,400.19 per Dr. Tempel's O&E account. The balance reported to the state is \$5,481.36 = itemized deductions. Dr. Tempel spent hours trying to reconcile the same expenditures in two different files. She will continue. We haven't filed for an extension to spend the balance yet.
(2019 grant \$50,329.53) Spent since July meeting - \$3,375 on: \$1,400 on sign enforcement and litter removal salary & wages; \$475 on litter can maintenance; \$1,500 for school assembly programs. These expenditures are coming from the 2019 grant for the moment. If we are granted our extension, they will be re-categorized as expenditures from the remainder of the 2018 grant.
- 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 \$31,653.78.

5. COMMITTEE and LIAISON REPORTS

A. Council Liaison - Mr. J. Dean

- There was no report.

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

- Brian said there was no meeting yesterday. The planning board concluded the M&M Realty (Crossroads @ Durham) application. They met all the conditions required and received final approval. There will be monitoring work to ensure they are complying with restrictions that were set. Still awaiting test results from the sewer/sanitary line study.

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

- Bridgepoint (602 New Market Ave.)(former Gypsum site) - applicant wants to build a large warehouse for storage and office building with parking. The other half of the lot will be a detention basin. Adam and Jordan checked the site. It is currently forested wetlands and an abandoned building. Applicant has requested an EIS waiver because they have on-site staff who will be in charge of compliance. They are also using CTM Environmental to file reports to the NJDEP on cleanup of site. They are applying to the NJDEP for a flood hazard permit which allows them to build in a wetlands area. SPEC will ask for that EIS. They will be clearing approximately 21 acres. The warehouse will have about 40 tractor trailer loading docks in the rear. There will be 181 parking spaces. Adam believes their traffic study only utilized construction conditions, not proposed-use traffic conditions. SPEC will clarify. The traffic report stated that an increase of 100 or more vehicles at peak per hour would equal a significant increase. This report figured 50 or less vehicles. SPEC members contend that each tractor trailer should be equal to 3 - 4 cars. When you couple that with the current tractor trailer traffic (truck route), the increase is significant. This increase will cause a degradation of air quality and noise pollution in the residential area. Reviewed their tree removal/replacement plan. They will be removing approx. 260 trees and planting 213 shade, 28 ornamental and 83 evergreens. The site is currently 22% impervious; it will increase to 49%. The building is 4 acres. This will contribute to the flooding issue in the area. Tom suggested they could be the first company in town to install a green roof. He said green roofs can divert/capture up to 60% of rain water from entering into storm sewers. Tom explained the many benefits. It would reduce the size of the detention basin. Dr. Tempel noted that having a detention basin in a flood plain is not the most effective plan. Jordan mentioned ¼ of the perc tests failed because the soil was too wet. They reached water levels above where the bottom of the proposed detention basin will be. Therefore, there will be standing water/pond. SPEC will question what type of goods will be shipped/received, particularly due to possible flooding in the area. The applicant did not supply a recycling plan.
- All Seasons Sports Academy (2700 Hamilton Blvd.)(revised application) - the applicant is proposing to install ball fields in the rear and increase parking. We previously commented on the wetlands. This site plan doesn't show wetlands delineation; Dr. Tempel said they may have been filled them as proposed on the 2017 application. Jordan said there is a lot of masonry fill in the rear of the property. The location for some of the fields is heavily wooded. There is no traffic study, EIS or tree removal plan. Adam said there are two existing 24" drainage pipes coming out in the proposed area for the fields. These are not addressed on the site plan.
- Dr. Tempel mentioned the previously reviewed site plan for 1335 W. 7th Street is considered incomplete, so she is waiting for additional info before submitting our comments.

D. ERI - Ms. D. Leporino

- Dorothy said we need a new chairperson for this committee because Debra has to step down as chair. Debra completed most of the open space index update.

E. Clean Communities - Dr. A. Tempel

- Decided on 9/21 for the fall litter cleanup at the 7/16 CCAB meeting. Dr. Tempel drafted a flier which will also serve as an ad in 'The Observer'. Debra will email the flier to CBA members and civic groups and post on social media sites. The CBA will sponsor a toiletry/food drive for the Boro pantry.
- Glitter Award - discussed the criteria that Debra has drafted. She will forward to the CBA advisory committee for comments.

F. Land Use - Dr. A. Tempel

- There was nothing new to report.

G. Forestry - Mr. J. Schmidt

- The dog park tree planting is complete. Dr. Tempel said we purchased extra trees to plant in Willow Park which exceeded the quote threshold. We had to get more quotes, but by the time that was done, it

was too advanced in the season to plant.

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

- Dr. Tempel will be hosting a nature walk on 8/28 for the girl scouts.

I. Historical Sites Preservation - Mr. L. Randolph

- There was nothing to report.

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

- Adam said there is nothing new to report from Mickey Gross, Middlesex County Health Dept.

K. Green Team - Mr. T. Walsh

- Tom said at the last meeting members started discussing ‘Sustainable Jersey’ action points. Tom will be getting the Boro’s new vehicle inventory list from DPW, which may get us some points. Tom doesn’t think it will kick in for this year.

- Dr. Tempel reported the main interview with ‘Business View’ magazine, a Canadian publication, is scheduled for 8/28. She and Councilman White have already had a conference call and several emails exchanged. She explained that one of the sustainability factors is strengthening your local economy. Councilman White is working on a program that will promote buying local. It will be a way for our local businesses to have an online presence. This is one of the factors that attracted the publication to our town along with our sustainability program.

L Public Information & Technology -

- There was nothing new to report.

M. Stormwater Advisory Committee- Mr. T. Walsh

- John Ferguson said he can make available info he receives from a mailing list on storm water management. John mentioned Rutgers is hosting an open house on 9/14 at the Rutgers Marine Field in Little Egg Harbor. This is located within the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve. Lisa Auermuller, watershed coordinator, will be speaking.

N. Environmental Specialist - Dr. A. Tempel

- Dr. Tempel presented an issue of ‘Resource Recycling’ with an article on plastic packaging. Jon Dean brought up the possibility of a town ban on plastic bags. Some SPEC members are gathering data/info on the subject to advise.

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

- Kathleen said more money is needed for the proposed green house at the high school. She has been busy gathering details and information for the planned uses.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- Debra asked what she needs to do to make the Labor Day festivities a ‘Litter-free’ event. Dr. Tempel explained.

- Adam said he would like the Boro to revisit their ordinance limiting honey bee hives to approx. 8. He would like to add to his existing hives. He explained a study showed that each hive adds ecologically \$350 in value. The ordinance limiting hives was adopted due to an incident from hives that an aging beekeeper had; her hives were swarming. Dr. Tempel explained to Adam that he would have to draft a sample ordinance that would convince our commission that this is an idea we would recommend the council adopt the amendment. Adam will consult with John Obryk, health department.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2019 at 8:00 pm in the Borough Hall Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Roseo
Environmental Commission Secretary

ACRONYMS

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| 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 |