



**BOROUGH OF RARITAN, SOMERSET
COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
*February 21, 2019***

MINUTES

Chairman Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Chairman Clark read the following Open Public Meetings Act Statement:

Open Public Meetings Statement:

“In accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, be advised that adequate notice of this Meeting of the Environmental Commission of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset was made by the posting on the bulletin board at the Borough Hall and transmitted to the officially designated newspapers indicating that his Meeting would take place at the Borough Hall, Council Chambers at 7:00pm on February 21, 2019. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.”

The roll call was as follows:

Present: Mark Clark (Chair), Michael DeCicco, Olga Metaxas, Emilie Stander, Joanie McKelvey, Chris Gussman

Absent: Denise Carra, Paul Giraldi, Diana Russo

Members of the public: none present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. DeCicco, seconded by Ms. Stander, to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2019 meeting. The motion was carried unanimously upon voice vote.

REPORT FROM BOROUGH COUNCIL

There was no report from Borough Council.

Mayor McMullin was present to conduct the oath of office for Mr. Gussman and Ms. McKelvey to welcome them as new members on the commission.

REPORT FROM PLANNING BOARD

Mr. DeCicco briefed the group that the Planning Board reviewed the site plan for a set of warehouses on Johnson Drive towards the end. The site plan did not include any new structures, and was done just to properly document existing structures.

Mr. Clark submitted the comments on the site plans the group reviewed during the last meeting.

Mr. DeCicco reported that the 3rd Ave development is moving along quickly. The foundation is in already and the parking structures will go up next.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

No members of the public present.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a) Wayfinding and Streetscape Improvement Workshop, Feb 2nd, 8:30am-12:30pm at train station: Mr. Clark shared a report and recommendations he prepared following his attendance at the workshop. He gave a brief description of the proposed project, including art installations and trees down Anderson and/or Thompson to invite people to spend time in Raritan rather than just pass through. Workshop organized presented the option of using bioretention along Anderson/Thompson using curb cuts to water trees with stormwater. Ms. McKelvey, when she served as secretary as RBEC previously, donated her salary to purchase curbside trees and tried to give them away to homeowners, but no one wanted them. She was trying to target Anderson and Thompson streets, but no one wanted to deal with the leaves/maintenance. She ended up installing them in Frelinghuysen Park. The tree planting in this case would likely be organized by the borough, so would not require homeowners to volunteer. Mr. Clark provided a little background on the \$1M TAP grant and indicated there would be a master plan and opportunities for public comment. Mr. Clark's recommendations covered several topics, including art installations visible from the train. Ms. McKelvey shared that there's a local group looking to facilitate an arts scene in Raritan, similar to efforts in Somerville. Mr. Clark made some lighting recommendations to replace existing lighting with LEDs. We can make a recommendation to potentially put a top shield over the fixture to make them more directional. He also recommended putting a stormwater retention feature in the little park with the swingset.
- Mr. Clark also discussed the Economic Development Committee's grant to make main street more attractive to businesses. This \$200,000 grant would be used to spiff up the main street via better enforcement of property management ordinances. Mr. DeCicco raised concerns about efforts that could increase the costs on business owners, as has happened in other towns. Mr. Clark encouraged Mr. DeCicco to attend the Committee's meeting and to look up the information about the committee on the borough website.
- Mr. Clark shared that there's a \$20,000 grant to study pedestrian and bicycle traffic safety. He shared a letter of support from the Commission and invited input from Commissioners.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Potential Grant Proposals
- a. ANJEC Open Space grant, \$1500, due April 15, simple application – propose stormwater management structure in one of the borough parks and associated education/outreach activities. **ACTION:** Commissioners were asked to look for potential locations before the next meeting.
 - b. NJ American Water Environmental Grant Program, \$1-10,000, due Mar 29, application not too involved – could request funding for metal bars to put on the catch basins to

trap debris from getting into the stormdrains, could also incorporate the adopt-a-stormdrain ideas we developed for the Sustainable Jersey hub proposal, or impervious cover assessment. **ACTION:** Emilie will write a draft for the group to comment on at the next meeting.

- b) Mark shared the RBEC's draft annual report for our review; Ms. Metaxas entered a motion to approve the report, Mr. DeCicco seconded, all members approved. Mr. Clark will notify Mr. Giraldi that he would like to read the report into the record at an upcoming Borough Council meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

- a) VW Charging Station: We'll need an enabling ordinance to identify potential locations. **ACTION:** Mr. Clark will start drafting language after the Eco-Fair. Mr. DeCicco discussed a potential property near the train station. The town would have to purchase the lot, so would have to discuss with the mayor.
- b) River clean up, April 6, 10am, Canal Street Park next to Basilone statue and foot bridge; Ms. McKelvey organizes volunteers to clean up under Basilone bridge and Nevius St bridge, inmates can do the roadside work, canal path usually doesn't need too much cleaning, wants to focus on embankment on Old York Rd side and get people with boats to go into the canal, wants more volunteers at Hibernia footbridge near Woodmere St, before Robert St there was a junkyard with old trash getting into the river, past Robert St there are several Bridgewater businesses that are pushing their trash closer and closer to the river, Ms. McKelvey is communicating with Kristen Schiro from Bridgewater Township to coordinate and get donations of cleanup materials. DPW will pick up the trash bags. Commissioners are encouraged to participate in the cleanup and spread the word.
- c) Updates on actions from last meeting:
- **ACTION:** We discussed potential grant proposal opportunities.
 - **ACTION:** Mr. Clark has communicated designation of Secretary to Council for confirmation.
 - **ACTION:** Mr. Clark has located maps showing where the electricity is along the streets.

GREEN TEAM

- a) South County Green Team meeting of Green Team representatives from Manville, Hillsborough, Franklin, and Raritan on Thur, Mar 28, 6:30pm at Manville Borough Hall Sustainable Jersey. The meeting is designed to identify opportunities for these towns to collaborate on Sustainable Jersey projects. RBEC members are encouraged to attend.
- b) Raritan Day/Eco Day, Sat Apr 27, rain date Apr 28, we'll receive 1,000 tree seedlings to give out, several RBEC members attended the Events Committee meeting last week. There are several subcommittees to join to pull the event together. Ms. McKelvey has ideas for potential vendors that she will share. Events Committee is working on the art contest, parking, logistics, etc. Vendors will bring prizes to raffle off, plus RBEC will come up with some environmentally-friendly prizes, plus giveaways. Mr. Clark prepared a flyer, Ms. McKelvey will publicize it on Facebook when the time gets closer.
- c) RBEC/Green Team Facebook page: Ms. McKelvey is willing to manage the page.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. DeCicco, seconded by Ms. Stander, to adjourn the meeting at 8:23pm.