



B O R O U G H O F R A R I T A N

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

April 21st, 2022

MINUTES

1) 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 posting on the Raritan Borough website indicating that this Meeting would take place at the Raritan Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. on April 21st, 2022. 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.

2) Roll Call

- In attendance: Juan Alvarez; Olga Metaxas; Emilie Stander; Tony Sacino; Michael DeCicco; Christopher Gussman; JennieRose Saunders; Pablo Orozco, Council Liaison
- Not in attendance: Denise Carra, Planning Board Liaison

3) Flag Salute

4) Approval of Minutes: March 17th, 2022

Mr. Gussman made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Sacino seconded the motion.

5) Report from Borough Council

Ms. Saunders came to the recent Council meeting to discuss the creation of a no-mow zone to protect the new tree seedlings in the greenway area near JFK School. Engineer Shrek was in favor of this idea. We can make it an event to stake out the area. The Commission can identify the exact area and Councilman Orozco will bring the information to the Council. Council can purchase additional seedlings as needed to expand the planted area. Ms. Saunders added that we could try to partner with the school on this effort. Mr. Orozco indicated that the JFK principal is very responsive to Council; he is also a member of the PTO so he can help make connections to the school.

6) Report from Planning Board

The plan for 14 apartments in the old school next to the municipal building was approved. The plan for 8 units in the Colfax development was also approved. The Colfax redevelopment will also include EV charging stations.

The group discussed the state of sewer repairs in the town. The work is done piecemeal by a regional authority that serves a number of local towns. In light of the flooding that occurred as a result of Ida, the group agreed that more needs to be done to address impervious cover and the resulting strain on the sewer system.

The group discussed the need to include more green infrastructure in future development and redevelopment plans. Commissioners discussed the fact that it will be necessary to pass an enhanced stormwater ordinance in order to require developers to incorporate green infrastructure into engineering plans. Ms. Saunders talked about the need to think bigger regarding the riverfront area as a place to support businesses as well as environmental benefits.

A developer purchased the Stop & Shop property for \$6M.

7) Public Comment

Adam _____ attended from the public to introduce himself as a candidate for Borough Council and an interested member of the public. He indicated that he hopes to attend future meetings to get up to speed on environmental issues in the borough.

8) Discussion Items

9) New Business

- Resolution of annual notice with dates and times of upcoming EC meetings
Ms. Stander prepared the resolution for the Commission to review. Mr. DeCicco made a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Metaxas seconded the motion.
- The group reviewed the proposed plans of the new apartment complex on Orlando Ave next to the Lena. The complex includes 70 units plus a parking lot with 140 spaces. The plan was just received by the Planning Board yesterday and is not on the agenda for the next Planning Board meeting.
- How can the EC inform the vision for redevelopment of the Washington School area?
This issue is currently being discussed at Borough Council. Some financing is in place but the planning process is moving slowly. Council is still envisioning that emergency services would be relocated to the site.

10) Old Business

- Tree seedling giveaway for Earth Day on Sat, Apr 23 – coordination and logistics
We were only given 75 seedlings to give away. The event is scheduled for 12-4pm. Mr. Alvarez is not able to attend. He will pick up the tree seedlings tomorrow and will make arrangements to drop off the trees, the banner and canopy to Mr. Gussman and he will take them to the event on Saturday.
- Electric car charging station
This item was tabled until next month.
- Enhanced stormwater ordinance
This item was discussed in conjunction with the development items above.

11) Green Team

- a) Review status spreadsheet to determine activities to pursue over the next year
- b) Discuss funding needs and possible sources
These items were tabled until the next meeting.

12) Adjournment

Mr. DeCicco made a motion to adjourn at 8:49pm, Ms. Saunders seconded.