



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

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

### Regular Meeting

November 17<sup>th</sup>, 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 November 17<sup>th</sup>, 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; Christopher Gussman; Heath Hofmeister;
- Not in attendance: Michael DeCicco; Pablo Orozco, Council Liaison; Denise Carra, Planning Board Liaison

3) Flag Salute

4) Approval of Minutes: October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Mr. Hofmeister made a motion to approve; Mr. Gussman seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no revisions.

5) Report from Borough Council

Mr. Alvarez noted that the minutes from the Borough Council meetings are not posted on the borough website all the back to January. We still have no resolution of the EC bylaw change regarding the chairman position for the Environmental Commission in the new year.

Ms. Stander reminded the group that this is time of year when the chair of the Commission prepares the annual report. Ms. Stander will see if she has a previous version of the annual report prepared by Mr. Clark that Mr. Alvarez can work from. In the past the chair read the annual report into the record at a Borough Council meeting.

6) Report from Planning Board

Mr. Alvarez provided some updates based on conversations with zoning officer Gara. The Dollar Tree/Retro Fitness structure will be razed and redeveloped with small retail on the lower level and condos above. The rest of the Raritan Mall development is under litigation with the insurance company and can't be sold until that lawsuit is resolved. The group discussed the apartments planned for the LaGrange redevelopment, and discussed the need for an overpass or some sort of structure to allow children to access the pool. The Planning Board canceled their meeting yesterday and will not meet until the end of the month.

7) Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance.

8) Discussion Items

- Follow up discussion about outreach to local businesses regarding items to giveaway at future community events
  - Ms. Stander updated the group that RVCC had partnered with the NJ Clean Energy Program in the past; Ms. Stander will do some research on their website to see if they're still running programs like this.
  - Mr. Hofmeister is working on finding the right people to talk to at NJ Transit.
  - Ms. Metaxas said that JT may be willing to donate some pens or magnets. The group indicated that ideally we would love donations of environmentally conscious items, but we would certainly take something like pens.
- Status of recommendation to change EC bylaws
  - There is no additional information or status related to this item, as indicated in the "Report from Borough Council" section above.
- Status of recommendation to adopt enhanced stormwater ordinance
  - Mr. Alvarez will ask the borough engineer to ask the lawyers about the status of this initiative.
- E-waste disposal
  - Mr. Hofmeister is still trying to get information from the county about e-waste disposal; he will continue to update the group.

#### 9) New Business

- The group was notified by an interested member of the public that a couple of the trees we planted in the park next to the river were mowed or otherwise damaged. The group agreed to inspect the damage and approach the Department of Public Works as needed.

#### 10) Green Team

- a) Next steps for planning future Sustainable Jersey actions
- b) Mr. Alvarez reached out to the borough engineer to determine who is the current Van Clef representative tasked with assisting the Green Team with Sustainable Jersey certification. Mr. Alvarez is waiting for a response.
- c) Ms. Stander informed the group that Sustainable Jersey has a lot of new actions. The group should review the new actions before our next meeting and identify several we can prioritize: <https://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions/#close>  
The group should assume that most of our previous actions have expired at this point. We should plan to redo some of our previous actions, such as running a green fair and introducing a resolution specifying the membership of the Green Team at the January reorganization meeting.

#### 11) Adjournment

Ms. Metaxas made a motion to adjourn at 8:11pm; Mr. Hofmeister seconded the motion.