



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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

October 19th, 2023

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 October 19th, 2023. 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; Emilie Stander; Tony Sacino; Ryan Bellinger; Heath Hofmeister
- Not in attendance: Olga Metaxas; Michael DeCicco; Christopher Gussman; Adam Armahizer, Council Liaison; Denise Carra, Planning Board Liaison

3) Flag Salute

4) Approval of Minutes from September 21st

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

5) Report from Borough Council

The EC's council liaison was not present, so there was no report from Council.

6) Report from Planning Board

The EC's Planning Board liaison was not present, so there was no report from the Planning Board.

7) Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

8) Discussion Items

- Clean up event debrief
The group discussed the small number of participants and ideas to engage more participants next time. We should make an effort to reach out to the schools to get to the Boy/Girl Scouts involved in future events.
- Social media update and planning: looking for volunteers to develop content for Mr. Bellinger to post, can also find existing content to re-post
Everyone should send Mr. Bellinger content ideas. A fall foliage post could be nice this time of year.
- Stormdrain stenciling update and planning
The past few weekends have been rainy so it has not been conducive to spray painting. Whoever successfully paints a catch basin should send around a photo to the rest of the group so we can standardize the placement of the stencils.
- Follow up from last month's discussion with Assistant Borough Engineer Mr. Brosnan

- Tree removal ordinance
 - Mr. Gussman reviewed the ordinance and shared some comments with Mr. Alvarez. Those will be shared with Mr. Brosnan. Mr. Gussman is still working on updating the tree list.
- Environmental Resource Inventory update
 - Raritan should update its Natural Resource Inventory (NRI, now called an Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)) since it is 10 years old. We can apply for a grant from Sustainable Jersey to get funding to pay someone to do the GIS mapping work. Mr. Bellinger may be interested in taking this on. Ms. Stander will send the group the Sustainable Jersey NRI action document as well as our existing NRI; Mr. Bellinger will determine whether he is able and willing to do this.
- Stay tuned for Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
 - Mr. Brosnan will visit us again once the plan is ready to see what we can do to help with outreach efforts.
 - Ms. Stander suggested we do a little research to see what Clean Communities coordinators are supposed to do.

9) New Business

- Is the EC/Green Team interested in holding an Earth Day event next spring?
 - Mr. Alvarez suggested we reach out to local businesses to see if they would donate a portion of the costs associated with making reusable bags with their logo and our logo on it. Pizza Brothers, JT's Landscaping, and Valley Wellness might be interested.
 - Mr. Alvarez will ask the finance people in the borough if we are able to take donations like this.
 - We could hold a rain barrel workshop during the Earth Day event to raise awareness and drum up interest for future workshops.
 - We could also reach out to Bridgewater and Somerville to see if they're interested in partnering with us.
- The group needs to check the terms of the commissioners to make sure none of the current members need to have their terms renewed in January.

10) Green Team

- a) Report out and discussion regarding Ryan Bellinger's Sustainable Jersey efforts
 - Mr. Bellinger found out that the person who does the Community Forestry Plan has to be a certified arborist. He is working toward getting that certification and will keep us posted on his progress.
- b) Other activities identified by Team members?
 - See the discussion of updating the NRI/ERI above.

11) Adjournment

Mr. Alvarez made a motion to adjourn at 8:06; Mr. Bellinger seconded the motion.