



**BOROUGH OF RARITAN, SOMERSET
COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**
January 17, 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 January 17, 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

Absent: Denise Carra, Paul Giraldi, Diana Russo

Public: Christopher Gussman, Angela Knowles, Stephanie Konik, Von Scully

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. DeCicco, seconded by Ms. Stander, that the minutes from the meeting December 20, 2018 was carried unanimously upon voice vote.

REPORT FROM BOROUGH COUNCIL

There was no report from Borough Council.

Mayor McMullin was present to conduct oath of office for Mr. DeCicco to renew his membership on the commission.

REPORT FROM PLANNING BOARD

Mr. DeCicco indicated there have been no Planning Board meetings since the last Environmental Commission meeting.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Von Scully, watershed ambassador representing AmeriCorps, wants to see how EC is addressing water

quality issues. Mr. Clark noted that Von gave a presentation about stormwater and flooding in the Borough at the Environmental Speaker Series in November. The Ambassador program can provide access to organizations and programs. Mr. Scully noted that minutes from last commission meeting contained lots of ideas for Earth Day and partnering with ambassador and Duke Farms.

ACTION: Mr. Clark to share email from Von containing info on grant opportunities with the rest of the commission.

ACTION: TBA to look at whether a grant program could pay for impervious cover assessment. Potential grant programs to explore -- Sustainable Jersey, NJAW, DEP 319h program

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a) Wayfinding and Streetscape Improvement Workshop: Ms. Knowles shared that a Wayfinding and Streetscape Improvement kickoff workshop will occur Feb 2nd, 8:30am-12:30pm at train station. This is part of NJDOT grant to do road improvements and study area from train station to the river. The point of the grant is to get people from the train station to downtown to the river by implementing physical improvements plus wayfinding (signage, lighting, streetscape design elements, etc.) and hiring a consultant. The borough wants to get public input before proceeding. The workshop will include a presentation on what wayfinding and streetscape improvement are and then the group will take a walk down to the river. Another piece is encouraging Duke Farms users to park at the train station and bike into Duke Farms. The borough is looking at bike lanes and possibly making some streets one-way. The Environmental Commission has an opportunity to influence design to include green infrastructure. The workshop is open to the public.
- b) Health and Wellness Fair: Mr. Clark shared an event forwarded by the Community Programs and Events Committee – the first annual Health and Wellness Fair at JFK All-Purpose Room on February 12th, 6:00-8:00pm. This is a free event with experts on a number of related topics.
- c) Canal and River Clean-up: Mr. Clark shared that a Raritan resident is coordinating a canal and river clean-up on April 6th. This event will be in partnership with multiple community groups and will run from the riverfront park near the Basilone Statue down towards Duke Island Park . The clean-up will focus on the canal, river, street fronts and includes Raritan, Bridgewater, Duke Island Park, DPW, Sheriff's Office, among others. The Raritan Environmental Commission will help promote the event and members of the commission and Green Team are encouraged to participate.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Nomination for 2019 Secretary. Mr. Clark nominated Ms. Stander. Ms. Stander accepted the nomination. Mr. DeCicco put forward a motion to designate Ms. Stander as Secretary. Ms. Metaxas seconded this motion.
ACTION: Mr. Clark to communicate designation of Secretary to Council for confirmation and payment for the position.
- b) Review of Municipal Land Use Board (previously Planning Board) applications
 - i) Loyadham Temple of Raritan, 10 W. Somerset St.. The application is to add storage space with HVAC equipment as an addition to the existing building. Mr. Clark proposed focusing on impervious cover aspect of the proposal. The current impervious coverage for the lot is

69.9% with a zoning requirement of not more than 95% (B-1 zone, central business district). The commission requests the following for this application: completion of the green development checklist (Checklist 7 for Determining Site Plan Application Completeness for Green Development), including consideration for a method of mitigating stormwater runoff (i.e. rain barrel, rain garden, etc.).

- ii) Stone Ridge building expansion at 929 Rt 202. This is a request for a 2.5 story addition for storage and office space on an existing 2 story management office building. The project will increase impervious coverage. The zone P-2 NPACD total maximum impervious lot coverage is 60%. The proposal shows an existing coverage of 19.3% but the proposed impervious coverage is "N/A" on the application. It is not clear if the impervious coverage calculation includes paved surfaces. It was also noted that soil erosion and sediment control, stormwater calculations, and landscaping drawings are not included. Other review notes include the project appears to be seeking a variance to avoid adding new parking, there is some concrete walkway being added, and additional concrete walkway is being added to another area.

The commission requests the following for this application: (1) complete and include green development checklist (Checklist 7 for Determining Site Plan Application Completeness for Green Development); (2) update application to include Percentage of impervious lot coverage (#13 on the application, currently "N/A"); (3) include soil erosion and sediment control plans, stormwater calculations, and landscaping plans; (4) notification if additional parking is ultimately required. Note: the commission would be supportive of a variance to not include additional parking to help minimize impervious surface cover and resulting rainwater runoff.

- c) VW It Pay\$ to Plug In Charging Station Application: Mr. Clark submitted a proposal for electric vehicle charging station, requested \$6,000 for one Level 2 charging station with 2 ports. To take full advantage of grant, charger has to be on public land and open and accessible to the public. Need to see if there is enough power to support it in whatever location we identify. Location options include Canal St near Basilone Park; side street next to library; plot of land on Railroad Ave near train station; Nevius Street Bridge parking lot.

DECISION: the train station is not a viable location because it is not owned by the borough, logistics issues associated with users getting on train and leaving for extended periods of time, and uncertainty around utilization and enforcement among other reasons.

ACTION: Mr. Clark to follow-up with borough planner (Ms. Knowles) if maps exist showing where the electricity is along the streets.

OLD BUSINESS

- a) 2018 Annual Environmental Commission report.
ACTION: Mr. Clark to send out RBEC annual report in improved format
- b) A new Planning Board liaison, Denise Carra, has been appointed by Mayor McMullin.

GREEN TEAM

- a) Sustainable Jersey: Ms. Knowles shared that we were only granted 10 points in 2018 for Open Space Plan. Ms. Knowles indicated she would look into this. She recommended keeping copies

of flyers, rosters, sign-in sheets, meeting minutes, pictures, etc. in order to have enough documentation for points. Sustainable Jersey is interested in seeing that events aren't just one-off but are ongoing programs (like speaker series). Ms. Knowles indicated she would come back to this group for help getting documentation. Some actions might be too old – may need to go back to Council to get a new resolution in favor of various things (Complete Streets, etc.)

- b) Ms. Knowles mentioned Raritan is looking to submit a grant for the PSE&G program for improved bike lanes and other improvements. Green Team/EC could provide a letter of support. Only one grant per town so the EC should not work on a grant related to funding impervious cover assessment but would likely be able to get Sustainable Jersey credit for the borough's effort.
- c) Ms. Stander mentioned that Hillsborough and Manville are planning to meet to talk about potential collaboration, they are open to Raritan participation. Would be helpful for small towns to have administrative support from larger towns like Hillsborough and Franklin to run joint programs.
- d) Environmental Speaker Series: Ideas discussed included:
 - i) Streetscapes plan (Ms. Knowles)
 - ii) Backyard composting
 - iii) Organic/green gardening

ACTION: Ms. Stander to reach out to Duke Farms (Melissa Almendinger)

ACTION: Mr. Clark will work on booking the room at the library
- e) Earth Day Fair: Mr. Clark met with Community Programs and Events Coordinator, Linda Schulte. The Environmental Commission is getting 1,000 free seedlings on Friday, April 26th. Recommendation is to hold the fair the following day (Sat, Apr 27 with 28 as rain date) to give them out. Location will be Frelinghuysen Park. The Events committee is committing funds to the event (children's activities, DJ, banners/advertising, giveaways, etc.) so the event will be branded as a community eco fair (i.e. Raritan Day/Eco Day). The Events Committee will also assist with finding vendors, logistics, etc.
Team needs to come up with press release. Other event ideas:
 - iv) kid friendly activities,
 - v) upcycled crafts,
 - vi) food trucks/vendors,
 - vii) rain barrel demonstration and workshop sign-up
 - viii) electric vehicle showcase

ACTION: Mr. Clark to get input from Ms. Schulte on duration. Green Team proposes 11am-3pm.

ACTION: Mr. Clark to follow-up with Mr. Scully on possibility of getting barrels donated. Can also use the Manville model of charging people registration fee, using that \$ to purchase barrels, and then having participants apply for NJWSA rebate to get reimbursed;

ACTION: Mr. Clark to reach out to electric vehicle groups for vehicle showcase.

ACTION: Mr. Clark will put together list of items that the EC should take the lead on (as opposed to the Events Committee) and Green Team members can sign up, form smaller task group for the event

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. DeCicco, seconded by Ms. Stander, to adjourn the meeting at 8:43pm.