



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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

November 21st, 2019

MINUTES

- 1) Open Public Meetings Statement:
 - a) 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 this Meeting would take place at the Borough Hall, Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. on November 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.
- 2) Roll Call:
 - a) Present: Mark Clark, Christopher Gussman, Michael DeCicco, Diana Russo, Emilie Stander, Olga Metaxas, Joni McKelvey
 - b) Not Present: Paul Giraldi, Council Liaison; Denise Carra, Planning Board Liaison
- 3) Flag Salute
- 4) Approval of Minutes: *October 17, 2019*
 - a) Mr. Gussman made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. DeCicco seconded; all in favor
- 5) Report from Borough Council
 - a) Mr. Giraldi was not present but provided a report by email. The reorganization meeting will occur in January.
- 6) Report from Planning Board
 - a) None
- 7) Public Comment
 - a) No members of the public in attendance.
- 8) Discussion Items
 - a) The group discussed the status of the Block 81 construction and the proposed renovation and expansion of the Gaetano's property. The lack of setback from the street was lamented in relation to both projects. It would be useful to provide this feedback to the Planning Board, but our liaison to that group has not been available for Environmental Commission meetings this year. Mr. Clark has reached out to several borough officials to ask if a different liaison could be assigned to our committee, but there has not been a response. Mr. Clark will make another attempt.
- 9) New Business
 - a) A boy scout looking for an Eagle Scout project contacted the mayor for ideas and suggestions. Mayor McMullin reached out to Mr. Clark to provide input. Mr. Clark suggested a rain garden project; the scout could research an appropriate site, and utilize technical assistance from Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Ms. Stander suggested the group could devote a portion of next year's budget to the project. Mr. Clark suggested the little park across from the Nevius St bridge could be a good location for a demonstration rain garden. Ms. Stander suggested the library front yard. Mr. Clark said he would share the Natural Resources Inventory with the boy scout to give him some ideas.

- b) Ms. McKelvey updated the group on Raritan Headwaters Association's recent dam removal and tree planting.
- c) NJ Tree Recovery Campaign has 1,000 seedlings for their annual program. Mr. Clark will put in a request and indicate a tentative date to give them away in late April in Frelinghuysen Park.

10) Old Business

- a) Ms. Stander will continue to work with borough planner Angela Knowles on researching rain barrels. Mr. Giraldi would like to know how many we plan to purchase. We have \$1,000 to spend by late December. The money can also be used to purchase the supplies to construct the rain barrels. We could also purchase ready-made barrels from Agway at cost and have the workshop be a decorating party.

11) Green Team

- a) Sustainable Jersey Solar Communities webinar: Ms. Stander gave an update on the issues that were discussed in the webinar. This included SJ actions such as a solar enabling resolution that would speed up the permitting process, and descriptions of community solar programs.
- b) Mr. Clark provided an update on the SJ webinar he attended related to municipality energy audits. Mr. DeCicco pointed out that a review of street lighting could be done. Ms. McKelvey added that shields could be placed on existing lights to prevent unnecessary light pollution. Mr. Clark commented that such a proposal would need to be put into a capital planning cycle. Mr. Clark mentioned this idea at a previous Economic Development Committee meeting. Having a recommendation from an audit could help, since the audit would indicate cost savings and payback period associated with lighting upgrades.
- c) Sustainable Jersey review: Mr. Clark wrote up the narrative for the EC planning board review process to get SJ points for that work. Mr. Clark and Ms. Stander met two weeks ago to go over the SJ points that Ms. Knowles identified; Mr. Clark reviewed some of these items.
 - i) **Action item:** Mr. Clark will run the old green team proclamation through Mr. Giraldi to determine what process is needed to update the old proclamation at this January's reorganization meeting.
 - ii) We will work toward the June 2020 SJ submission deadline. Mr. Clark will send out a list of actions that the Green Team should work on.

12) Adjournment

- a) Mr. DeCicco made a motion to adjourn at 8:00pm, Mr. Gussman seconded.