

## Environmental Commission Board Meeting – May 10<sup>th</sup> 2022

Call to Order by Chair

Open Public Meeting Notice read by Commission Lawyer

Pledge of Legion and Moment of Silence led by Chairwoman Seemuller

Roll Call taken by Commission Secretary – See the table on page 3

Adoption of Minutes – April 12, 2022 were adopted; see vote on page 3

There were no Public Hearings

Open Discussion:

1. Tree City USA – requested an update from previous meeting
  - a. Commission Lawyer Ron Cucchiaro advised that proposal is with council for consideration
  - b. As outlined in the previous minutes there is a financial aspect to the application that needs to be approved.
2. Bag Bill Outreach Subcommittee update
  - a. Committee reached out to the Green Team Volunteers to canvas small business to pass out flyers on the May 4<sup>th</sup> plastic ban.
  - b. Library passed out 500 reusable bags that the township provided throughout the month of April in anticipation of the May ban.
  - c. The Mount Laurel Green Team organized a showing of the movie Bagit at the Library for May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Viewed movie and had open discussion with participants. The South Jersey Green Faith Circle members held a display of alternate plastic and “greener” products that avoid plastic packaging.
3. Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)
  - a. EC members requested an update on the progress of the NRI.
  - b. Ron indicated that the consultant group is working extremely fast to complete the assessment and have the report issued.
  - c. Toni said the report had been drafted. She has requested some missing information be included in the final report.
  - d. Ron indicated that once the report is issued the planning board will review and determine
4. Open Space Projects
  - a. Members requested an update from the previous meeting inquiry on EC boards involvement with open space.
  - b. Ron indicated he would put together the links to the various groups with regards to open space involvement
  - c. Ron advised the EC board to wait for the NRI to be completed as this mandates that the EC advises on the use of Open Space
  - d. Councilwoman Karen Cohen did mention that the township purchased a piece of land known as the “back 40” which links a large portion of green/open space to create a “greenway”.

5. What are the EC's short term and long term goals?
  - a. Ron advised the EC board that we are to review applications
  - b. Statutory adoption of the NRI when completed
  - c. Ron also advised that our main goal should be concentrated on educational and outreach. Using the Plastic Ban outreach program as a good example. He suggested we should outline a list of environmental/sustainable issues, outline a plan, and execute.
  - d. It was mentioned by Gina Cohl that educational/outreach on environmental and sustainability issues were always a large part of the Green Team and transfer of this responsibility to the EC was unfortunate but it is the early adoption of the EC board.
6. Proposal of Native plants and Invasive plants Ordinance
  - a. Gina Cohl brought up the prospect of proposing a Native plants and Invasive restriction Ordinance. She had reached out to ANJEC for example ordinances which they provided examples from Montclair and Eatontown. ANJEC also mention these other towns were considering similar ordinances Howell, Old Bridge, Point Pleasant Beach, and Belleville.
  - b. Ron advised we stick to educational outreach and not proposal of ordinances.
  - c. Gina explained further that she was proposing an ordinance for restricting plantings of township owned land to native plants and to exclude invasive plants not to developers at this time.
  - d. Councilwoman Cohen indicated that Evesham has an avoidance checklist and perhaps we can look into something similar.

Meeting Adjourned – motion by Gina Cohl and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marinna Seemuller. All were in Favor.

Next Meeting is Tuesday June 14<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 7pm.

Environmental Commission Board Attendance

		Attendance	Absent
Chairwoman	Marinna Seemuller	x	
Citizen	Sandra Carleton	x	
Citizen	Gina Cohl	x	
Citizen	Bhupindar Singh	x	
Citizen – Planning Board Rep	Ramesh Venkatakrishnan	x	
Citizen Alt 1	Christopher Hughes	x	
Citizen Alt 2	Mandy Skalski		x
Councilmember	Karen Cohen	x	
Township Rep	William Giegerich	x	
Professional	Toni Sapio	X	
Lawyer	Richard Briigliodoro	x	
Lawyer	Ron Cucchiaro	X	

Vote on Adopting Minutes from April 12, 2022 Meeting

		Motion	AYE	NAY	Abstained	Absent
Chairwoman	Marinna Seemuller		x			
Citizen	Sandra Carleton	2 <sup>nd</sup>	x			
Citizen	Gina Cohl	1 <sup>st</sup>	x			
Citizen	Bhupindar Singh		x			
Citizen – Planning Board Rep	Ramesh Venkatakrishnan		x			
Citizen Alt 1	Christopher Hughes		x			
Citizen Alt 2	Mandy Skalski					x