

Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission (BHEC)

Meeting: January 4th, 2021

- Meeting Came to Order – 7:37pm
- In attendance
 - Commissioners
 - Richard Leister
 - Kim Diamond
 - Kevin Hall
 - John Leo
 - Angus Chen
 - David Harris
 - Renee Ciesla
 - Chris Scalera
 - Guests
 - Alvaro Medeiros [Township Council]
 - Helen Kirsch [Board of Education]
 - Tom Foregger [resident]
 - Brian Pinke
 - Sander Raaijmakers (resident)
- Approval of Minutes:
 - Meeting date – 12/14/2020 – moved: Harris/Second: Chen
- Environmental Meeting date Changes
- Hearing on Agenda Items:
 - No resident questions/comments
- Agenda
 - Scout Projects (Scalera)
 - Nothing to report
 - Community Garden – (Ciesla/Scalera/Leister)
 - Richard reports Township Treasurer allows Winter Walk luminaries sold by Community Garden; Township Treasurer can handle funds received
 - Storm water Ordinance (Leister)
 - Nothing to report
 - Sustainable Jersey (Leister)
 - Richard Leister top recirculate priority action items
 - Tree Ordinance (Leister)
 - Update coming
 - Recycling
 - Alvaro Medeiros, representing the Township, indicated the following changes to the Township recycling [collection] schedule:
 - January – February: No change to existing schedule
 - Starting the second week of March: collection dates will change from Wednesday/Thursday to Monday/Tuesday.

- Helen Kirsch, representing the BoE, confirmed that the School system recycles cans, glass, plastic, cardboard, and metal, not just paper products.
- Township Newsletter
 - Kim Diamond to recirculate draft articles for EC's review.
- Municipal Complex
 - Rain Gardens – TBD - Nothing to Report.
- Trex Collection & Trex Benches
 - 3 benches received over the holidays (Township Council, Pat Smith, TaylorRental)
 - Taylor Rental has ceased accepting plastic until an aggregator/upstream collection point can be identified. Kim Diamond is investigating whether Taylor Rental can become a Trex partner.
 - Motion to encourage resident to recycle thin-film plastics at alternative sites until the full and reliable Trex program resumes - Moved: Chen/Second: Harris
- County Hub
 - Nothing to Report
- Lower Columbia Park
 - The Columbia Park gathering Place Project – subpage of EC website detailing project advancement
- Leaf-Blower Ordinance
 - Kim Diamond Lois Kraus, a member of the Westfield Environmental Commission/Green Team is endeavoring to make the “Leaf-Blower Ordinance” a Sustainable Jersey action. Kim will update the BHEC on any notable progress.
- LED Street Light Retrofit Program
 - Neighboring community comments:
 - Madison - has done partial retrofitting project
 - Livingston - mayor claims that lights with blue or white tints are bad for people and animals; suggests lights with yellow tint instead.
 - Kim Diamond comments:
 - If the township is considering retrofitting street lighting, it should investigate using yellow tinted lights
 - Richard Leister comments:
 - Sustainable Jersey has a section on lighting – asked Commissioners to review it
- Citizens Hearing
 - Sander R. claimed that PSEG was cutting trees on municipal property and asked who he should inquire with regarding a possible remedy. Richard pointed out that suspected illegal tree removals should be reported to the Township tree inspector, Tom Bocko.
- Plans:
 - 174 Maple Avenue – Recommendation to deny (exceeds max impervious) – moved: Harris/ Second: Ciesla

- 36 Hampton Drive – Recommendation to deny (exceeds max impervious) – moved: Harris/Second: Hall
- Annual Report
Richard will draft the annual report for the Commission to review and include goals for 2021.
- Meeting adjourned – 9:07pm