

Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission

Minutes of Monday, May 1st, 2023 Meeting

ATTENDEES

Commissioners:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Angus Chen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Renee Ciesla	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kimberly Diamond
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Harris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Leister	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Leo
<input type="checkbox"/> Alvaro Medeiros	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nirit Rotenberg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eduardo Veyan

Guests: Steve Carrellas

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm.

1. Approve minutes for February 20, March 20, April 3, April 17 – none approved.
2. Hearing on agenda items only - 3 minutes per resident:
Steve Carrellas noted that it was difficult to download the agenda from the Township website. He also noted that the spring drop of tree debris will make for a good “Adopt-a-Drain” competition with Westfield.
3. New Business:
 - a. Composting: Vitamix “Foodcycler” device to be discussed in detail at a future meeting. Logistics of local pickup / drop-off options were discussed, with no conclusions.
 - b. Grant a Wish – no update; can be removed from future agendas.
 - c. BH Community Watch Live: forum for discussing local events, bhcommunitywatch.com; possibility of leveraging this to highlight EC priorities/activities.
 - d. NJ Land Conservation: Richard noted the EC has the authority to recommend a property be put in conservancy (ie, be purchased, subject to agreement of the seller, & designated GreenAcres). John proposed that guidance for homeowners be posted on the EC web page, as a resource for residents who may be interested in pursuing conservancy for their property.
 - e. Nirit proposed a motion that the EC participate in the BH Downtown Summer Block Party (Sunday June 4th); seconded by Angus.
4. 4)Plans:
 - a. None
5. 5)Old Business:
 - a. Scout projects – see (b) below.
 - b. Community Garden: addition of children’s garden is ongoing; the shed has been moved but a ramp is needed – this could be a scout project; David to seek support from Scout Troop 368.
 - c. Stormwater Ordinance and MS4 Education status: Richard shared a draft on 5/1/2023; this is based on the NJ model ordinance with inclusion of some elements from New Jersey Future. EC members to review this draft.
 - d. Adopt a Drain – competition with Westfield announced in TAPinto, in the Township FB forum and on the electronic sign at Plainfield and Mountain.
 - e. Sustainable Jersey Actions

- i. Green Team has been approved.
 - ii. Environmental Commission action has been completed.
 - iii. Nirit is planning a paper shredding event which will complete a deliverable; this has been posted on the FB page.
 - iv. Winter Walk, Emergency Planning, Anti idling – no updates.
- f. Tree Ordinance: Mr Couto was not present to speak to the BH draft ordinance. Draft model ordinance from the State is open for comment until May 12th; a revised version is expected in due course.
- g. Peppertown Park – no update.
- h. Recycling and Clean ups – no update.
- i. Topics for the township newsletter – may be returning in a revised format; Angus following up.
- j. Passaic River Park (Berkeley Caterers) and Trails – no update.
- k. GLHS & Watchung – no update.
- l. Earth Day Tree Saplings: event was successfully completed. Most popular sapling was the dogwood, of which there were only 25. The approximately 20 saplings remaining after the event were provided to Halls to be given away. Angus proposed that we should consider purchasing additional saplings of popular species for future years' events.
- m. Grants -
- i. SWIFR and RGGI Grants: awaiting feedback from the Township Financial Officer.
 - ii. NJ American Water: expect to hear this month if our application was successful.
6. Citizens hearing on any environmental issues - 3 minutes per resident – none.

The meeting ended at 8:22 pm; motion to adjourn proposed by Angus, seconded by John.
The next EC meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 15th, 2023, at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by David Harris, May 2nd, 2023.