

# Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission

## Minutes of Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 meeting

### Attendees

Members: Richard Leister, Angus Chen, David Harris, Kim Diamond, Renee Ciesla.

Guests: Steve Carrellas.

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 p.m.

1. Approve minutes for April 18: not approved – minutes not available.
2. Hearing on agenda items only - 3 minutes per resident  
Confirmed that meetings are routinely held in-person in Town Hall, as well as online; if in-person option will not be available for a given meeting, this will be noted in the agenda.
3. New Business:
  - a. GI Presentation: Richard shared a presentation on stormwater management.
  - b. Summer Block Party on June 5: Agreed we should participate if we can decide what to promote at the event. Event timing is 1-4 p.m. Consider if GL Environmental Club is interested in participating with us. We have approximately 100 reusable bags to give away if we do this event.
  - c. Trail Funding (Nature Conservancy)
4. Plans: None
5. Old Business:
  - a. Scout projects – no update on ongoing projects.
    - i. Proposed projects – list of projects drafted and circulated by John previously. We considered if fencing the area for the forestation project at GL would be a suitable project: Richard to check with Dan Bernier if the County could drive in the posts, in which case could the scouts string up the fence? David to check if other projects on John's list are of interest to any scout groups. Cost of the fence is estimated to be approximately \$7500.
  - b. Community Garden: A grant application related to the Community Garden was submitted to ANJEC without being reviewed by the EC. The EC agreed that the Grants Committee should be alerted that all grant applications to Sustainable Jersey or ANJEC, or related to the Community Forestry Management Program or that are environmental in nature, must be reviewed and endorsed by the EC prior to submission. Richard to send a letter to that effect to the Grants Committee, cc the Mayor and Township Administrator.
  - c. Stormwater Ordinance and MS4 Education status – Richard alerted the EC that viewing the “Asking the right questions in stormwater management” video counts towards the education credit of the MS4.

- d. Adopt a Drain – Kim has received expressions of interest from Princeton and Montclair. Article about the drain naming competition has been posted to the EC website.
  - e. Sustainable Jersey Actions
    - i. Expired Actions
      - 1. ERI: Richard has found and uploaded Word versions of some sections of the document; will continue to look for the remaining sections.
      - ii. SJ Grant for Rain Gardens – we were not awarded this grant, but will have the opportunity to speak with the reviewers to find out where we fell short. Richard to sign up for that meeting.
  - f. Tree Ordinance and Trees Wanted
    - i. Trees along the right of way to be planted this month.
    - ii. Saplings – All of the trees from the State were given away, along with a substantial number of the evergreen saplings provided by Sydney Birbower. Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped with this event. Angus is drafting an article to publicize the giveaway; awaiting receipt of waivers to permit use of photographs taken at the event.
  - g. Peppertown Park – no update.
  - h. Recycling – plastic bag ban to become effective in 2 days!
  - i. Topics for the township newsletter
    - i. Stormwater management education – no update.
    - ii. Mosquitoes – Richard to draft and share article shortly; the pesticides used by some companies in the area are harmful to pollinators.
  - j. Passaic River Park and GLHS – Richard noted some work needs to be done on the path and bridge in the vicinity of the Robins Ave brook. Also noted the presence of Lesser Celandine, an invasive species – the County has been informed. L’Oreal volunteers may do some of the work at Passaic River Park, and some maintenance on the GL Rain Garden, at their event in June.
  - k. Projects with Watershed Ambassador – no update; this item to be removed from the agenda since the Watershed Ambassador is nearing the end of their term.
6. Citizens hearing on any environmental issues - 3 minutes per resident – none.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 16, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by David Harris, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.