

Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission

Minutes of Monday, June 22nd , 2020 Meeting (conducted via teleconference)

Attendees

Members: Angus Chen, David Harris, Richard Leister, John Leo, Kinan Tadmori, Kim Diamond, Chris Scalera, Renee Ciesla.

Guests: Alvaro Medeiros, Helen Kirsch.

Meeting called to order at 7:33 PM.

- 1) Minutes of the May 18th 2020 meeting were approved.
- 2) Hearing on agenda items only – none.
- 3) Old Business
 - a. Scout projects – no update.
 - b. Stormwater Ordinance – no update.
 - c. Sustainable Jersey Actions – submission deferred until end of July. Discussed additional items the township could complete, including emergency communications, diversity in township, heat island assessment, energy efficiency for municipal facilities, public EV charging infrastructure (will not be implemented by end Sept 2020), anti-idling education program, innovative community projects (Vegan Fest to be included here; consider an EC project to install a raingarden), non-mandated materials recycling (include Trex program here; Angus reported we might include another recycling item[4 and 6]), sustainable land use pledge, buy-local campaign, commercial & institutional recycling, backyard composting (suggested that we create a separate sub-page on the EC website to collect composting resources; Chris drafting an article on this topic for the newsletter).
 - d. Tree Ordinance – no update.
 - e. Peppertown Park – no update.
 - f. Recycling
 - i. Mayor’s Recycling task force: next meeting to focus on preparation for next round of bids, should that be necessary.
 - g. Ordinance on Restrictions on Plastic Bags, Plastic Straws, and Polystyrene – no update.
 - h. Topics for the township newsletter – articles drafted by Chris on native & invasive plants; suggested those be merged into a single article, for publishing in next issue of newsletter. Article on composting for a subsequent newsletter. Discussed opportunities to increase traffic to the EC Facebook page.
 - i. Municipal Complex and stormwater – no update.
 - j. Passaic River Park – David & John have both contacted County officials requesting cost estimates for engineering work to support permit applications.
 - k. 1,000 trees – Angus sent press release to Tapinto.net. Richard to draft report to the state. Renee to follow up with Halls to find out how the distribution of the remaining trees went.
 - l. Composting – the recent Hub meeting provided good resources on composting; Kim & Angus to determine how to best use / post those.
 - m. EAB treatment – ash trees in Township being treated on a 3 year-cycle; this round of treatments expected to continue for the next 2-3 weeks, or longer if delayed by weather. The treatment program is expected to continue through 2030.

- n. Soil at municipal complex and trail behind 9/11 memorial – probably no further environmental commission interest in this soil for EC projects; consider removing this item when results of soil contamination testing are available.
- o. Hub Meeting – Hub is developing logo; Kim is collecting input on draft designs.
- p. Girl Scout T-shirts – Angus has created & posted website content. Endpoint of project is for the bags to be distributed through the Library, when that opens. The EC can help publicize this event when that time comes. Suggestions that the girl scouts work with their troop to ensure this effort is sustained beyond their project, and/or that resources (kits, information, etc) be made available to enable the public to continue doing this; David to follow up with girl scouts on these questions.
- q. Community Garden – garden is going well. Suggestion that we post photographs / information to raise awareness of the Community Garden.
- r. ANJEC Grant for Lower Columbia – no update.
- s. Engraving Trex benches – Kim is collecting organization names to be engraved onto the benches we have received so far. Quote for the engraving work is pending.

4) New Business: none.

5) Citizens hearing on any environmental issues -none.

6) Plans:

- a. 182 Plainfield Ave (Mondelli property): the applicant proposes to construct 10,450 square foot public park and a 10-unit multi-family dwelling. Richard has drafted a proposed EC assessment of the application; EC members to provide comments to Richard by morning of June 23rd.
- b. 299 Garfield St.: the applicant proposes to construct a second story addition, a front porch and a garage. Richard has drafted a proposed EC assessment of the application; EC members to provide comments to Richard by morning of June 23rd

Meeting adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 6, 2020, at 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by David Harris on June 23rd, 2020.