

# Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission

## Minutes of Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup> 2020 Meeting

### Attendees:

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

Guests: Alvaro Medeiros.

Meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm.

- 1) No minutes to approve.
- 2) Hearing on agenda items (3 minutes per resident) – none.
- 3) Old Business
  - a. Scout projects – Chris in touch with troopmaster from Troop 68.
  - b. Stormwater Ordinance
    - i. ANJEC webinar on stormwater management – David registered but did not attend on the night; have link to the webinar that can be viewed.
  - c. Sustainable Jersey Application – Richard resubmitted; asked for approximately 370 points, which would be sufficient for Silver status. The next opportunity to update incomplete items will be Oct. For the anti-idling action, we submitted some photographs plus a statement that we are posting additional signs; Joe Graziano has committed to do this. Sustainable Jersey reviewers are sometimes amenable to discussing the best ways to categorize work we have done. Other opportunities:
    - Mayor’s Wellness Program – Alvaro to set up a meeting to identify additional actions that can be taken.
    - Green Business Recognition: Kim recommends that the requirements of the NJ Sustainable Business Registry be followed. Motion that Sustainable Berkeley Heights would assume responsibility for working with business in BH that are interested in NJSBR certification was proposed by Kim and approved. This should be adequate to satisfy the requirements of that SJ action,
    - Arts and creative culture – Richard to share that action for EC to review for next meeting.
  - d. Tree Ordinance – no update.
  - e. Peppertown Park – no update.
  - f. Recycling:
    - Angus working on a document to define more clearly the requirements for recycling.
    - Still no Trex pickup options.
  - g. Ordinance on Restrictions on Plastic Bags, Plastic Straws, and Polystyrene\_ No update
  - h. Topics for the township newsletter:
    - Riparian zone – David confirmed that the riparian zone along the Passaic River and its tributaries in BH is 50 ft. David to update the draft newsletter article on riparian zones with this information, plus recommendations for remediating riparian zones, and provide to the EC to review ahead of the next newsletter deadline.
    - Chris to update previous article on composting.

- i. Municipal Complex and stormwater (rain gardens) – the contractors who will grade & pave the parking lot in Oct-Nov, following demolition of old municipal complex, will leave selected “islands” for rain gardens. EC to be consulted on which islands to become rain gardens nearer the time. Richard to check whether NJ American offers grant money, or whether Michele Bakacs, Rutgers Extension, is aware of funding.
  - j. Passaic River Park – no update.
  - k. Soil at municipal complex and trail behind 9/11 memorial – soil pile still being accumulated.
  - l. Community Garden – Kim asked if any Community Garden members Chris/Renee to follow up with Community
  - m. Engraving of Trex benches – approximately 9 of 16 completed; project still in progress. Some benches already in Lower Columbia Park
  - n. Stormwater management PR campaign – Angus & John have met with Pam Yoss (Communications Committee); goal is for campaign to be reusable; targeting minimum of 12, and ideally exceed the minimum by aiming for 14-15 points annually.
  - o. FEMA Grant Funding Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities – meeting this week .
  - p. October Hub Meeting – contact Kim with any ideas for content or accomplishments that can be promoted to / through Hub.
- 4) New Business:
- a. Solid Waste Ordinance – Union County is bringing online a composting facility in Linden. County ordinance to be amended to include this Class C recycling facility. Alvaro to obtain more information on this and share with EC, to determine if this could be leveraged for businesses/institutions in BH.
  - b. SJ Green Business Recognition Program – see above.
  - c. Proposal from Ramesh Gupta for biogas/methane generator at WW treatment plant – to be discussed at Oct 5<sup>th</sup> EC meeting.
  - d. Remediation of Chemtrade pond (discussed in context of Chemtrade planning board application , below) – EC agreed we would like information on Chemtrade’s plans for remediation of the pond. Richard to seek information from the Township on whatever remediation plan Chemtrade has agreed with the Township and/or the State DEP. This item to be added to the agenda for next EC meeting.
- 5) Citizens hearing on any environmental issues (3 minutes per resident) – none.
- 6) Plans:
- a. 110 Circle View Drive: lot subdivision; lot coverages to be within zoning requirements. Motion proposed and approved to accept Richard’s draft recommendations, specifically:
    - If the proposed sanitary sewer easement requires the removal of trees, the applicant should be required to replace the trees or pay any fees for tree removal;
    - Retain all stormwater runoff on the property with green infrastructure; connect any downspouts or sump pump outputs to rain gardens or vegetative swales;
    - Driveways should slope to the lawn or allow runoff into vegetative swales.

- b. 450 Springfield Avenue: changes to current plans. Motion proposed and approved to request the applicant consider installing solar panels over the parking area.
- c. Chemtrade application for remediation of wastewater storage & treatment infrastructure – approved at Planning Board meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020.
- d. 5 Wilson Drive: minimal environmental impact. Motion proposed and approved to accept Richard's draft recommendation, specifically to retain stormwater runoff on the property with green infrastructure and to disconnect any downspouts or sump pumps from the street and connect them to rain gardens or vegetative swales.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:14 pm.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 28, 2020, at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by David Harris, 16<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020.