

Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission

Minutes of Monday, January 6th, 2020 Meeting

Attendees: Richard Leister, Chris Scalera, Renee Ciesla, David Harris, Kinan Tadmori
Kim Diamond, Angus Chen, Alvaro Medeiros (Guest)

Meeting called to order at 7:33 PM

- 1) Minutes of the December 2nd meeting not approved. Minutes of December 16th meeting approved with latest track changes.

Clarification discussion on motion from December 16th meeting: Kim makes a motion to revise prior motion on non-EC member guests at meetings. Residents or interested parties looking to address the EC may arrange for a presentation on an environmental topic (not to exceed 20 minutes) by contacting the EC prior to the meeting. Otherwise, they may speak for 3 minutes during the hearing on agenda items only (at the beginning of meeting), or during the conference session on other environmental topics (at the end of the meeting).

- 2) Hearing on agenda items only – 3 minutes per resident: no topics brought up.
- 3) Old Business
 - a. Scout projects – no updates.
 - b. Stormwater Ordinance – Liza reached out to Richard and will be setting up meeting with Tom Solfaro.
 - c. Sustainable Jersey
 - i. Kim made motion to apply for Sustainable Jersey for Vegan Fest. Renee seconds that motion. Alvaro mentioned possibly exploring collaboration with other towns. For now keep in BH, but work on spreading the word.
 - ii. Mayor's Wellness Campaign: Meeting scheduled for January 13.
 - d. Master Plan – Survey has been posted. Master Plan subcommittee meeting to occur at next Planning Board meeting.
 - e. Tree Ordinance – Richard mentioned that there is currently no language in tree ordinance to prevent trees from being planted underneath or near power lines, so this should be included in ordinance. Should also include language recommending certain tree types.
 - f. Peppertown Park – no updates
 - g. Recycling

- i. Mayor's Recycling Taskforce
 - Taskforce met with township administrator of Westfield about a potential joint bid for recycling.
 - Angus will meet with Joann Gemenden (Union County Recycling Coordinator) and possibly other township representatives.
- ii. Trex bins
 - 10,000 lbs reached late 2019. Currently almost at 10,400 lbs.
 - Kim responded via email to BH Women's League on how to adopt a Trex bin.
- h. Ordinance re: Restrictions on Plastic Bags, Plastic Straws, and Polystyrene Containers.
 - No progress at state level bill, we will move forward with proposing a town-level bill.
 - Alvaro reiterated importance of continued communication with local businesses
 - Resident education also needs to be emphasized. Kim mentioned it would be good to collaborate with schools.
 - If budget passes can utilize marketing funding for education
 - Richard spoke with Helen Kirsch regarding Board of Education liaison. She will inquire whether any other Board of Ed members are interested, otherwise she could potentially participate via teleconference.
- i. Joint meeting among environmental commissions
 - Next meeting Jan 16th 2020, in Cranford; Kim coordinating agenda.
 - Possible topics suggested during last meeting were Passaic River Park (liaison needed w New Providence, Summit); composting – topic not yet decided.
- j. Topics for the township newsletter:
 - Richard asked Pam to publish Environmental Stewards program in newsletter and Facebook page.
 - Kim submitted blurb on plastics and potential plastic ordinance
 - Draft roster for next few newsletters:
 - February: Renee – salt/snow considerations related to the environment
 - March: David – riparian zones (with reference to ordinance)
 - April: Chris - Encouraging residents to plant native trees / plant species
 - May: Chris - invasive species
- k. Municipal Complex and stormwater – no update

- l. Government Energy Aggregation – Alvaro meeting with Gabel Associates and Summit. Chatham may possibly be involved as well.
 - m. Climate Action Plan Survey – remove for now, revisit in the future.
 - n. Passaic River Park – no update
 - o. Chemtrade – no response to Richard’s email from Chemtrade representative
 - p. Budget
 - Need to draft 1-2 sentences justification for each line item in budget request
 - Richard will work on budget narrative draft and will send to the EC. Budget meeting is on January 13th.
- 4) New Business:
- a. Goals for 2020
 - Richard sent out draft goals for 2020 for EC review.
 - Kim proposed collaboration between Sustainable Berkeley Heights and Environmental Commission a quarterly plastic awareness week
 - Another goal suggested by Renee: general Environmental education – on all topics (plastics, recycling, trees, etc.)
 - Kim suggested looking at Sustainable Jersey actions and determine what is reasonable for us to accomplish. Kim also suggested exploring what Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops are doing in town and whether we can collaborate and help them earn SJ recognition.
 - Plastics ordinance should be added as a goal
 - Quarterly clean ups should be added as goal. Potentially could create program where groups are incentivized to attend more than one clean up.
 - Continue to think about goals in next few days so Richard can include in annual report, EC members should follow up with any additional goals via email to group to discuss at next meeting.
 - b. Richard will order trees for schools for Arbor Day.
 - c. Community Garden – goal was to get latest version of application approved early January. Chris will follow up with committee.
- 5) Citizens hearing on any environmental issues – 3 minutes per resident: no topics brought up
- 6) Plans:
- a. 110 Roosevelt Avenue: 11 residential buildings with 47 three-bedroom townhouses, and other buildings (flood zone, 6+/-12 recharge, wetland & buffer, slope 0 to 15%)
 - Proposed impervious surface 37%, maximum is 60%.
 - Proposed building coverage: 19%, building coverage max is 35%

- Recommendations: Could not identify stormwater management plan. Applicant needs to provide. Rain gardens should be utilized, driveways should be sloped properly. Recommend installation of a retention basin
 - Applicant should consider installation of solar panels on roofs where facing south.
 - High level of concern about number of trees being removed (381). Recommend to change the development of layout to reduce the number of trees being removed. Not sufficient credits for number of trees being removed.
- b. 495 Springfield Avenue: Mixed-use building with five residential units (not flood, 0 recharge; not wetland, slope up to 3%).
- c. TWA for Lone Pine Drive Lots 3, 4, 8; Block 703
- Developer applying with DEP to work within wetland.
- d. Little Flower on Plainfield
- Plan for tree planting is for 10 feet apart, which was approved by DEP in order to plant same number of trees that will be removed. Need more space between trees to allow room for growth. Applicant will re-apply with DEP to reduce number of trees needed in the area.

Meeting adjourned at 9:49 PM

The next EC meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 20, 2020, at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kinan Tadmori on January 7, 2020.