

Minutes of the Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission  
January 21, 2019

Meeting called to order at 7:33 PM

Attendees:

Members: Richard Leister, Kim Diamond, Kinan Tadmori, Renee Ciesla, David Harris, Kevin Hall, Angus Chen (via phone)

Guests: Dave Ogens

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from January 7, 2018 (latest revised version) approved

**Old Business**

Community Garden

- Richard met with Tom Barton and Michel Marceau on how checks would be handled – can be made out to Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission. Michel will process the checks.
- Richard has made list of applications and sent it to the committee and folder with scanned applications
- 17 applications at this point
- Post on Facebook that there are still spots left – Richard will send fillable form.
- Richard will set up a date for square foot gardening
- Township Engineer asked the plumber to do drawing for spigot so that he can approve it
- Several emails from Alvaro and Scouts, who are interested in projects (both Eagle Scouts and general Scouts)
- Applied for TCNJ students to help with setting up Community Garden

Environmental Movies: Two options from ANJEC for viewing for large audience: Bag It! Is Your Life Too Plastic? And Groundswell Rising. Additional film recommended was Plastic Ocean. Will look into playing either at schools or at Town Hall. Could show it in different locations in town (multiple movies, could do “film festival.” Could do event with other environmental activities, perhaps close to Earth Day. Kim will ask VFW and ambulance unit if either facility could be used for showing a movie.

Scout Projects: Kevin will reach out to Alvaro.

Stormwater Ordinance: Richard sent out sample Stormwater Ordinance before meeting, look at before next meeting.

Sustainable Jersey: Certified bronze at the moment. Kim will move forward on Art – related Sustainable Jersey action

Master Plan: Richard will send PDF of Master Plan to the group.

Tree Ordinance: Nothing to report.

Stream Clean Up: Nothing to report.

Peppertown Park: Kim has been appointed to Peppertown Park committee. Will try to incorporate Sustainable Jersey art action into their activities. Look to have environmental message plugged into Art in the Park.

Smart Cities: Nothing to report.

Recycling:

- Rotary Club is collecting for Trex currently. We have passed 3,000 pound mark of collection in total. If state doesn't move forward in the next few months with plastic bag fee we should revisit a municipal ban.
- Mayor wants to establish recycling task force – environmental commission would be a part of it. DPW director should be as well since they should be certified recycling coordinator. Need clarification on goals of the Recycling Task Force, who the stakeholders are and ensure they are involved.
- Styrofoam and electronics grant confirmed – bought two large containers, now where will they be placed, what are the logistics? Want volunteers to be present when Styrofoam collection is open to ensure no one is bringing Styrofoam with food/no unacceptable items are put into the containers. Richard will ask about the specifications of the containers.
- Angus reached out to Alvaro – who will reach out to Giordano to find out why #5 plastic cannot be recycled. Richard also informed township administrator about Giordano apparently accepting #5 from another town. Angus reached out to Preserve to see if any partnerships are available.
- Look into whether Giordano would come do a presentation on where our recycling goes
- Organic waste recycling – presentation will be held in Westfield on January 31 at 4:30 PM (Conference Room, Town Hall, East Broad St., Westfield)
- Should establish do's and don'ts of environmental issues, include in Communications Committee newsletter – monthly issue.
- Motion to do an article each month on environmental issues in TAPinto and Communications Committee
- Ask Bobbie Peer if we can do a recurring (monthly) column.

Plastic Bag Recycling: Discussed under recycling.

Resolution on Plastic Bags: Nothing to report.

Joint meeting among Environmental Commissions: Facilitated by Sustainable Jersey, will be held January 28<sup>th</sup> In Springfield

Land Art Generator Initiative: Nothing to report but will consider pursuing if we receive a grant.

## **New Business**

Goals:

- Should continue to keep ordinances in mind and review applications.
- Achieve Silver status for Sustainable Jersey
- Draft certain ordinances: stormwater
- Look for more grants than we've received previously
- Raise our overall presence/image (branding, outreach)
- Gain input from residents on what environmental actions/initiatives they would like to see
- Develop Communications Plan

Mayor's Recycling Taskforce: discussed above under recycling.

Recycling Styrofoam and electronics: discussed above under recycling.

Mayor's Wellness Campaign: Mayor is inquiring about our support. Kim will reach out to YMCA contacts regarding wellness initiatives. This could be a Sustainable Jersey action.

"Mass Balance" program with Unifi Manufacturing, Inc.: Bottle recycling – Kim looking into whether town's recycled bottles could be used for recycling into threads via Unifi Manufacturing.

National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation: Look at Sustainable Jersey and see how action can be tied to this.

PSE&G looking to apply select herbicide to maintain their gas lines. Richard will inquire for further details.

## Plans

### 43 Forest Avenue

**Findings of Fact:** Looking to construct second story above first story. Total current coverage is 16.9% in an R15 zone, proposing increasing to 17.5%. Maximum coverage is 25%.

**Recommendations:** Recommend that homeowner disconnect downspouts and manage stormwater on property.

### 23 Springfield Avenue

**Findings of Fact:** Construct 2-story addition and a deck. Increasing overall coverage from 25.61% to 26.09%. Recharge is more than 12 inches per year.

**Recommendations:** Should not be approved since exceeding impervious coverage. If approved, downspouts should be disconnected and stormwater should be retained on the property.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2019 at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted by Kinan Tadmori on January 22, 2019