

Environmental Commission

Thursday, July 8, 2021

Regular Meeting

Minutes

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

CALL TO ORDER

- 7:40pm

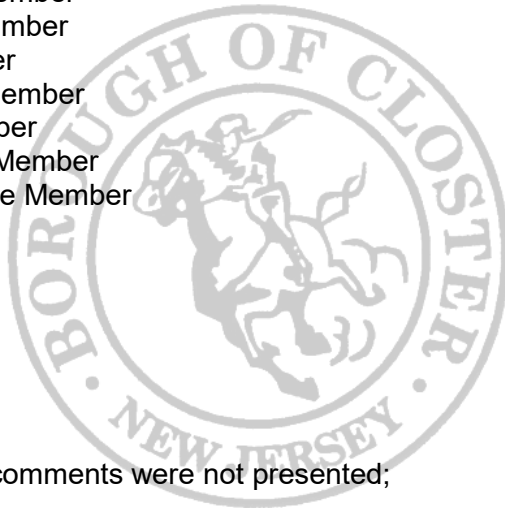
ATTENDANCE

Present

- Steven Isaacson- Full Member
- Miriam Lockhart- Full Member
- Scott Devlin- Full Member
- Sophie Heymann- Full Member
- Krishna Rege- Full Member
- Mordechai Feibish- Full Member
- Sophia Suarez- Associate Member

Absent

- VACANT- Chairperson
- VACANT- Alternate #1
- VACANT- Alternate #2



OPEN TO PUBLIC

- public questions and/or comments were not presented;

MINUTES

- **VOTE** - motion was made by Ms. Lockhart and seconded by Mr. Isaacson to approve minutes for June 10, 2021 Meeting with 1 noted amendment (motion passed unanimously);

TREASURER'S REPORT

- 2021 *TEMPORARY* Operating Budget Subaccount Balances: Subscriptions/Books (\$0.00); Meetings/Dues (-\$400.00); Miscellaneous (\$2,375.26); Secretarial Support (-\$480.00); Mac Bain Farm (\$0.00); Harvest/Fall Festival (\$0.00); Earth Day (\$0.00); Cleanup Day (-\$100.00);
- Governing Body introduced municipal budget with Commission's Operating Budget being unchanged from last year (\$6,540.00) but with caveats that line item previously dedicated to Mac Bain Farm will be reallocated/renamed Passive Parks as result of Farm's jurisdiction being shifted from Commission to committee organized by Governing Body as well as inclusion of \$2,000.00 in open space funds for trail maintenance to be performed by Department of Public Works (DPW);
- **ACTION**- Ms. Lockhart will research feasibility of Commission retaining vendor which meets Borough's strict insurance coverage thresholds and specializes in trail development which may prove to be beyond DPW's bailiwick (New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, etc.);

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive

(*Leader*- Vacant; w/ Devlin)

- Mayor John Glidden is considering appointees to replace Thomas Colwell who resigned as Commission's Chairperson effective July 1st (Councilman Devlin chaired this evening's meeting);

Events

(*Leader*- Rege; w/ Isaacson & Lockhart)

- dedication of Arthur Goldberg Trail and birdhouse contest at Buzzoni Farm Park are slated for July 10th and will showcase pollinator garden as well as history of site as former horse trotter and bull/cow raising farm (Committee will collect attendees' information through data mining to verify Borough residency as well as to create email list to maintain contact);

Trails & Passive Parks

(*Leader*- Isaacson; w/ Heymann & Rege)

- fallen tree is located at north end of Olaf and Ingeborg Hagen Park (thorough inspection of entire trail system is warranted given recent storms);
- DPW will cut back vegetation growth along soon-to-be dedicated Arthur Goldberg Trail located in Busoni Farm Park;
- 2002 Master Plan Reexamination recommended trail installation along Blanch Avenue (Borough of Norwood previously wanted to vacate all of Blanch Avenue but was persuaded by Closter to retain 6'-wide stretch to accommodate trail);
- Borough is seeking to procure approximately 100' long right of way (easement) parallel to Dwars Kill from property owner of 102 Blanch Avenue (Seth Unger) to negate approval from Norwood to replace bridge and link Borough's eastern and western trails (such would reconstitute trail along Dwars Kill which existed for 150 years until fencing was installed by prior property owner of 102 Blanch Avenue (David Watkins) to protect sheep from coyotes when parcel was utilized as farmland);
- Historic Preservation Commission hopes to have Blanch Avenue designated as historic landmark given it dates back to American Revolutionary War;
- **ACTION**- Councilman Devlin will confirm which Borough-owned parcels are classified as active or passive parks to revisit which would be best overseen by Environmental Commission, Recreation Commission or Improvement Commission;

Education/Advocacy & Publicity

(*Leader*- Heymann; w/ Lockhart)

- Governing Body will introduce amendments to noise ordinance(s) at its July 14th meeting (proposal limits construction and landscaping activity to weekdays between 7:00am and 7:00pm along with Saturdays between 9:00am and 6:00pm);
- enforcement of new noise regulations would be gradual to allow construction workers and landscapers to become acclimated given latter are not required to be registered with Borough to performance lawn maintenance (Police Department could initially give verbal warnings instead of issuing summonses to offenders while social media in form of articles written in Mayor's monthly newsletter, etc. and other outreach enlightens public);
- **ACTION**- Ms. Lockhart will forward online posting from Closter Farm & Livestock Co. (681 Closter Dock Road) which applauded Commission and Shade Tree Commission's efforts in promoting tree preservation, beehives, etc.;
- **ACTION**- Ms. Lockhart and Mr. Feibish will contact Recycling Coordinator (Carole Dacey) and Borough's recycling vendor (Interstate Waste Services Co.) to discuss protocols to curtail residents gathering recyclables in plastic bags and placing them at curbside for pickup (several municipalities provide recycling containers to its residents);

Plan Review, Environmental Notification & Contaminated Sites

(*Leader*- Feibish; w/ Isaacson)

- emphasis on environmental review is lacking by both Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment as well as their applicants in terms of Board professionals, witnesses and plans involved (application for 624 Piermont Road to redevelop abandoned restaurant to child care/daycare center involves having storm water overflow drain into Borough's storm sewer system which flows underneath several residential lots on High Street as well as raising elevation of site by

- 5' which equates to 3,000 cubic yards of soil import);
- numerous trees located at 84 Herbert Avenue thought to be slated for removal in near future are marked solely to delineate extent of wetlands on-site (such tree removal would require arduous permitting process with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection);
- 19 tree removals are proposed to accommodate construction of new 1-family house located at 63 Harvard Street (mitigation, bonding and public noticing is required for such applications which fall under jurisdiction of Borough's Tree Expert, Shade Tree Commission, Borough Engineer and Building Department at varying degrees);

Mac Bain Farm

(*Leader*- Heymann; w/ non-Commission members only)

- report was not given;

NEW BUSINESS

- new business was not discussed;

LIAISON REPORTS

Governing Body

(*Liaison*- Devlin)

- Governing Body adopted Resolution reiterating Chapter 16 of Borough Code to ensure Commission members' terms are staggered every 2 years to limit number of reappointments made solely by Mayor and/or vacancies in given year (5 Commission members saw their terms expire in 2020);
- ordinance authorizing Building Department to penalize tree service providers in addition to property owners for violating Borough's tree preservation and removal regulations will be introduced at Governing Body's July 14th meeting;

Planning Board

(*Liaison*- Heymann)

- report was not given;

Shade Tree Commission

(*Liaison*- Lockhart)

- Commission is collaborating with Building Department to prevent topping (harsh pruning) of shade trees which results in their gradual demise (notice of violations will be issued to property owners);
- 3 factsheets detailing deer guards, new tree plantings and avoidance of tree damage during construction were recently posted on Borough website;

Historic Preservation Commission

(*Liaison*- VACANT)

- report was not given;

ADJOURNMENT

- 8:45pm