



Environmental Commission

April 13, 2023 7:30pm via Zoom

Minutes

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance Chair Yarin called the meeting to order at 7:32 with the Public meeting announcement.

Attendance The Roll Call was taken, and the following members were present: Cinnie Cole; Scott Devlin, Council Liaison; Krishna Rege; Conway Wong, Planning Board Liaison; Chair Yarin.

Approval of Minutes (January, February, and March) Councilman Devlin moved to approve the minutes for January, February, and March, second Ms. Cole. Carried.

Open Meeting to Public Comments No members of the public requested to be heard.

Executive & Treasurer's Report

The chair reminded the Commission of their key goals. Councilman Devlin shared that that the introduced budget included \$7,725 for the Environmental Commission. The chair showed screen shots indicating the current state of the EC budget. Councilman Devlin stated that \$2,000 are available from the operating budget and that additional funds are available from the grants.

Ms. Cole announced that due to personal health issues she sadly needs to step down. She has enjoyed working with the Commission and wishes them tremendous success. She will help tie up loose ends as she can. Fellow commissioners thanked her and wished her well.

Unfinished Business

Healthy Yards Working Group Report

Councilman Devlin spoke about No Mow May. At the next Council meeting there will be a resolution stating that if people participate in No Mow May they won't get in trouble. Ms. Cole stated that last year several members participated and that she collected information from e-code regarding lawn regulations. She suggested a flyer outlining suggested guidelines. She also stated that a portion could just be unmowed for May and the rest maintained. She also suggested signs. Councilman Devlin feels that signs are a good idea. Mr. Wong stated that he owns a print shop and someone in Ridgewood created signs and flyers and is willing speaking to the group. Chair Yarin suggested someone speaking with him. Mr. Yarin, Ms. Rege, and whoever is interested will speak with him.



Chair Yarin suggested there are other reasons to reach out to the community.

Buzzoni Pollinator Garden Working Group Report

Ms. Rege reported that the aluminum sulfate has been applied. Tony Lupardi has volunteered to donate some plants to the garden. Ms. Cole is preparing for next year's grant. She reported that a request for funding for irrigation has been submitted.

Sustainable Jersey Working Group Report

Councilman Devlin shared that Closter already does a lot of the actions that will garner points. He has been uploading documents and writing paragraphs and now has about 70 points in "completed" points. About 90 more points are planned or in process. 150 points will achieve Bronze. Chair Yarin is reminding officials of the information needed for the Fleet Inventory.

NJDEP Green Acres Acquisition Grants Program 2023

Deadline has passed, but this would be good to consider next year.

New Business

Sustainable Jersey Summit

Event is scheduled for May 5. Members of the Commission attended last year. Exhibitors display green products and people from across the state share ideas. Commissioners and other interested people are encouraged to attend if possible and can let the Chair know within the next week if they want to attend. He will be going.

Closter Cleanup Day

Event is scheduled for May 6. A flyer has been printed, thanks to Mr. Wong. Thanks to Ms. Rege for organizing the event. The PTO fair is the same day, so word will have to be spread widely. The fair is geared more to the afternoon (11:00 to 4:00). Mr. Wong suggested the EC have a booth at the fair as well, to talk to people about what the EC does. Discussion. The supplies need to be picked up from the County; Mr. Wong will pick them up. Two chairs and a table will also be needed. It would be good to have maps with sites to be cleaned at the sign-in table at the Senior Center. Ms. Rege will share a list of sites cleaned last year. A few scout troops have been in touch. Mr. Yarin will reach out to them.

ANJEC Grant request

Ms. Cole is writing the request for the follow-up to last year's report. It is due Monday. She is also writing the new request, due in June.



Anti-Idling Campaign

Closter Girl Scout Troop 98006 (3rd grade) wishes to run a campaign aimed at reducing pollution from cars of parents waiting at schools. Chair Yarin created flash cards to teach the scouts about why emissions is important and how electric cars can reduce them. The scouts were motivated and excited, and and drew signs for posting at the schools.

Environmental Resource Inventory

ERI's are used as a reference for site development, and ANJEC strongly recommends them as a foundational task for all Environmental Commissions. It is unclear when the last inventory for Closter was performed (possible 1980s or 1990s). They are expensive to produce – perhaps \$15,000 to \$30,000 – as specialized knowledge is required. Chair Yarin will continue to investigate this.

Plan Review and Comment - 10 Railroad Ave. (PB)

There is only one single large warehouse roof in Closter suitable for a large solar installation. The business occupying the property is applying for a variance for exceeding impervious coverage limits. A solar provider has the ability to lease a roof, create solar energy, and then sell to the residents of Closter at a discounted rate. Mr. Wong stated that the hearing may be postponed a month or so.

Liaison Reports

Governing Body

Councilman Devlin moved to authorize up to \$250 for the Closter Spring Fair, if the Commission will have a table, seconded by Chair Yarin. All in favor. Carried. He moved authorizing up to \$500 on lawn signs for No Mow May, seconded by Mr. Yarin. He would like to do mailers for other outreach. The Commission discussed recyclable/reusable signage options to avoid excessive plastic waste. Councilman Devlin moved to approve spending \$1000 to allow for more sustainable signs, second Ms. Rege. All in favor. Carried. Councilman Devlin moved to approve spending up to \$250 for the May 5 Sustainable Jersey conference, second Chair Yarin. All in favor. Carried. Ms. Rege suggested spreading the word on Facebook. Discussion. A 3-person committee will be created for the No Mow May signs (Chair Yarin, Mr. Wong, and Ms. Rege). Chair Yarin will do research on recyclable options and follow up with the others.

Ms. Rege brought up the issue of trail maintenance (signs, keeping trails clear, etc.), which she believes should be added to Commission's annual list of goals. She and Chair Yarin will discuss.



Shade Tree Commission

Despite some activity at the Council, STC is still a Commission at this point.

Planning Board

Mr. Wong reported that two properties will be heard this month: 77 Venus Drive wants to remove trees, and the Shade Tree Commission requires 1 tree to be planted. The application is deemed complete. 142 Closter Dock will be demolished and rebuilt; 3 trees will be removed. The application is complete.

Adjournment Councilman Devlin moved to adjourn, second Ms. Rege. All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Francis
Recording Secretary