



Environmental Commission

September 14, 2023 7:30pm via Zoom

Minutes

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance** Chair opened the meeting at 7:30 pm with the Open Public Meetings Act announcement, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Attendance**
Present: Modi Feibish, Rachel Suter, Conway Wong, Paul Yarin
Absent: Scott Devlin, Jim Oettinger, Krishna Rege
3. **Approval of Minutes:** (July 13 and August 10) Rachel Suter moved to approve, second Modi Feibish. All in favor. Carried.
4. **Open Meeting to Public Comments:** No public were present.
5. **Executive & Treasurer's Report:** Chair Yarin recapped the goals of the EC. Certification for the Bronze level of Sustainable Jersey should come in this month. Silver certification will require review of the possible actions. Members were asked to think about where they could take a leadership role. He spoke about creating a new Natural Resources Inventory (the last one was created 29 years ago). He proposed researching funds to create one in the most modern way. Next week is Climate Week NYC. He suggested looking at sessions available in New York or New Jersey. ANJEC is holding their 50th anniversary congress. Anyone interested in attending should let him know. New Jersey League of Municipalities, at the November convention, gives badges to people whose towns have earned Sustainable Jersey certification. Budget money could be well spent on public communication.
6. **Unfinished Business**
 - a. **SustainableCloster.org website update:** Rachel gave an update on changes to the website. Sustainable Jersey information will be added when she has it. A video about the pollinator garden and the environmental sensor has been created and added to the website. Rachel played the video. This website update will be a regular feature in the meeting.
 - b. **Buzzoni pollinator garden / ANJEC grant update:** Chair Yarin spoke about the Garden as a meeting and outreach space. Modi Feibish has looked into sprinkler systems and secured a few proposals.



- c. **EV ordinance update:** Chair Yarin spoke about different ways of measuring how many electric cars are on the road and what is needed to meet global decarbonization efforts. He looked at all of the EVs registered in Closter; $\frac{3}{4}$ of them were Teslas. He spoke about the importance of passing the Model Electrical Vehicle Ordinance.

7. **New Business**

- a. **Spotted lanternfly management:** This has been a vexing issue for many people. Now they are in multiple states and every county in this state. They especially like a tree that is actually an invasive weed. Each egg mass can have 30-50 future lantern flies. The egg mass is often very hard to see. He wrote a letter warning against using pesticides that could harm pollinators. He suggested, instead, taking down the infected tree of heaven trees, grinding the tree and stump (thus killing the eggs), and reducing the future trees available to them. He discussed several pesticides and herbicides and their levels of risk.

- 8. **Plan Review and Comment** Conway Wong congratulated Rachel on the website. He spoke about a property before the Planning Board that is near Northern Valley Demarest. The plan would require 37 trees to be removed. The application has been deemed complete. 25 MacArthur is the other application. There are two drop curbs but only one driveway. Also, there is problem with a door. The door and curbs will be rectified. The application deemed complete. Chair Yarin spoke about green design.

9. **Liaison Reports**

- a. **Governing Body:** Not present. He sent notes about the following: MacBain Farm caretakers are being interviewed. The \$1500 spotted lantern fly grant can be used for tree removal. He recommended removing only trees that are really bothering people.
- b. **Shade Tree Commission:** Not present
- c. **Planning Board:** See above.

- 10. **Adjournment** Conway Wong moved to adjourn, second Rachel Suter. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Francis
Environmental Commission Recording Secretary