

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
November 11, 2015

8:00 p.m.

Minutes

Chairman Len Resto called this Environmental Commission meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. in Room 212, middle level, Chatham Municipal Building. Mr. Resto read aloud the Statement of Adequate Notice for this meeting.

Roll Call

Name	Present	Absent
Len Resto, Chairman	X	
John Tancredi	X (arrived 8:05 P.M.)	
Carl Cappabianca		X
Ben Lampert		X
Brendan Keating	X (arrived 8:10 P.M.)	
Kate Murphy	X	
John Bitar		X
Council Member Kass		X
Liz Holler, Rec. Sec.	X (arrived 8:50 P.M.)	

Two visitors were present: John Dey and Wolf Robinson.

Public Comment

There was none.

Resolution #15-13

The meeting minutes for the Commission meeting of September 9, 2015 were approved as amended.

Correspondence

No correspondence received.

Liaison Reports

Planning Board

Since both Mr. Bitar and Ms. Holler were absent, Mr. Resto reported that the update to the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI), completed by former Commissioner Dick Plambeck, would be included in the Borough's update of its Master Plan in 2016.

Borough Council

Council Member Kass was not present to give a report.

Community Gardens

Mr. Resto reported he had spoken with Stan Elman, Vice-Chair of the Community Gardens Committee and the Garden has planted its fall & winter crop of cover oats during the dormant season. The Committee is looking to appoint a Chair in January 2016 and will begin the process of awarding plots and conducting educational sessions at the Library.

Boy Scouts

Mr. Tancredi reported that Scout Van Benedict would be working on the trails in Wuhala Woods. Mr. Tancredi noted that Mr. Benedict's proposal somehow didn't get signed off by the Environmental Commission and went straight to the Mayor who signed off on the project. Mr. Benedict will be constructing new bog bridges and repairing existing ones that are repairable. Mr. Tancredi is working with Mr. Benedict to improve on the project. Mr. Benedict would like to start work on the project before a hard freeze sets in, which means before the end of November. Mr. Benedict will also make his own trail markers using red & blue Cougar paws. One problem that will be faced is the securing of bog bridges so we don't lose them when water pools and the bridges don't just float away. Mr. Benedict initially thought of a floating dock with piping allowing the bridge to rise and fall with the height of the water. Mr. Tancredi expressed his concern of someone falling on such a pipe and being impaled. As an alternative, Mr. Benedict changed his proposal to a corkscrew-type anchor system.

Rain Garden

Mr. Resto reported that the Garden is now dormant for the winter and that he has requested \$250 in the Environmental Commission budget for new plantings in the spring. Mr. Resto recognized Mr. Cappabianca for his great efforts throughout the year in keeping the Rain Garden looking beautiful.

Eco-Film Series

Mrs. Murphy reported on a potential birding project for this upcoming May, 2016 with photos. More details to follow.

Pilgrim Pipeline

Mr. Keating first reported that the Board of Chosen Freeholders had approved the Solar Panel project for Chatham High School. Regarding Pilgrim, Mr. Keating reported that more and more municipalities are passing ordinances banning pipelines as permitted uses. Chatham Borough will continue using its Land Use Ordinance "as is". Mr. Resto reported that despite the drop in oil prices, Pilgrim is proceeding with permit dropping in New York State and New Jersey will follow. Chatham Borough is spearheading the effort to bring New Jersey municipalities together to discuss next steps.

Pending Business

Appointments to the Environmental Commission

Mr. Resto indicated that, if he hadn't done so already, the Mayor would be contacting those whose term would expire at 12/31/15 to see if the Commissioner would be willing to serve another term. Mr. Resto also urged Messrs. Dey and Robinson to re-submit their applications so as not to have their original applications get lost in the shuffle. Mr. Resto will e-mail the form to Billy Conlan who was unable to make the meeting.

Environmental Badge Award

Mr. Resto indicated that he, Mrs. Murphy and Mr. Tancredi make up the sub-committee. Mrs. Murphy will suggest some dates/times for the sub-committee to meet to get this off the ground.

Status of ERI

Mr. Resto indicated that former Commissioner Dick Plambeck's update would be included in the Borough's update to the Borough Master Plan in 2016.

Status of Budget

Mr. Resto reported that he had not yet heard back from Borough CFO Mr. Day as to whether the EC budget had been approved.

Reimbursement for ANJEC Congress

Mr. Resto reported that he had submitted his \$80 expense to attend the ANJEC Congress to Mr. Day for reimbursement. Mr. Resto asked Mr. Dey to do likewise by submitting his receipt from ANJEC. Mr. Dey will locate the receipt and submit same for his \$80 reimbursement.

Explore Chatham Suggestions

Mr. Resto indicated this was a project assigned to Mr. Conlan; however, in his absence, the topic will be carried to the next meeting.

Environmental Commission Website Improvements

Mr. Lampert had agreed to take on this assignment. Unfortunately, he was absent; but, he subsequently e-mailed his comments which Mr. Resto will pass along to the Commissioners. Mr. Dey indicated he was technologically adept enough that if he could be given "write" permission for the website, he could go in and repair broken links and add new ones. The EC agreed and Mr. Dey will contact Borough Clerk Robin Kline.

Sub-Committee for Drafting Recycling Tips

Mr. Resto expressed a need for a sub-committee to take on the responsibility of developing a recycling brochure or one-pager reminding residents about single-stream recycling and what can and cannot be placed in recycling containers. Also, since the MCMUA has complained about glass and plastic containers containing considerable food residue, such as peanut butter and jams/jellies, a reminder to residents to wash containers as much as possible before tossing same into the recycling bin. Dirty containers end up in the trash diminishing our recycling figures.

New Business

DEP Certification for 12 River Road

Mr. Tancredi reported that the DEP report for the soil clean-up at 12 River Road had been properly done and because the only requirement was to clean up the soil, there was no requirement about off-gassing. As a result, the DEP considers 12 River Road as compliant with DEP regulations. Mr. Tancredi further reported that if another business were to take over the 12 River Road property for another use, there would be other DEP guidelines that would apply and more work would need to be done.

Plastic Bags Initiative

Mr. Resto reported that at the ANJEC Environmental Congress he attended a session that addressed communities which have tried to address the issue of merchants' use of plastic bags. The communities have tried to get the merchants to either require shoppers to either use or buy reusable bags or to use paper bags instead of plastic. Mr. Resto noted that he shops at the Chatham Township Shop-Rite and they had begun a program encouraging reusable bags by giving shoppers a 10 cent credit per reusable bag. However, over time, the credit dropped to 8 cents, then to 7 cents and today, there is no credit given. Today, the Shop-Rite still uses plastic bags and many shoppers ask for both paper and plastic. While Shop-Rite will take the plastic bags back and "recycle" them; there is no clear signage in the store that such is the case. Mr. Resto would like to approach EC's in neighboring towns to see if there might be support to impress upon merchants that plastic is bad for the environment. Mr. Resto thought the initial outreach should be to the EC's of Chatham Township and Madison.

Kelley's Pond Area Clean-Up

Mr. Resto reported that on a recent walk through the Kelley's Pond area, there is a need for a spring clean-up. The trail from Jackson Ave. to the Pond is practically non-existent and needs to be re-done with wood chips and several trees need to be moved out of the way. The Pond itself is covered with algae and needs attention. Mr. Tancredi indicated we can do the clean-up in the spring separate and apart from the Chatham Spring Clean so as not to compete with the same set of volunteers.

Joint Trail Projects with City of Summit

Mr. Resto asked whatever happened to the grant both Summit and Chatham were going to ask for in order to link trails so there would be a loop to get to the other side of the river. Mr. Tancredi reported that Summit expressed interest in applying for the grant with us. He later discovered that then Mayor Ellen Dickson applied for the grant without us. The grant did not materialize. Mr. Resto suggested re-approaching Summit officials as Mayor Dickson and her running mates had been defeated in the Nov. 3rd election.

EPA Region 2 "Best Practices" Website

Mr. Resto indicated he learned of the EPA's Region 2 "Best Practices" website by a story he read in ANJEC's monthly magazine. He will circulate the website address to all EC Commissioners.

At 9:05 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 9, 2015, at 8:00 P.M. in Room 212, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Len Resto
Acting Recording Secretary