

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

November 13, 2019

8:00 p.m.

Chairman Len Resto called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m., in Room 212, middle level, Chatham Borough Hall. Chrmn. Resto announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Len Resto, Chrmn.	X	
Kate Murphy, Vice Chrmn.	X	
Patricia Soteropoulos		X
Kevin Murphy	X	
Torri Van Wie	X	
Joseph Treloar	X	
Philip Kagan	X	
Ben Lampert		X
Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen		X

Also present:

Dr. Rozella Clyde, Borough Green Team Member

Maddie Kaplan, a Chatham Middle School Student

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Mr. Treloar made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2019 Environmental Commission meeting as amended. Vice Chrmn. Murphy seconded the motion. The minutes of the October 11, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

There was none.

Reports/Pending Business

Planning Board

Mrs. Van Wie discussed the minor subdivision application that the Board had recently approved for 14 Clark Street. She suggested the Commission look into the recent trends of “readily” approving these subdivisions in the Borough. Mrs. Van Wie felt that too many of these 150 ft. wide lots are being chopped in half. As a result, densely packed dwellings are then constructed. The Borough’s Green Space will start disappearing. Council Member Kobylarz spoke to the neighbors afterwards who were not happy with this subdivision. He will look into Chapter 165, the Land Use ordinance. Mrs. Van Wie will keep in touch with Council Member Kobylarz concerning this matter. On another matter, Mrs. Van Wie asked that the Commission appoint another liaison to the Planning Board for the new year. She can no longer fill that position. Chrmn. Resto said he had a candidate in mind.

Dr. Clyde reminded Commissioners of the Joint Special Meeting to be held tomorrow night, November 14<sup>th</sup> regarding the River Road Redevelopment Project. She distributed photos

showing the proposed buildings to be constructed on River Road. Dr. Clyde was very concerned about the 249 living units being proposed on the corner of Watchung Ave. and River Road. There will be no mixed-use. She pointed out the absence of green space which would result. Dr. Clyde questioned what would Chatham Borough derive from the creation of these units.

Dr. Clyde passed around two booklets that were available at the Joint Special Meeting: “Conceptual Architectural Renderings (of River Road)” and “The River Road Redevelopment Plan: Traffic Impact Presentation”. Dr. Clyde noted that the developer had commented that if the utilities were allowed to go underground, River Road could be widened a little bit. An extra turn lane could be created.

Commissioners discussed the ratables issue involved with these developments. Chrmn. Resto brought up that there would be an increase to the Madison-Chatham Sewage Plant when more living units are created. This increased capacity will require more money which has already been planned for. Chrmn. Resto pointed out that the youngest equipment at the sewage plant is 50 years old.

#### Plastics Ordinance

Chrmn. Resto noted that on Saturday the Northern NJ Sustainability Municipal Alliance met to discuss how to give clear information to residents concerning the plastic bag ordinance.

On the local level, Chrmn. Resto reported that DPW is willing to collect plastic bags from the Chatham Library and take them to Whole Foods during the week. Chrmn. Resto and Dr. Clyde are willing to transport bags to Whole Foods on weekends as needed.

Chrmn. Resto will be meeting with Karen Brodsky, the Chatham Library Director, about this collection process. Chrmn. Resto anticipates that the volume of plastic bags will decrease after the ordinance banning plastic bags incept on 3/1/2020.

#### Terracycle

Chrmn. Resto reminded Commissioners that the terracycles were bins that could be installed for the disposal of cigarette butts. NJ Transit, at first, turned down this idea. However, they were sent a photo of all the cigarette butts collected in bags by volunteers during Chatham’s Spring Clean Day. In their second response, NJ Transit suggested that the teracycle bins be placed either by the parking meter machines or by the platform staircases. However, NJ Transit would like a resolution approved by the Borough asking for such an installation. Chrmn. Resto will help get such a resolution before the Borough Council.

Returning to the plastic bag ordinance, Dr. Clyde asked if the Commission could have banners installed on Main Street concerning the plastic bag ban.

#### Electric Vehicle Charging Station(s) – Status

Mr. Treloar reported that Madison Borough has installed five double-charging units. These units will be installed at the end of the year. Vice Chrmn. Murphy explained that a private citizen in Madison figured out how to apply for the grant money for these installations. She stated that Mr.

Wilcol, the Madison resident, suggested that the Commission contact JCP & L and see if they would be interested in setting up a charging unit. Mr. Treloar reviewed the installation prices that may be involved.

Chrmn. Resto will talk with Mayor-Elect Kobylarz about this charging station installation matter being on a Borough Council agenda in the new year. Mr. Treloar noted that the Commission has to make sure the representative from Volta can make the Council Meeting. Chrmn. Resto will let Mr. Treloar know of the Council meeting dates when the presentation could be heard.

Mr. Treloar brought up the matter of Volta having lit signs at their charging stations. The lit signs will consist of 8 flips an hour. One of the signs will be available for Chatham Borough announcements. Another flip will feature Volta itself. The remaining six flips will have to obtain the Borough's approval.

Mrs. Van Wie brought up the fact that the Borough does not necessarily have to use Volta for their charging station. It can be an independent charger.

Dr. Clyde asked how many hours per day would the charging station show flips. Mrs. Van Wie believed that there is a mandatory shut-off at 8 p.m. Mr. Treloar believed the hours of operation could be negotiable.

#### Home Energy Audit

Mrs. Van Wie will work with Council Member Mathiasen on this project. She will email her.

#### EC "Jobs"

Chrmn. Resto suggested some sub-committees be formed for certain projects.

Dr. Clyde brought up that the Green Team had discussed doing something special for Earth Week. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day is coming up. The Green Team is considering an Earth Day program in the Lundt Room at the Library. The big glass case will be available in May to show alternative uses in place of plastic. Dr. Clyde suggested that volunteers could help find info and objects for this display. This can start in March.

Chrmn. Resto volunteered to write a press release asking for volunteers for this Earth Day Project. Also, the Borough's rain garden on No. Passaic Avenue could use some volunteers to keep it in good condition. Chrmn. Resto felt that local scouts could work on the rain garden for the community service hours that they need to earn.

Mrs. Van Wie discussed the idea of "Stages for Ages" giving projects to children at different age levels to help the planet.

Regarding future Eagle Scout projects, Chrmn. Resto had suggested at least four benches be installed along the walkway of Shepard Kollock Park ballfield.

Mrs. Van Wie offered to reach out to some of the organizations at Chatham High School to see if they can take on some of these environmental tasks.

Chrmn. Resto stated that in his article, he will point out the short time commitment some of these environmental jobs would take.

Mr. Kagan brought up the possibility of an educational program for the rain garden. A volunteer could explain to visitors why this garden exists and what it does for the environment.

Dr. Clyde suggested an Eagle Scout Project would be the construction of an informative sign explaining the rain garden.

#### Drinking Fountains

Mr. Kagan reported on the research he had done on the installation of public drinking fountains. He noted that Newport, RI and Long Beach Island have had successful fountain projects. Mr. Kagan noted that fountains that contain bottle fillers can cost up to \$10,000 to both buy and install, assuming that potable water is available nearby.

Mr. Kagan noted that there are opportunities for funding for these foundations by grants or corporations.

Mr. Kagan felt that the big issue with these fountains would be potable water. Chrmn. Resto felt that potable water could be obtained at Rotary Park, where there is a sprinkler system, and the Shepard Kollock Park ballfields.

Mr. Kagan brought up that these fountains can be made weather-proof, as Madison has theirs. Also, if these fountains are installed in high-traffic areas, they will be successful.

Dr. Clyde suggested that once these fountains get installed, some of the local businesses may want a fountain installed in front of their establishments.

#### Drive Electric Week

Mr. Treloar explained the possibility of Drive Electric Earth Week. The Borough can hold this event whenever it wants. Mr. Treloar recommended that the Drive Electric event be held with another Borough event, preferably on a Saturday. As a stand-alone event, it may not be as successful.

At 9:10 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 8:00 p.m., Room 212, Middle Level, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler  
Recording Secretary

cc: Chatham Township Environmental Commission  
Mayor Bruce Harris