

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
December 11, 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. Mr. Murphy read aloud the Statement Regarding Adequate Notice of this meeting. 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

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Chrmn. Resto made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2019 Environmental Commission meeting. Vice Chrmn. Murphy seconded the motion. The minutes of November 13, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.

Reports/Pending Business

Borough Council

Council Member Mathiasen noted that there is a great deal of misinformation circulating by email about the Post Office Plaza Development and the River Road Development. She suggested that some re-education of the public be done to clear up these misleading emails. Council Member Mathiasen reported that the Post Office Plaza Redevelopment Project is still in its very early stages.

Council Member Mathiasen reported that the River Road Development Project is making progress. The cost for the underground wiring would come to approximately \$1 million. Council Member Mathiasen felt that \$1 million could better be used for something else. She reported that the First Student Bus Company property has been sold.

Council Member Mathiasen brought up the recent plastics legislation. Chrmn. Resto read aloud an article from NJ News reporting on the State Senate bill recently introduced would prohibit stores, restaurants, and other food businesses from providing single use plastic or paper bags as well as Polystyrene foam cups, food containers. Plastic straws will be available for those customers who request them. The ban of the use of plastic bags will become effective in one

year. Chrmn. Resto reported that if municipalities have passed regulations less strict than these new State standards, they must now follow the State regulations.

Council Member Mathiasen recommended that residents make phone calls to their State legislators, urging them to vote in favor of this bill.

Chrmn. Resto agreed with an earlier point raised by Council Member Mathiasen that this bill, if passed, will greatly affect smaller businesses.

On another matter that had been before the Borough Council, Vice Chrmn. Murphy was unhappy to see the Memorial Garden disappear on the Stanley Church property. It was a wonderful place to sit and rest when walking up Fairmount Avenue on a hot day. Vice Chrmn. Murphy suggested the governing body “take it slow” in deciding about the Memorial Garden and the church parking lot.

Council Member Mathiasen gave the Commissioners an update on the Stanley Congregational Church property. One of the options is to turn the property over to Chatham Borough. The Borough Council still has to decide whether to accept this property. Chrmn. Resto felt that this building would make a nice community center. Some Commissioners felt parking would be an issue. Dr. Clyde suggested a bike section be created on the Fairmount Avenue side of the building. Council Member Mathiasen suggested the building could be used as a teen center.

Council Member Mathiasen stated that an online survey can be available to hear the residents’ ideas about this building. Borough officials need to be particularly sensitive to the residents who live close to the building.

Plastics Education

Mrs. Van Wie reported on Katelyn Osucha’s Girl Scout project, giving out bags at the Farmers Market. Mrs. Van Wie hoped that Katelyn could help make posters to be put at retail places, reminding people to bring their own shopping bags to stores. Mrs. Van Wie suggested a program “Take It or Leave It” to leave a bag or pick up a bag to be held in the high school. Mrs. Van Wie will spearhead this project at Chatham High School. Chrmn. Resto will spearhead it at the Senior Citizen Center of the Chathams.

Terracycle

Chrmn. Resto reported that NJ Transit is willing to accept the Terracycle Program; however, they would like a resolution on this installation from the Borough Council. Chrmn. Resto will do a presentation at a January Borough Council meeting. He will then return to NJ Transit with the necessary resolution.

Home Energy Audit Program

Council Member Mathiasen discussed a home audit company that is available to Madison and Summit residents. This company can perform an energy audit in a home for \$49. The audit will review the home’s insulation situation, and drafts that a home may be experiencing.

EV Charging Stations

Chrmn. Resto noted that Sustainable Jersey has \$20,000 grants. He suggested that Chatham Borough should apply for one. Chrmn. Resto reported that Janice Piccolo has found out that EV Charging Stations are not eligible for grants. Mrs. Van Wie brought up the possibility of a super charger being installed in the Borough. Vice Chrmn. Murphy reviewed where Madison has installed their EV charging stations.

Underground utilities – Zoning variances for new construction

Chrmn. Resto reported that this is being looked into. It will be discussed at the next meeting.

Earth Week – 2020

Chrmn. Resto suggested a subcommittee be formed to help Dr. Clyde with the Borough's observation of Earth Week. Dr. Clyde discussed the Earth Week exhibit she will be organizing at the Library. The display case will have 3 or 4 shelves available for items. Chrmn. Resto asked Dr. Clyde to email Commissioners what material would be helpful for this display. Ms. Soteropoulos will try and obtain some samples of interest for the display.

Before adjourning, Chrmn. Resto announced that tonight is the last meeting for Commissioner Kevin Murphy.

Chrmn. Resto read aloud Environmental Commission's Resolution # 004-2019:

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER EFFORTS OF KEVIN MURPHY, ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEMBER

Whereas, it is the mission of the Environmental Commission of the Borough of Chatham to enhance the quality of life in the Borough by promoting sustainable measures that protect our environment; and,

Whereas, part of the mission of the Environmental Commission is the promotion of recycling to prevent recyclable items from entering the stream of waste in our landfills; and,

Whereas, the Borough of Chatham wished to reduce the use of plastic bags in the stream of commerce which unduly hurt the environment and causes costs to rise for taxpayers in addition to placing recycling employees at greater risk of injury; and,

Whereas, the elimination of plastics overall enhances our quality of life, protects wildlife and adds to the aesthetic beauty of our environment; and,

Whereas, the Environmental Commission also recognizes that the use of organic compounds over the use of chemical compounds is environmentally desired, as is less noise and polluting leaf blowers and snow blowers, as well as other powered lawn machinery, and

Whereas, Kevin Murphy championed these issues during his entire tenure on the Environmental Commission at great sacrifice to his time and resources, and,

Whereas, Kevin Murphy and his wife, Kate, helped champion the first ever “bags for benches” program in Chatham which conservatively estimated eliminated over 250,000 plastic bags from our environment, and,

Whereas, Kevin Murphy was one of the leaders in the effort to eliminate harmful herbicides and pesticides from Borough owned land, and,

Whereas, Kevin Murphy set an example to others by the dint of hard work and dedication to environment in our Borough and beyond,

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that the Environmental Commission of the Borough of Chatham joins all Chatham Borough residents in hereby recognizing and thanking Kevin Murphy for his outstanding achievements through the volunteering of his time and energies. The Environmental Commission extends its appreciation of Kevin’s efforts and he will be greatly missed!

Resolution 004-2019 was unanimously approved.

Mr. Murphy offered to still help the Commission set up for activities like Fishawack.

Refreshments in honor of Commissioner Murphy were served.

At 9:07 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, 8 p.m., Room 212, middle level, Chatham Borough Hall. It will be the Commission’s Reorganization meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

cc: Mayor Bruce Harris
Chatham Twp. Environmental Commission