

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
March 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. Chrnm. Resto announced that all legal notices has been posted for this meeting

Name	Present	Absent
Len Resto, Chrnm.	X	
Kate Murphy, Vice Chwmn.	X	
Patricia Soteropoulos	X	
Kevin Murphy	X	
Torri Van Wie	X	
Joseph Treloar		X
Kyle Muir	X	
Ben Lampert	X	
Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen	X	
Liz Holler – Minutes Clerk	X	

Also present:

Dr. Rozella Clyde, a member of the Borough Green Team

Public Comment

There was none

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Murphy made a motion to adopt the minutes of the February 13, 2019 Environmental Commission meeting as amended. Ms. Soteropoulos seconded the motion. The minutes of February 13, 2019 were approved as amended.

The Environmental Commission’s letter to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment

Mrs. Van Wie noted that tonight’s draft letter has incorporated edits made by Dr. Clyde and Chrnm. Resto. This letter, from the Environmental Commission, will be

requesting consideration of sustainable practices for all new applications coming before the Planning Board and Zoning Bd. of Adjustment.

Mrs. Van Wie asked Commissioners to review the list of design elements she had put together, to be requested of applicants who come before the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment with proposed plans. Mrs. Van Wie had tried to keep the list of elements short and realistic.

Ms. Soteropoulos gave the suggestions made by her husband, an engineer, who had reviewed the letter. Her husband had recommended that the Commission not use the term “green roof”. If the house has enough room, a “green space” could be considered. Ms. Soteropoulos noted that there are no standards in place for insulation projects.

Commissioners discussed the idea of asking that solar paneling be suggested for new roofs. Mrs. Murphy felt, particularly for any future development at Post Office Plaza, that a roof, at four stories, should be capable of handling solar panels.

After further discussion, Mrs. Van Wie suggested this revised language for this matter: “Designs that enable the installation of solar paneling...” The Commissioners approved of these revised words.

Commissioners also discussed the request for underground electrical services and water reclamation for new construction. A suggestion was made that parking and driveway surfaces be required to have maximized pervious surface coverage.

Mrs. Van Wie will continue to revise this letter keeping in mind the comments made tonight by Commissioners.

### Reports/Pending Business

#### Planning Board

Mrs. Van Wie noted that she had reviewed the Post Office Redevelopment Plan that Planning Board members had recently received. She has met with representatives of Topology who had drafted this plan. Mrs. Van Wie had given these representatives requests from the Environmental Commission.

Also, in relationship to the Post Office Plaza Development, Mrs. Van Wie discussed an idea she had on helping to alleviate congested traffic in the downtown area. A public bus service could be established to help especially senior residents and young people, without car transportation, to reach other parts of town. The bus

could start its route at Post Office Plaza and make certain stops all around town. This bus would also be helping to bring more potential customers to Main Street businesses.

Also concerning the Redevelopment Plan, Mrs. Van Wie reported that Topology had discussed green landscaping and the green certification standard. Mrs. Van Wie noted that solar energy had also been covered in the plan. She had concerns about a specification stating the solar installations must not be higher than 4 feet from the roof coverage. Mrs. Van Wie mentioned this height concern in her letter to Topology. Also, Mrs. Van Wie felt that the amount Topology asked for pre-wiring charging stations was very low. Topology asked for only 10% for all new parking spaces to be pre-wired. Mrs. Van Wie recommended a trench be put in the ground to make room for additional chargers, since she felt that electrical cars will become increasingly popular in the future.

Mrs. Van Wie and Commissioners discussed what percentage of charging stations should they ask Topology to consider. Commissioners decided to ask for 100% .

Mrs. Van Wie discussed an idea to keep traffic flowing on Main Street after the redevelopment project is done. A subterranean passageway could be constructed for pedestrians to safely cross over to the other side of Main Street. This passageway may encourage particularly local students to patronize local stores.

Mrs. Van Wie excused herself from the Commission meeting after giving her report.

#### Borough Council

Council Member Mathiasen reminded Commissioners that a joint meeting between the Borough Council and the Borough Planning Board will be held on Wednesday night, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m. to discuss the Post Office Redevelopment Plan.

#### Organic Fields RFP

Council Member Mathiasen reported that the Borough Council has decided there will be no non-organic treatment on any of the playing fields. The full organic treatment of the fields, costing \$30,000, has now been removed from the Public Work's budget for the year. **Aeration, as does the School District, and over-seeding** will be done on the Borough fields. The Joint Board of Recreation will be discussing the rotation of playing fields.

Council Member Mathiasen reported on a new project being considered of the Borough producing paperless agendas in the near future. This method would reduce the Borough's heavy use of paper and postage.

### Plastics Initiative

Mrs. Murphy reported on the latest meeting with Environmental Commissioners from Chatham Township, Madison, and Summit. An ANJEC presentation will be held at the Madison Community House on May 16<sup>th</sup> to educate residents about plastics. A suggestion was made that when a town-wide clean up day is held; a pile should be made of all of the plastic trash that had been gathered. Photos should be taken of the cast-off plastics around town. These photos could be put on the Commission's website. Addresses will be omitted.

Mrs. Murphy noted that at a recent Great Swamp Watershed Association meeting, a scientist had reported that all the streams and rivers in the Great Swamp area had been tested. Micro fibers and little pieces of plastic exist in every stream that was tested.

Council Member Mathiasen said it was her hope to have an ordinance to disallow plastic bags and Styrofoam to be given out by Borough businesses. She noted that the plastics market has now collapsed. Many **non-recyclable** plastics are **no longer** being accepted **by** the market. **The same applies to** contaminated papers and metals. Council Member Mathiasen suggested Chatham Borough have a plastics ban ordinance in place **at** the same time Madison Borough does theirs.

Mr. Murphy reported that at a recent meeting he had attended, that the acceptable numbers for plastic recycling are 1, 2, and 5. He felt that trying to recycle plastic nowadays is counterproductive. Mr. Murphy discussed the large amounts of microfibers that are deposited into the ocean each year, particularly when new clothes are laundered. He questioned whether glass should still be recycled. Mr. Murphy noted that many municipalities now just take recyclables straight to the landfills.

Council Member Mathiasen suggested the Commission reach out to the different vendors in town about **the** plastic bag situation. Work can be started on a model ordinance on this issue. She suggested data could be requested from **MCMUA** about the cross contamination of plastic bags **with other recyclables and how plastic bags detrimentally affect the other recyclables**. Many times, those machines have to be shut down to allow an employee to climb in and pull out the **stuck** plastic bags.

Ms. Soteropoulos asked who would enforce an ordinance banning plastics bags in Borough stores. Council Member Mathiasen answered probably the Zoning Officer. A fine would be put in place.

Council Member Mathiasen asked Chrmn. Resto if a member from the Environmental Commission could give a presentation on the plastic bag issue to the Borough Council when the draft ordinance is being considered. Chrmn. Resto agreed.

Dr. Clyde recommended that one of the Commissioners visit the local vendors before this ordinance is introduced to the Borough Council.

#### Riverside Trail

Chrmn. Resto complimented the Department of Public Works for removing all the **fallen** plastic tubing and netting from the saplings planted along **the** Riverside Trail. This work detail was undertaken immediately after last month's Commission meeting, when the sapling situation was brought up.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

The next Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 8 p.m., Room 212, middle level, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler  
Recording Secretary

cc: Mayor Bruce Harris  
Chatham Township Environmental Commission

