

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
December 9, 2020 8:00 p.m.

(Note: Meeting held via Zoom conference due to the Governor's Health Emergency order related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. All news outlets informed of the change and a notice was posted on the entrances to Borough Hall)

Chairwoman Kate Murphy called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. via Zoom Conference. Chmwn. Murphy read aloud the Statement of Adequate Notice. All legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Kate Murphy, Chair	X	
Patricia Soteropoulos, Vice Chair	X	
Rozella Clyde	X	
Torri Van Wie	X	
Joseph Treloar	X	
Philip Kagan		X
Ben Lampert	X	
Susie Robertson		X
Yana Doyle		X
Jocelyn Mathiasen, Council Co-Liaison	X	
Len Resto, Council Co- Liaison	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Maddie Kaplan, a CHS student, was also present.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

The Commissioners decided to postpone voting on the November 11, 2020 minutes. They needed more time to review these minutes. The November 11, 2020 minutes will be voted on at the January 6, 2021 Reorganization Meeting.

Reports/Pending Business
Planning Board

Mrs. Van Wie stated that she had not participated in the latest Planning Board meeting.

Ms. Holler, recording secretary for the Planning Board, reported that the Board is continuing their work on new definitions for the B-5 District. The Board is also reviewing the Borough's bulk requirements. The Board's professional planner, Kendra Lelie, is helping with these two projects.

Related to the Planning Bd., Mrs. Van Wie asked if the Environmental Commission could urge passage of an ordinance to mandate developers that they run pre-wiring for charging stations for electric vehicles. She noted that both Morris Township and Berkeley Heights have adopted such ordinances. Mrs. Van Wie had sent a link containing these ordinance to the Commissioners.

Council Member Resto agreed that pre-wiring should be a requirement for developers, because electric vehicles will be very popular in the near future.

Mr. Treloar pointed out that it's a good idea for apartment dwellers to have charging stations available. Perhaps more apartment dwellers would be leaning towards buying electric cars if they had a charging station within their reach.

Council Member Resto told Mrs. Van Wie that he will take a closer look at those ordinances.

Mrs. Van Wie reported that recently constructed Rose Hall in Madison has a charging station. Three or four tenants make use of it. They use the charging station on a rotating basis. Mrs. Van Wie went over the advantages of pre-wiring. Council Member Resto pointed out that it's a less expensive installation.

Dr. Clyde reported that she had studied the Municipal Code with these type of installations in mind. She suggested the Commission ask Borough Attorney Lott to see where, in our Borough ordinance, such a requirement would fit in. Dr. Clyde also would like Attorney Lott to see, if such an ordinance was passed, could the owner of the future River Road development have to comply.

Council Member Mathiasen pointed out that both Post Office Plaza and River Road are redevelopment projects with redevelopment plans, so they don't actually have to follow the Borough's zoning ordinances. The Borough is currently negotiating with the River Road developers. They have agreed to install a conduit for 100% of the parking spaces. Council Member Mathiasen explained how

difficult it is to put charging stations in a municipal parking lot. Council Member Mathiasen suggested that at the next Commission meeting, Commissioners should vote to recommend that the Borough Engineer review the language that was in the Morris Township ordinance. She pointed out that it is really Mr. DeNave, the Borough Engineer, who shepherds through any changes to the Borough's Zoning ordinance.

After further discussion, Council Member Mathiasen recommended that the Environmental Commission refer this issue to the Planning Board for their consideration. One option could include something in the Borough's Land Use Code that would mandate a certain ratio of charging spaces to parking spots. Another option is when redevelopments are considered in the Borough, the developers would be required to meet or exceed the environmental standards that are in place for regular projects.

Dr. Clyde and Council Member Mathiasen decided the best course of action would be to ask Mr. DeNave to look over the Morris Township ordinance and ask for his feedback and any changes that could be made to this ordinance before the Commission voted on it and referred it to the Planning Board. It is hoped, ultimately, it could be added to the record as an official ordinance. Mrs. Van Wie volunteered to undertake this assignment.

Council Member Mathiasen clarified a statement that she had made earlier. It is the Borough Council who amends the Borough Building Code; however, the Planning Board first reviews these amendments.

On Council Member Mathiasen's suggestion, Mrs. Van Wie will set up an appointment with Mr. DeNave to discuss this ordinance review. Council Members Mathiasen and Resto offered to join her in this meeting with Mr. DeNave.

Chwmn. Murphy asked if there was anything else from the Borough Council to report on.

Council Member Resto noted that the Borough's garbage contract is being worked on. The Commission had discussed this at their November meeting.

Council Member Mathiasen reported that the Borough Council is working on end-of-the-year items. The Council is close to approving a contract with the River Road Developers. No movement has taken place on Post Office Plaza.

Dr. Clyde asked if the Environmental Commission had to submit an Annual Report to the Borough Council.

Council Member Resto answered yes. The report usually is worked on in January.

Northern NJ Sustainable Municipal Alliance Group

Mrs. Van Wie reported that a Climate Action Plan was recently held with Christine Symington of Sustainable Princeton. The Plan has “blown up in epic proportions” which Mrs. Van Wie felt was not a bad thing. Ms. Symington recommended that the municipal alliances pursue ordinances focused green construction, green fleets, energy aggregation.

Council Member Resto reported that he had taken a look at the Sustainable Princeton Plan. He felt that Sustainable Princeton had a number of substantial groups to support their projects.

Dr. Clyde reported that Mrs. Van Wie has set down the framework for the working groups. These groups look at eight groups of sustainability and are making tremendous progress. Dr. Clyde commented that Chatham Borough will benefit greatly from working with energetic municipalities like Madison Borough.

Reserving EC Budgetary Funds on an annual basis

Mrs. Van Wie noted that the Commission has a budget that they don't really use. She suggested the Commission use some of their money for backpack blowers for the DPW. Also, the Commission could take the initiative to install charging stations in the Borough. Perhaps the Commission should have a liaison to the budgetary committee.

Council Member Resto explained that every year Borough Departments, Borough Boards and Commissions should be receiving a request for budget dollars. If the Commission has some projects in mind, they should make it known during the budget process. The Borough Council can then review it and see if it can be done.

Council Member Mathiasen stated that the Environmental Commission receives money every year. For a number of years, the Commission has not spent the money. Council Member Mathiasen said she will send an email to the new Borough CFO right now to make sure she is sending out the budget requests to all the Boards and Commissions. The Commission can then be sure of how much money it has. Council Member Mathiasen noted that the Borough CFOs have turned over quickly the last few years, which has caused some inconsistency and

confusion. She suggested the Commission ask Ms. Fornaro, the current CFO, what it has received in the past year. The Commission can always ask for more money. The deadline for any requests would be the end of February.

Dr. Clyde felt that battery packs for the DPW would be an excellent project to fund.

Mr. Lampert and Council Member Resto recalled that the Commission had already given one battery backpack to the DPW a couple of years ago.

Mr. Treloar suggested the Commission get the views from the DPW itself about these battery packs and their needs. Mr. Treloar offered to touch base with Tony Torello, the Director of Public Works to discuss this situation.

Mrs. Van Wie felt that if the Commission were to fight for funds, it should really be for the installation of charging stations. For some reason the state-wide grant “It Pays to Plug In” is not being forthcoming with the necessary money.

State Plastics Legislation

Council Member Resto said he asked this topic to be included in tonight’s agenda to see if one of the Commissioners could keep an eye on NJ State’s legislation on plastics to see how it works with the Borough’s regulations on plastics. The Borough should keep in sync with the State’s regulations.

Dr. Clyde believed that the State regulations are more expansive than those of the Borough’s and it basically replaces local legislation.

Council Member Mathiasen recommended that the Borough Attorney should send out a memo on these regulations. Some section of the local regulations will now have to be removed because the State regulations are much more stringent when they go into effect. Mr. Treloar noted that the State regulations won’t go into effect until May 2022.

EC’s Sustainable Jersey Application

Dr. Clyde reported that she has heard from Margie Lowe at Borough Hall. Ms. Lowe has finally received a communication from Sustainable Jersey. The opening day for applications is March. Applications must be submitted by June 2021.

Dr. Clyde believed the Green Team is on target to reach the application deadline.

Dr. Clyde reported that the Green Team will also make plans to observe Earth Day.

Energy Aggregation

Dr. Clyde reported that the Energy Aggregation group included Millburn, Livingston, Morris Township, and Chatham Township. She reported that Livingston will enter into a new energy aggregation agreement in March 2021 for their PSE & G customers, but Livingston is still looking for a plan that will include their JCP & L customers.

Dr. Clyde reported that a resolution is needed for Chatham Borough to become part of an energy aggregation. A consultant can then shop around for the best cost of energy for the town. There is an opt-out opportunity for anyone who does not want to participate in the energy aggregation.

Dr. Clyde strongly recommended that Chatham Borough join this Energy Aggregation program.

Mr. Treloar stated that the Borough which would greatly benefit from energy aggregation.

Mrs. Van Wie noted that the process would be simple. The Borough just has to pass an ordinance to get a consultant. She has sent the ordinance to Commissioners to review.

Council Member Mathiasen clarified that passing the ordinance would allow the Borough to take the first step. It wouldn't obligate the Borough in any way. The ordinance could be introduced in early 2021. The Energy Aggregation group will select a consultant. The Borough Council will have to sign off on the consultant. Council Member Mathiasen cautioned that the Borough would not want anyone's energy bills to increase with this process. Otherwise, she is in full support of energy aggregation for the Borough.

Dr. Clyde confirmed with Mr. Treloar that Borough residents who already have solar installed on their homes will not be participating in the aggregate. Mr. Treloar explained in more detail.

Maddie Kaplan's video

Ms. Kaplan showed the wonderful video she had created on leaf blowers – the differences between electric leaf blowers and gas-powered blowers.

The Commissioners complimented Ms. Kaplan on the fine job she did on her video. It has been forwarded to Steve Williams, the Borough Administrator.

Miscellaneous

Dr. Clyde reported that the State had passed a regulation in February 2020 mandating every municipality to update their Stormwater Management. She noted that Chatham Borough is mandated to provide to the County a new stormwater ordinance that is compliance with the State regulation before February 1, 2021.

Council Member Resto answered that Chatham Borough is on target to meet that deadline. He has spoken with Mr. DeNave, the Borough Engineer, on this matter. Council Member Resto believed this ordinance will be voted on at one of the January meetings.

Council Member Mathiasen noted that Mr. DeNave had recently attended an ANJEC webinar regarding the stormwater requirements. Mr. DeNave had notified her and Council Member Resto that the necessary revisions were in the works. Council Member Mathiasen stated that she will confirm with Mr. DeNave that the Borough is on target with these revisions.

On another matter, Dr. Clyde brought up that the Environmental Commission is mandated to keep an inventory of all of the Borough's Open Spaces, Wetlands, and Municipal properties. She asked how this was being done.

Council Member Resto answered that the Borough has an Open Space & Historic Trust Conservancy that keeps track of the town's Open Spaces, Wetlands, and Municipal properties and keeps the State informed of any issues that may arise.

Council Member Mathiasen added that the actual Borough lands are tracked by the Borough's GIS system. An inventory is maintained on all the Borough parks, open spaces, etc.

Dr. Clyde asked if a link to this inventory could be put on the Environmental Commission's web page.

Council Member Mathiasen answered yes, that could be done.
At 9:09 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, 8 p.m. It will be a virtual meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

cc: Mayor Thaddeus Kobylarz
Chatham Township Environmental Commission