

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

April 15, 2020 7:45 P.M.

(Notes: (1) Meeting date changed from 1st Wednesday of the month for the observance of Passover. (2) Meeting held via Zoom conference due to the Governor's "Stay at Home" order related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. All news outlets informed of changes)

Vice Chair Pat Soteropoulos called the Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 P.M. via Zoom Conference. Vice Chair Pat Soteropoulos 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 Liaison		X (EDAC sub-committee Zoom Meeting)
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary		X

PUBLIC COMMENT

As no members of the public participated on the Zoom conference call, there was no public comment.

MOTION TO ADOPT MEETING MINUTES

Since the minutes of the March meeting were not yet available, approval of said minutes was postponed to the May meeting.

REPORTS/PENDING BUSINESS

Planning Board

Council Co-Liaison Resto reported that due to the pandemic, the Planning Board had no business to transact and he was unaware that they had met.

Borough Council/Plastic Bags

Council Co-Liaison Resto reported that due to the health crisis where the Governor has extended the fiscal year to September 30th, all discretionary spending has been frozen. This could affect the Environmental Commission budget; however, as many of our events may not happen, we do not anticipate such action to impact us.

On the Plastic Bags Ordinance, Council Member Resto reported that several requests had been made to the Council from residents that the Borough temporarily suspend the Plastic Bags Ordinance. He noted Madison had suspended their Ordinance noting that, apparently, Stop & Shop had run out of reusable bags and their paper bags supply was low. They had many plastic bags left over. He also reported that Trader Joe's in Florham Park were not allowing any shoppers into the store carrying reusable bags. They need to use the paper bags being provided by Trader Joe's at no charge. The Borough has not suspended the Ordinance.

Climate Action Plan

Commissioner Rozella Clyde advised that work on the Climate Action Plan has been slowed down; but is not in complete abeyance. (NOTE: Since the meeting, Council Member Resto forwarded a Sustainable Jersey e-mail with various webinars, several of which involve topics related to Climate. Several EC and Green Team members have already registered).

Earth Week 2020

Commissioner Clyde was spearheading this effort and she had already taken steps to secure display space at the Library. However, given the pandemic, Rozella has pivoted to a virtual Earth Day and she shared her screen where we viewed her description of the event as well as a calendar of things people could do at home to celebrate Earth Week. After a few suggestions from Commissioners Lampert, Treloar and Soteropoulos, the exhibit was finalized and Rozella will distribute via press release to all media outlets (NOTE: At this writing, this has already been done). Some of the suggestions involved taking out things where a company would do an energy audit and we would pivot to how any homeowner can perform their own energy audit. Another idea was keeping a diary of things done during Earth Week, etc.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station

Council Member Resto indicated he had taken a long walk and found electric vehicle charging stations at the Sun Valley complex in Florham Park, the Livingston Mall in Livingston and a townhouse development in Livingston near CIT, off Columbia Turnpike. He will send pictures to the Commissioners. We will get this moving again post-emergency.

Plastic Bags/Styrofoam

Council Liaison Resto reported that this item had been added after he heard from Jessica Romeo of the Northern New Jersey Sustainability Alliance about the next steps after the plastic bags ordinance. He added that this has been placed in abeyance until the emergency is over.

Environmentally Friendly Things to do at Home

Commissioners discussed things residents could do while confined to home. Suggestions were planting/adopting indoor plants, planting a terrarium, outdoor gardening, starting some backyard composting, etc.

EC Website

It was widely agreed that the EC website needs much help. Yana Doyle and Susie Robertson suggested that having some action pictures which would link to information would attract attention instead of the current long narratives. Rozella indicated how dated the information was- some going back to 2009! Yana agreed to make the website "tiles" if others could send her pictures to post. Susie stressed that the

attention span for tile pictures is within 10 seconds. We need to make the site more “punchy”. Rozella suggested Green Team member Shazia help. All agreed. Ben will coordinate having the new information posted on our Facebook interface.

Being no other business to discuss, Commissioner Soteropoulos made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Treloar, all voted in favor.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 8:00 P.M. The meeting will be held via Zoom conference as the “Stay at Home” order has been extended to May 15th.

Respectfully submitted,

Len Resto
Acting Recording Secretary

Cc: Mayor Thaddeus J. Kobylarz
Chatham Township Environmental Commission