

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
February 12, 20208:00 p.m.

Chairman Kate Murphy called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. in Room 212, middle level, Chatham Municipal Building. Chrmn. Murphy read aloud the statement of Adequate Notice. All legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

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

Also present:

Teagan Richichi, Boy Scout & Eagle Scout Candidate  
Matt Pasko, Boy Scout & Eagle Scout Candidate  
Yana Doyle, a Green Team member  
Ernie Dorflinger, an interested resident  
Shazzia Razzaq, an interested resident  
Maddie Kaplan, a CMS student

At the time of the roll call, a quorum of Commissioners was not present. Chrmn. Murphy suggested the Commissioners listen to the Eagle Scout Candidates' proposed projects.

Boy Scout Teagan Richichi presenting his Eagle Scout Project

Teagan Richichi noted that his Eagle Project Plan consisted of constructing two new picnic tables at Stanley Park, replacing the current picnic tables that have seriously deteriorated. He will also encourage the Borough to remove some of the dangerous, aging trees in the park. Teagan distributed a brief summary with photos of his proposed project.

Council Member Resto suggested that Teagan work with Tony Torello, the DPW Director, to remove the deteriorated trees pictured in his hand-out.

Council Member Resto and Teagan discussed the \$250 expense. Teagan explained that he will be using planking for the new picnic tables. Dr. Clyde suggested using Trex boards for the picnic tables. Teagan will look into this suggestion. Dr. Clyde suggested Teagan submit a map

showing where the new picnic tables will go. Teagan answered that the new tables will be put in the same locations as the old picnic tables.

Council Member Resto asked how long this project will take.

Teagan answered anywhere from one to two months. He still has to obtain approval from the Boy Scout Council and from the Mayor and Borough Council. Teagan hopes to start the work in mid or late March.

Council Member Resto gave his approval of the project. He told Teagan once approval is obtained from the Boy Scout Council, Teagan should email him or Chrmn. Murphy. Teagan will then be put on the docket for a Borough Council Meeting.

Teagan thanked the Commissioners for their time and advice.

At this point in the meeting, a legal quorum was now present.

#### Motion to Adopt the Meeting Minutes

Dr. Clyde made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2020 Environmental Commission meeting. Mr. Lampert seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The minutes of the January 8, 2020 EC Meeting were approved.

#### Planning Board Liaison Report

Mrs. Van Wie was absent tonight. Also, the Planning Board has not met recently.

#### Boy Scout Mark Pasko presenting his Eagle Scout Project

Mark described the new trailhead he is proposing to construct in Wuhala Woods. He also plans to construct four main steps and a little bit of a trail for the woods. Mark is proposing to also create a kiosk. He explained what advantages the trailhead would provide visitors to Wuhala Woods.

Chrmn. Murphy asked if the trailhead would provide access to the existing bird blinds.

Mark answered no, the trailhead would not involve the bird blinds. The trailhead will be running perpendicular to the bird blinds.

Dr. Clyde and Mark discussed what surface will be used for the trailhead. Council Member Resto suggested Mark touch base with Mr. Torello, the Director of DPW. There may be gravel available at the Borough mulch area. DPW could probably help transport the gravel.

Council Member Resto asked Mark if the existing sign in the woods will be replaced. Mark answered that the existing sign will remain; however, a laminated copy of the trail could be posted. Council Member Resto pointed out that the walking trail along the Convent Station train line contains laminated information about the Morris Traction Company.

Dr. Clyde asked what the benches for the Trailhead will be made of.

Mark answered wood. Dr. Clyde suggested Mark contact the local houses of worship. Many of these congregations have earned Trex benches. These benches may need assembling. Council Member Resto will send Mark the email address of the Reverend Jeff Markey, pastor of Chatham United Methodist Church. Reverend Markey could be helpful in obtaining some of these benches.

Council Member Resto asked Mark how much the project would cost.

Mark answered about \$400. That figure is not including possible donations. Mark hopes to do the work in the Spring.

Dr. Clyde discussed the surfacing situation at the parking area of the Trailside location. Mark felt that he and the other Scouts don't have the means to do surfacing work; however, the area is parkable. Dr. Clyde suggested Mark work with the DPW to flatten the parking surface. Perhaps the Scouts could do the needed lining.

Council Member Resto said he endorsed this project. He will help Mark and Teagan secure a place on a future Borough Council meeting agenda to present their plans.

#### Borough Council – Council Member Mathiasen

Council Member Mathiasen reported that the Borough's ban of plastic bags will go into effect on March 1<sup>st</sup>. A mailing will be going out to local retailers today reminding them of this ban. The Police Department will be assisting through their Community Resource Officer.

Council Member Resto noted that there will be plastic bag recyclable bins available in different locations – Borough Hall, the Senior Center, Drip Coffee, the Purple Aardvark.

Dr. Clyde suggested asking the Police Department to put their blinking traffic sign out in front of the Municipal Building announcing the March 1<sup>st</sup> date of when plastic bags will no longer be used in stores.

On other matters, Council Member announced that the informational kiosk to be installed along the Shepard Kollock Trail recently was approved.

#### Climate Action Plan/Carbon Footprint

Council Member Resto noted that Mayor Kobylarz was supposed to attend tonight's meeting in order to make a Chatham Climate Action Plan a priority, however he is home sick. Dr. Clyde will be spear-heading this project.

Chrmn. Murphy showed a copy of Princeton NJ's Climate Action Plan. She explained that part of this project was to figure out the carbon footprint of your town. Council Member Resto noted that former EC Commissioner Carl Cappabianco had created a spreadsheet of carbon emission for the Borough. Council Member Resto will try and obtain an updated spreadsheet, if possible. Dr. Clyde explained how the Princeton Climate Action Plan had operated.

Commissioners discussed the diesel fumes that come from idling school buses. Chrmn. Murphy felt the heating and electricity is a bigger concern than vehicle fumes.

Council Member Mathiasen stated that she will be reaching out to Madison soon about the program of having their residents doing their own energy audits of their homes. Residents usually don't realize how much heat is leaking out of their homes. Possibly the Chatham Borough Municipal Building should undergo an energy audit.

Chrmn. Murphy reported that she had looked up the carbon footprint for Chatham. So far, the largest amount is for electricity. Natural gas is second. Chrmn. Murphy stated that maybe something can be adjusted on the streetlights.

Dr. Clyde said she would like to see the municipal fleet of vehicles eventually be electric powered.

#### Earth Week activities

Dr. Clyde reported that the Green Team will be holding a meeting on February 18th to focus totally on Earth week events. The Green Team hopes to have a list of activities for the whole month of April. The February 18<sup>th</sup> Green Team meeting will be held at the Library of the Chathams at 7 p.m. Representatives from Chatham High School and Chatham Middle School have been invited. Dr. Clyde discussed an exhibit that is being planned to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day. This exhibit, which will be on display at the Library, will show artifacts that can be used to replace single use plastic containers. The Library bulletin board that the Green Team has reserved will focus primarily on Earth Day.

Dr. Clyde reported that on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, the Green Team has space reserved the Lundt Meeting Room. A speaker from the Energy Council will give an OSHA presentation on the chemicals being used on lawns and gardens. Area landscape businesses will be invited. Residents are also welcomed to attend.

Dr. Clyde asked Maddie Kaplan, a CMS student present tonight, how the Environmental Club is doing at the Middle School.

Ms. Kaplan answered unfortunately the Chatham Middle School students have not been too involved with environmental matters. However, a CMS Science teacher, Ms. Goldberg, is trying hard to make students aware of the environment and to become involved in Earth Week. Ms. Kaplan said she is trying her best to peak the students' interest.

Shazzia Razzaq, an interested resident, noted that she has two daughters – one in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and one in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. She reviewed what her daughters plan on doing, on their own, for Earth Week. Among the activities that her daughters are planning are making short films for their school and maybe recycling some trash as pieces of art work.

Dr. Clyde discussed the idea of a Repair Café. She felt that could be included in the Sustainability Fair. A volunteer team of repair people will be organized. A day could be held for residents to bring in their broken items to be repaired for re-use.

Dr. Clyde confirmed with Chrmn. Murphy that the Green Team meeting, February 18<sup>th</sup>, will be held in the Council Chambers.

#### Energy Aggregate

Council Member Mathiasen noted that currently JCP & L currently buys the Borough's electricity and then determines the residents' bills. Council Mathiasen explained an auction day that JCP & L will be holding. On this date, a municipality can either choose 30% renewable or 15% renewable. She recommended that Chatham Borough adopt an ordinance to participate in this program. Council Member Resto noted that Livingston is already participating. Council Member Mathiasen suggested that Chatham Borough get the ordinance through and try and partner with Millburn and Chatham Township.

Dr. Clyde made a motion that the Commission advance an ordinance to investigate the possibility of energy aggregation for the Borough. Mr. Treloar seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion was unanimously passed by all Commissioners present.

#### Sustainable Housing

Chrmn. Murphy reported that last week she had attended a meeting with representatives from Madison and Long Hill Township on sustainable housing. She noted that one of the Long Hill Township Commissioners works for Elizabethtown Gas Company. This Commissioner visits homes and tells residents how they can save energy. This gentleman would like to give a talk to the Borough Environmental Commission. Chrmn. Murphy noted that this group also had plans to take a field trip to look at sustainable homes, possibly one in Madison.

#### Consideration of a Styrofoam Ban

Council Member Mathiasen asked Commissioners if they would consider endorsing a Styrofoam ban as a follow-up to the plastic bag ban. She also asked if the Borough should extend the plastic bag ban to restaurants? Commissioners had mixed answers. Council Member Mathiasen noted that plastic straws cannot be prohibited because of the American Disabilities Act. Council Member Mathiasen suggested a subgroup be formed to discuss whether Styrofoam and carry-out items should be prohibited by ordinance. Council Member Resto reminded Commissioners that the Chatham Township Presbyterian Church has resumed their Styrofoam recycling collection on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

#### Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Mr. Treloar reported that his group is trying to reserve space on a future Borough Council agenda to give their presentation on charging stations in the Borough. Council Member Mathiasen recommended that the zoning regulations be kept in mind when proposing locations for charging stations.

#### Terracycle

Ms. Doyle reported that a presentation on Terracycles is being organized to give to the Mayor and Borough Council. A resolution is needed from the Borough Council giving approval of the installation of Terracycles at the train station. NJ Transit requires this resolution. Commissioners will have to take on the job of emptying these Terracycles.

At 9:16 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 8 p.m., Room 212, middle level, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler  
Minutes Secretary

cc: Mayor Thaddeus J. Kobylarz  
Chatham Township Environmental Commission