

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

January 11, 2023

7:30 p.m.

Chrmn. Susan Robertson called this Reorganization and Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. in Room 301, Upper Level, Chatham Municipal Building. Mrs. Robertson read aloud the Statement of Adequate Notice. All legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

The following were sworn in, renewing their EC membership or becoming new members:

Susan Robertson

Rozella Clyde

Nicholas Eck

James Cashel – First Alternate

Lisa Allocco – Second Alternate

Allison Slater will be sworn in at a future meeting.

The roll call attendance was then taken:

Name	Present	
Susan Robertson	X	
Pat Soteropoulos	X	
Rozella Clyde	X	
Joseph Treloar	X – arrived 7:45 p.m.	
Yana Doyle	X	
Allison Slater		X
Nicholas Eck	X	
James Cashel	X	
Lisa Allocco	X	
Council Member Koronkiewicz	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Public Comment

There was none at this point of the meeting.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Doyle made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2022 EC meeting as submitted. Ms. Soteropoulos seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The minutes of December 14, 2022 were approved.

Resolution #23-01

Mrs. Doyle made a motion to nominate Susan Robertson as Chairman of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission for the year 2023. Mrs. Doyle seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye.

Dr. Clyde made a motion to nominate Pat Soteropoulos as Vice Chairman of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission for the year 2023. Mrs. Doyle seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following individuals have been elected as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Environmental Commission for the year 2023 and agree to accept and hold such offices until replaced by a subsequent election:

Chairman: Susan Robertson

Vice Chairman: Patricia Soteropoulos

Reports/Pending Business

Chrmn. Robertson made some suggestions for the EC in the new year. She noted Lisa Allocco will be helping with assembling of meeting agendas and minutes. An effort will be made to cut the repetition of topics that are discussed among the EC Commissioners and the Green Team members. Chrmn. Robertson would like to limit the EC meetings to one hour.

Chrmn. Robertson welcomed the three new Commissioners: Nicholas Eck, James Cashel, and Lisa Allocco. The Commission welcomes Council Member Koronkiewicz as our Borough Council Liaison this year.

Chrmn. Robertson noted that Ben Lampert has now resigned from the Environmental Commission. Mr. Lampert have served a number of productive

years on the Environmental Commission. We thank Mr. Lampert for his dedicated service and wish him the very best.

Focus for 2023

SJ Silver certification

Dr. Clyde noted that the application for Sustainable Jersey has to be submitted by February 2024. Any sustainable projects done in this past fall can be included in this submission, as well as any projects completed this current year.

Chrmn. Robertson asked Dr. Clyde what she felt the Green Team should be doing this year. How should the SJ assignments be distributed?

Dr. Clyde explained that the Sustainable Jersey application is handled by the Borough's Community Services Department. Janice Piccolo and her assistants are the ones who actually do the data entry for the SJ submission. A minimum of 350 points need to be obtained for the Borough to obtain certification. Dr. Clyde felt it would be wise to aim for 450 points to create a safety-net. The application is submitted in mid-February of next year, which is 3 months earlier than the last time a submission was made. Dr. Clyde explained the green sheet that Mrs. Piccolo sends out to every Green Team member.

Dr. Clyde stated that at next week's Green Team meeting, members will discuss what activities could be done. Each innovative project produces 20 points toward certification. The Green Team will decide on three innovative projects. The food pantry at Chatham Methodist Church had been an innovative project in the last SJ filing. Unfortunately, it can't be included in the next submission.

Dr. Clyde stated that the Green Team has to submit to Sustainable Jersey a narrative limited to 200 words. Sustainable Jersey is interested in the number of people that had been impacted by the SJ projects which had been accomplished.

Chrmn. Robertson gave the Green Team's meeting schedule if any of the new EC members would like to participate in their activities.

Environmental Resource Inventory

For the new Commissioners, Chrmn. Robertson explained that this inventory will be a working document for the Land Use Boards in the Borough. This inventory document will be very useful when a developer proposes to build in the Borough. Any impact to local wildlife, natural resources, could be ascertained.

Chrmn. Robertson noted that Mrs. Doyle is currently looking at the latest Inventory to see what can be removed, updated, added, etc. Chrmn. Robertson recommended that a section on affordable housing should be included. She reported that Borough Administrator Steve Williams had informed her that the EC had \$5500 available in their budget. At a later date, Mr. Williams reported that this figure of \$5,500 was erroneous and had not been included in 2022's budget. Perhaps this money could be used to hire a consultant for this Inventory. Chrmn. Robertson has been in contact with Mrs. Fornaro, the Borough CFO, about including this item in the Municipal Budget this year. Chrmn. Robertson will work on re-writing some budget numbers for this hiring. At present, she is asking local ECs which consultants they used and how much they charged. Chrmn. Robertson will report further next month.

Mrs. Doyle pointed out that a lot depends on whether the EC wants the Inventory to be re-written. She felt some portions of the Inventory just needed some updating. The rest will need to be re-written.

Chrmn. Robertson and Mrs. Doyle felt that the EC could probably do some of the re-writing themselves. Mrs. Doyle pointed out useful information is available on the EPA website.

EC Involvement in the Land Use process – Environmental checklist, etc.

Chrmn. Robertson distributed copies of a flow chart entitled "Morris Township Process Flow". She and Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos had attended a meeting with Chatham Twp., Madison, and Morris Twp., regarding Land Use Boards and how environmental commissions fit in and review applications with Land Use Boards. In attending this meeting and looking at this flow chart, Chrmn. Robertson and Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos concluded that the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission has little participation in the review process for land use applications. Fortunately, the Chairman of the Environmental Commission also serves as the EC's liaison to the Borough's Planning Board.

Referring to the Morris Township flow chart, Chrmn. Robertson pointed out that at the beginning of application, the Morris Township Environmental Commission becomes involved in the process. The Shade Tree Commission is also included. When the Morris Township EC receives the information on an application, they assign a volunteer to be a point person to go on a site visit with the town engineer, review the application, and send it back to the engineer with their comments. The EC finalizes their report on their letterhead and forward it on to the Planning Board. On the flow chart, Chrmn. Robertson circled in blue where the Chatham

Borough EC currently participates in this review process. Under the current process in Chatham Borough, it is too late for the EC to usefully give advice or opinion on an application.

Chrmn. Robertson reported that she had met with Council Member Mathiasen after this meeting, showed her the Flow-Chart, and pointed out to her how far down the Chatham Borough EC is on this review process. To discuss this situation, a meeting will be held with Chrmn. Robertson, Borough Administrator Williams, the Borough Clerk, the Planning Board Attorney, and Council Member Mathiasen together with the Planning Bd. Chariman, Zoning Officer, Borough Planner and HPC Chairman on January 20th. At this meeting, Chrmn. Robertson will propose a technical review committee be formed or some other overhaul of the Planning Board process. She would like a proper environmental checklist that the applicant will fill out. It will help show if/how the Planning application will impact the environment. The Shade Tree Commission will also be included in this TCC review.

Mr. Cashel agreed to help with this project. He will attend the January 20th meeting. Chrmn. Robertson will keep the EC in the loop of whatever transpires. She believed the Land Use process will then eventually be revised to hear more input from the EC.

Chrmn. Robertson understood that Chatham Borough will receive 20 points for their Environmental Resource Inventory.

Development of “How Green Are You” initiative – recognition of businesses, sign-up of new businesses

This topic will be revisited when Allison Slater is present. Chrmn. Robertson encouraged Commissioners to be supportive of Ms. Slater and this project because she is already heavily involved with the new Chamber of Commerce.

Chrmn. Robertson reported that The Reverend Ellen Kohn-Perry had emailed her, expressing an interest in the “How Green Are You”, stating that green initiatives are currently done by her parish, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

Chrmn. Robertson asked Mr. Eck if he could serve as a “sergeant of arms” of sorts for the EC meetings, to help keep things moving along at a good pace.

Dr. Clyde noted that St. Patrick Church is currently doing many renovations. Now would be a good time to reach out to them with green suggestions.

Regarding these renovations, Dr. Clyde reported that she has spoken with Father Bob at St. Patrick's and has volunteered to give green input from the Environmental Commission.

EV Charging Stations

Mr. Treloar reported that he had sent an email to Borough Administrator Steve Williams concerning the two locations being proposed for EV chargers. One location is on a lot on Main Street very close to Elmwood Ave. The Police Department will have their own charger. Mr. Treloar explained what a dual charger entailed and its cost. Mr. Treloar will report back to the EC after his conversation with Mr. Williams.

Presentation of Ciel Power Home Energy Audit

Chrmn. Robertson noted that Scott Fischer had participated in the Borough's recent Sustainability Fair. He gave an excellent presentation at an NJSMA meeting in Madison. Mr. Fischer will be offering residents home audits for \$49. This audit will identify items like drafty windows, places lacking insulation, etc. Mr. Fischer will then let the residents know what tax credits and incentives would be available to remedy these situations. Chrmn. Robertson recommended that the EC promote this program this year. The public will be educated on these audits. Mrs. Allocco offered to write press releases about these audits.

Education/Promotion on recycling/composting in connection with the new garbage contract

Chrmn. Robertson suggested following the advice of the previous Borough Council Liaison and will help keep residents informed on the new way to recycle and the newly required bins that will be used.

At the EC's events this year (Earth Day, Fishawack, the Sustainability Fair), the EC will have different sized garbage cans on display.

Dr. Clyde suggested the Commission adopt a zero waste policy, and then look into ways to reach that goal in the near future.

Some Commissioners had reservations about that suggestion. They felt that the bulk collection situation in the Borough should be settled first.

Mrs. Doyle, who had attended the webinar on zero waste webinar with Dr. Clyde, clarified that it was having an attitude and understanding on how to re-use or reduce waste. It's not all about re-cycling.

Promotion of IRA incentives/credits for NJ residents/businesses (Once NJ details are available)

Chrmn. Robertson noted that it's not clear at this point whether the IRA will survive. However, when the needed funds arrive in NJ, each resident will have money in a personal "green bank account" to reach our green goals.

Three Green Events ahead

Chrmn. Robertson reminded Commissioners of the three dates in this new year, which will feature green themes, displays, activities, etc.:

Earth Day – April 22

Fishawack Day – June 18

The Sustainability Fair & EV Expo– September 23

On other matters, Chrmn. Robertson asked Council Member Koronkiewicz if she had any news to report from the Borough Council. Council Member Koronkiewicz answered not at the moment.

Multi-town Municipal events

Chrmn. Robertson reviewed some of the events run by the Madison Environmental Commission and other neighboring ECs who have graciously invited Chatham Borough EC to attend. Chrmn. Robertson suggest the Chatham EC hold an Eco Garden Tour in 2024. The Township would like to collaborate on one this year, but Chrmn. Robertson is concerned it will clash with the Senior Center's fundraiser.

Bear Aware

Chrmn. Robertson stated that this will be a joint event with Chatham Township. It will be held at the Library of the Chathams on February 9th at 7 p.m. This event is not to frighten residents about bears, but to help people co-exist with them. School age children as well as adults are welcome to attend. Chrmn. Robertson noted that this event should earn some Sustainable Jersey points.

On other matters, Chrmn. Robertson reported that Mrs. Fornaro has given her copies of the Budget. It looks like the EC has some grant money available that was never used.

Before adjourning, Mr. Treloar felt that the DPW should only be planting native trees. He recently saw two or three Japanese trees planted as Borough trees and things did not work out well. He will do further research on this situation.

At 8:39 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary