

Rahway Environmental Commission

MINUTES

Thursday, April 14, 2022

7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

On a call of the roll, the following Commissioners and Officials were present:

Mr. Jeffrey Robinson, Chairman
Ms. Clea Carchia, Commissioner
Mr. Joseph Paszek, Commissioner
Mr. James Keane, Commissioner
Ms. Denise Rolong, Commissioner
Mr. Alexander Parker, Commissioner
Ms. Michelle Gil, Commissioner
Ms. Gina Holmes, Clerk

Absent:

Mr. Eric Hausker, First Alternate Commissioner
Mr. Jordan Parham, Second Alternate Commissioner
Ms. Joanna Miles, Council Liaison

FLAG SALUTE

MINUTES

Approval of minutes of the Regular Meeting on Thursday, March 14, 2022

Motion: Commissioner Keane

Seconded: Commissioner Carchia

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SPEAKER

None

HEARING OF CITIZENS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

UC Air Traffic Noise Advisory Board - (Chairman Robinson is the EC rep to this Board)
No Meeting

Bayway CAP – (Commissioner Paszek is the EC rep to this Board)
In person and zoom meeting. Topics covered included Veolia taking over Suez Water, Commissioner Paszek informed the group about events in Rahway, Turbine work, PSE&G and Arc Light and the Linden Police Chief spoke about car break ins and suggested everyone lock their cars.

Letter to UC Chairman of Open Trust Fund Al Mirabella – Bazega Park – There is a meeting scheduled but not open to the public.

Letter to UC Parks Director Ron Zuber – Bramhall Road County Park site – Union County Executive Budget released including a playground for Bramhall Park. Councilman Brown is spearheading a community garden for that location. Suggestions were made to put a rain garden/pollinator garden and a tiny forest at this spot.

Tree Inventory – Commissioner Keane wrote an article for Our Town about the tree survey and there was an article in the Local Source publication about Urban & Forestry grants to Rahway & Summit. There was a quick discussion about the tree committee which Commissioner Parham is a member of. Chairman Robinson spoke with Lauren from Administration about putting a article in the next Rahway Review about the tree inventory and the importance of trees. He will also speak with David Brighthouse about putting an article in the Tap Into Rahway column.

Rain Garden – Chairman Robinson will be following up with the Business Administrator with regard to the curb cuts.

Sustainability Jersey Application – Chairman Robinson will be following up with the City Engineer, Dan Lee, as to the status.

LEED Requirements for redevelopers – Mr. Landolfi reviewed our letter and does agree with our suggestions and will be sending a letter to the Environmental Commission.

Rahway River Park lake chemical treatment – Aquatics Lakes & Ponds Co. has the contract and does work all over the state.

Opportunity to tour Waste Management food waste recycling facility in Elizabeth – Northern NJ Corp turns food scraps into energy. Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority uses this energy for fuel according to their website. Chairman Robinson will look into a tour.

NEW BUSINESS

UC Hub meeting will be held on 4/27/22 at Merchant & Drover's Tavern. Commissioner Carchia will be the guest speaker. Light refreshments will be served.

Resolution for Protecting Municipal Stormwater Rights will be given to Councilwoman Miles and the Attorney for the Planning Board.

Ban on plastic bags becomes effective on 5/4/22

Bill A2065 on plastic bags - update

The City of Rahway picked up their free Salem Oak seedling and Commissioner Keane is taking care of it and hopeful that we can plant it in November. Chairman Robinson will be contacting Administration about their Arbor Day plans.

The fence is complete at the City Community Garden. It was installed higher to keep deer out.

ANJEC will be holding a virtual earth day celebration on 4/22/22 from 1-2:00 p.m. The annual Rahway River clean up will be held on 4/23/22 from 9-12:00 p.m. at the waterfall in Winfield Park. Friends of Rahway River Parkway will be holding an event at Rahway Park from 11 – 2:00 p.m. also on 4/23/22.

The Environmental Commission will have a table at the Rahway Live Well Event on 6/4/22 at Rahway Train Station and will be using the new tent and tablecloth.

Montclair's Native Plant Ordinance requires all plantings be native plants, not sure if it passed but City Clerk Jeff Jotz will send us a copy of the Resolution.

ANJEC will have a webinar on 4/28/22 about the new Lead Line Replacement Law in NJ in reference to water utilities and how they will comply. The City of Rahway and Suez Water lead line replacement project will be completed by 7/22/22.

We are waiting on a letter from Austin Hamwi from the Rahway Recreation Dept. with a schedule for the Rahway Rain Garden maintenance for 2022.

Rahway Green Book – Update “Tips for Recycling & Green Awareness”

Invasive Jumping Worms spotted in Northeast New Jersey

Rahway Day will be held on 10/8/22 at the Rahway Recreation Center.

Memorial Day parade will be on 5/29/22

Master Gardener plant sale will be held at Rutgers on 5/13/22 – 5/15/22

The City of Woodbridge received a Gold Star Certification in water from Sustainable NJ

Suez Water Company was bought by Vieola Water on 5/14/22

Discussion was held on the repair of the Irving Street bridge which was damaged during Hurricane Ida and the importance of keeping it historical when it is repaired.

Rahway River Watershed Association – Riverfest will be 6/25 and 6/26/22. Environmental Commission will have a table. The Recreation Center rented 2 tents, Il Forno will have a pizza truck at location, 2-3 bands are booked. The theme is sustainability and hoping to have a “repair café”.

6/4/22 – Kayak Tour

Two flyers distributed:

NJ Freshwater Habitat Assessment & Benthic Macroinvertebrate Identification sessions 5/11, 5/12 and 5/13 (virtual) and 5/14 and 5/21 (field sessions)

The Why’s and How’s of Pathogen Monitoring – 5/11 (virtual) 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. and 5/12 (Rahway Yacht Club) from 2-4 p.m.

SITE PLAN REVIEW/PLANNING & ZONING BOARD ITEMS

DEP has approved API Foils plan to put a new warehouse behind their existing building with many restrictions including the forested area can never be touched and deed restrictions. Planning Board approved the application.

1204 New Brunswick Ave. – builder claims that he needs to remove tree to build new lot. Environmental Commission wants him to keep tree or be required to replace it.

Application from Merck for their new parking lot was approved.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Environmental Commission budget of \$1,000 was approved. We have already paid our ANJEC membership fees from this amount.

ADJOURN

The next Regular meeting of the Environmental Commission will be held Thursday, May 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Merchant & Drovers Tavern, Rahway, NJ. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Motion: Commissioner Rolong
Seconded: Commissioner Paszek
Unanimously approved

At: 9:33 p.m.