

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
March 18, 2019

The Regular Meeting of the Monroe Township Environmental Protection Commission was called to order by Chairperson Ryan Rebozo at 7:00pm in the 2nd Floor Joe Pace Meeting Room of the Municipal Complex. Adequate notice of this meeting was given as required by the annual notice of meetings.

Chairperson Ryan Rebozo led the Commission in the salute to our flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Beth Davis, Kathleen Flaherty, Christine Gorham, Sandy Keen, Ryan Rebozo, Matthew Scardino, Melissa Young and Cncl. Pat O'Reilly

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to approve the agenda with the following amendments, under section C, he added Email Correspondence, under section D, he added Environmental Resource Inventory, Projects Workshops, Measurable Goals and Future Proposed Budget. Beth Davis made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendments. The motion was seconded by Christine Gorham and approved by all members of the Commission.

NOMINATIONS AND LIAISONS

Ryan explained the Ordinance establishing the Environmental Protection Commission does not explicitly list a Vice-Chairperson. He said, he finds it useful and important to have a Vice-Chairperson as it helps spread the work load. Melissa asked Ryan to write a list of responsibilities and the duties of the Vice-Chairperson for everyone to review. Ryan will circulate the list to everyone prior to the next meeting and at the next meeting, the Commission will vote on a Vice-Chairperson.

Cncl. O'Reilly stressed the importance of having liaisons. Ryan said currently Matthew Scardino is the Planning Board Liaison and he is the Open Space Advisory Committee Liaison.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS

Cncl. O'Reilly advised, the latest ROSI is from 2014 and he is working with Chairperson Len Fritz of the Open Space Advisory Committee on getting it recertified for 2019, as there has not been anything added since 2014.

- **2019 Meeting Dates**

Ryan asked for a motion to approve the 2019 Meeting Dates. Sandy Keen made a motion to approve the meeting dates. The motion was seconded by Matt Scardino and approved by all members of the Commission.

- **Email Correspondence**

Ryan advised after reviewing the Commission's email, there was one email from May that was missed. He passed around a copy of the email which was from H2M Associates for review. He said, a consultant working with the DEP, was looking to do ground water sampling at a few locations in town and was having problems

gaining access to some private sites. He has followed up on the email and they had sampled at two sites in the fall and they will share their findings with Ryan once their sampling is completed. Kate stated, they cannot go on site without a site access agreement, however, it can be worked around, and information can be gathered from surrounding wells. She said all of the remediation in New Jersey is now consultant driven, it is not DEP

down, it is consultant up, which slows down the process. Sandy said, she is one of the residents that they want test and she has been in discussion with the DEP. Sandy then brought the Commission up to speed by giving them the background of the situation.

Ryan said, there was also an email dated from February 4th from the Pinelands Commission for an application, preliminary and final subdivision approval issued by the County Planning Board. He passed this around for review. He said, it is 110 acres for the development of 192 age restricted single family homes. Cncl. O'Reilly stated, it is the Whitehall LLC, which has been on the books for a number of years. He said, they were originally approved for townhomes and the Township negotiated to a 55 and over community as there was concern with the impact it would have on the schools.

- **ANJEC Workshop**

Ryan advised that himself, Christine and Kate attended the ANJEC workshop this past Saturday. He said, he felt it was really helpful, as it presented an overview of what Environmental Commissions do with regards to in depth plan reviews and storm water management.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Melissa talked about creating a Green Building Design Plan in Monroe and said there are so many resources that come along with it. She said, it is not done on a National or even State level yet, it is small towns and municipalities who are trying to push the green building codes. She said if the Township had a Green Building Design Plan, we would be able to receive points for Sustainable Monroe and Sustainable Jersey. She said, if Monroe is going to be seen as a "Green" town, the town should consider a Green Building Design, if not outside builders, but the things that the Town does should include green measures.

Kate stated, she feels that there should be an easily accessible list of resources in the township. She said, we cannot make resident google things, it needs to be available on the Commission's website or the Township Website, so people will know where to go. Cncl. O'Reilly said, there should be an action item in place, where the Commission needs to champion through the Township professionals, the list that needs to be enforced. He agreed there needs to be a list of requirements and best practices with regards to green building and our official preferred plantings.

Kate said, she feels the Commission should support dense development, because that is what is green. She said regardless of what people want to buy, dense development is green development and walkable communities which is the opposite of what Monroe currently is.

There was a discussion among the members regarding Main Street. Cncl. O'Reilly said, everyone wants Main Street to be like every other town's Main Street, but it is majority section 8 and the street is not wide enough. He said, the infrastructure is all above ground so it cannot be widened. Sandy said, a nice Main Street is possible but there has to be pressure on the builders and the businesses. Matt said, the landlords along Main Street need to be held more responsible than they currently are. He referenced a building down the street from his office that burned down in 2006, it has been boarded up and sold multiple times, nothing has been done with it. He feels the Township should come in to that land or to the owner and have it taken care. Cncl. O'Reilly said, from a taxpayer perspective, to try and offset taxes is not to build up Main Street at this point but to build up the businesses on the pike.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Pinelands Municipal Council**

Ryan explained, the Pinelands Municipal Council is where the 53 townships in the Pinelands meet every other month and discuss Pinelands specific issues. He said, it is not necessarily always environmental, it could be more land use issues, planning issues, but it provides them with a seat at the table with Pinelands Commissioners. He said, when he went through the attendance list from last year, Monroe did not have anyone in attendance, either the Mayor or a Mayor's appointee. He feels, it is important for Monroe to have a seat at the table, since we have such a

large section of town that is in the Pinelands. He polled the Commission and all were in agreement that Ryan draft a letter to the Mayor copying Council to find out the Mayor's interest or have him appoint a designee to attend.

Sandy said, Monroe Township is 70% Pinelands and 30% rural development and she feels we need to take a look at the rural development. She asked if maybe the Pinelands had a reference list that the Commission could use as a basis for their list. Ryan said, in 2012 the Pinelands worked with the Soil Conservation District to have a list for Pineland specific plants for either temporary plantings or roadside, however, the list is weak as it was a compromise. He said, it is easy enough for the Commission to put together a list of plant species that are native to the Pinelands and more specifically Gloucester County. He envisions the Commission creating a list that they can propose to be planted in the Pinelands sections and others to be planted appropriate for other sections of town. Beth said, she believes the Great Egg Harbor Watershed also meets monthly along the same lines as the Pinelands Municipal Council. She said, Monroe Township is at the head waters of the watershed and asked if this is something the Commission should also be interested in attending and being a part of. Ryan said, he will research this and report back at the next meeting.

- **Rutgers Impervious Cover Assessment**

Ryan stated, through Fred Akers and Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association they had Rutgers University perform an impervious cover assessment and reduction plan for the township. He passed around copies for the Commission to review. He said, he is meeting with Rutgers this coming Thursday, to learn more and he will report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

- **Media Presence**

Ryan talked about the importance of a social media presence. Beth said, she created the original Facebook page which Sandy runs. Cncl. O'Reilly feels going forward, the Commission needs to create a new social media policy with regards to the Commission's social media presence. He said, all comments should be turned off, everything needs to be informationally based only, social media is not for debating. Sandy said, she is the only one who posts on the Commission's Facebook page and she only posts things relating to ANJEC, law related, nothing outside related. She explained how the Commission has previously handled all of their social media content. Melissa suggested, a sub-committee needs to be formed within the Commission to handle the public relations and social media. A discussion followed among the members with their thoughts of how it needs to be handled going forward. Beth and Melissa will head up the sub-committee and they will meet prior to the next meeting.

- **Project Workshops**

Sandy discussed the upcoming Arts Festival and how the Commission has in past given out free trees to the residents. She said, if we want to continue to do this, we have to order the trees now from the NJ Forestry Nursey in order to receive them at no cost. Sandy will prepare a list of workshops, events the Commission has attended in the past and things that we need to keep on our radar which will help plan the year and distribute to the members. A discussion followed regarding the upcoming events.

- **Updating the ERI**

Ryan talked about the 14 year old ERI that needs to get updated. He asked the members to think about for the next meeting, what it is that they want to see on the ERI and how they want to go about completing those. He said, once the ERI is updated, it will be the basis for the Commission's recommendations in town. He will email the members the current ERI for their review.

- **Budget**

Ryan said, he would like to work on updating the budget plan for the current year. He is working on having the Shade Tree dues and the ANJEC dues renewed. He said, as opposed to asking for money every time it is needed, he would like to be in a position to present a detailed list of all anticipated costs for the year. Sandy discussed the previous budget with the Commission to bring all of the new members up to speed.

- **Measurable Goals**

Ryan said, he would like to prepare a list of measurable goals for the Commission, in order to have things to measure success from. He said, even if everything is not achieved, we can get a little aggressive on what we what

to do and have something to strive for. He said, this will help at the end of the year when we present an annual report to Council and Mayor. Melissa suggested coming up with a new mission statement. A discussion followed among the members regarding preparing an updated mission statement.

OLD BUSINESS

Sandy gave an update to the members of what has been happening and what the Commission need to work on this upcoming year. Specifically, on April 13th and April 14th, the Boy Scouts are going to clean up the Bee Garden that was installed last year. She said, the Commission works with the school community, the Boy Scouts, the Girls Scouts and the 4-H. The Commission has 12 rain barrels that were made last year with the Watershed Ambassador, the plan for these is to donate them to the community. She discussed the Community Forestry Management Plan that was started in 2010, she asked that all members review it. She said, the current obligation is, moving forward with our 5 year plan and the tree inventory. Sandy and Beth both strongly suggested every member try and attend the NJ Shade Tree Conference that is held annually. Kate said, a list needs to be created that shows who has to be paid and what has to be done to be in compliance with the things that have already been done this year. She said, with so many new members, we don't really know all of our obligations, all members were in agreement. Beth said, the most important thing, is a risk management plan for the trees, and we may have to hire professionals to help with the plan. Melissa suggested creating a list of the plans that are existing and need follow through and present it at the next meeting for review.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Matthew Scardino made a motion to open the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by Sandy Keen and approved by all members of the Committee. With no one from the public present and/or wishing to speak, Matthew Scardino made a motion to close the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by Sandy Keen and approved by all members of the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairperson Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to adjourn. Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to adjourn the Monroe Township Environmental Protection Commission Meeting of March 18, 2019. The motion was seconded by Melissa Young and unanimously all in favor by all members of the Commission. Meeting adjourned at 9:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenn Harbison, Secretary

The next scheduled Monroe Township Environmental Protection Commission meeting is Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at 7:00pm.

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the tape-recorded proceedings of the Environmental Protection Commission Meeting of March 18, 2019 and serve as only a synopsis of the proceedings.

Approved as submitted _____ Date _____
Approved as corrected _____ Date _____