

**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
JANUARY 27, 2020**

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: Kathleen Flaherty, Christine Gorham, Joseph Mahoney, Ryan Rebozo, Jennifer Rutter, April Scales, Katie Seeley

Absent: Matthew Scardino, Melissa Young, Cncl. Cody Miller

NOMINATIONS AND LIAISONS

Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to open nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to open nominations for Vice-Chairperson. The motion was seconded by Joseph Mahoney. Kathleen Flaherty was nominated for Vice-Chairperson and all members of the Committee in attendance were in favor. Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to close nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Christine Gorham made a motion to close nominations for Vice-Chairperson. The motion was seconded by April Scales. Kathleen Flaherty is now the Vice-Chairperson for the Environmental Protection Commission.

Ryan has decided to step down as the Open Space Liaison. Unfortunately, he has not been able to attend all the meetings and is asking that the members of the Commission decide on who would like to take on the roll. The Open Space Advisory Committee meets on the 1st Monday of the Month and attendance would be required. One idea is to have a rotating liaison so the responsibility is not on one person.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/AGENDA

Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 16, 2019 meeting. Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted of the Environmental Protection Commission Meeting of September 16, 2019. The motion was seconded by Christine Gorham and approved by all members of the Committee in attendance.

Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the January 27, 2020 meeting. Christine Gorham made a motion to approve the agenda for the January 27, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Joseph Mahoney.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS

- **Schedule of Meeting Dates for 2020 & Commission Attendance Policy**

Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to open the discussion on the schedule of meeting dates. Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to open the discussion on the schedule of meeting date. The motion was seconded by Christine Gorham. There are no Monday holiday scheduling conflicts. All members of the Commission are expected to attend at least 70% of the meetings. Ryan asked that members please provide proper notice if they are unable to attend. Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to approve the schedule of meeting dates. Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to approve the schedule of meeting dates. The motion as seconded by Christine Gorham. Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to close the discussion on the schedule of meeting dates. Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to close the discussion on the schedule of meeting dates. The motion as seconded by Christine Gorham.

- **Email Correspondence**

The Commission has been following a couple of violations within the town and received another on January 2nd. The Pinelands has rules with how densely you can develop in a region but also where development can occur. Development is not always building; it can also be demolition. The Pinelands has a lot of restrictions, but they have no enforcement of those restrictions; all enforcements happen at the Township level. Ryan is interested in learning how the Township will respond and has been trying to reach out to the Zoning Officer to get more information on how the Township handles these situations. By sending the Commission letters, The Pinelands has put the Township on notice of the violations.

A discussion developed about the difference between wetlands and uplands. Wetlands and uplands have to deal with the soil type and the way they are determined is by the vegetation. Plants that grow well in dryer soils are in the uplands and plants that grow in wetter soils are in the wetlands. The reason that we are so concerned with what happens in the wetlands is because those habitats follow our streams and rivers. Alterations in the wetlands could potentially affect our water quality.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Drainage Basin Project**

When you have a large area of impervious coverage, a detention basin is created to limit runoff so that you don't have flooding or puddling. You can see them around town in developments and near strip malls. They capture rain water from heavy storms that would otherwise runoff and carry contaminants and soil particles and allows it to slowly percolate back into the soil overtime. Melissa is interested in having the Township stop the mowing of the basins because it is essentially hurting the performance of the basin. Kathleen reached out to Rutgers and no regulations could be identified that require the Township to mow. When managed properly, the basins could have beautiful wildflowers, birds and wildlife. Kathleen has thought about making a pamphlet specific to Monroe Township about retention basins, detention basins and what we have in Monroe to be used at tabling events.

- **ERI Meeting**

The Township announced last year that they would be producing a new master plan. The Environmental Resource Inventory is about 15 years old and Ryan has asked that each member find a few points in the ERI that they can lend their expertise. The Commission will work to update the ERI so that it can be used as a resource for the Consulting Group, who is creating the master plan.

- **Tree Ordinance**

Ryan tried to make a comprehensive ordinance by including things such as not plating invasive and non-native species, and including a list of appropriate native trees and shrubs. The Ordinance creates conditions where new development can only use native trees and shrubs because they will help our local ecosystem.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Social Media**

Christine has been running the social media for the Commission. Right now Facebook is the only platform being used, but she is looking to expand and start using Instagram. One idea discussed was creating profiles for the members of the Commission so the public can learn about the Commission and the members who create it.

- Wetland Violation

The violation was discussed earlier, but as new information becomes available Ryan will share it with everyone.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to open the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by Christine Gorham and approved by all members of the Committee in attendance. With no one from the public present and/or wishing to speak, Kathleen Flaherty made a motion to close the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by Christine Gorham and approved by all members of the Committee in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairperson Ryan Rebozo asked for a motion to adjourn. Christine Gorham made a motion to adjourn the Monroe Township Environmental Protection Commission Meeting of January 27, 2020. The motion was seconded by Kathleen Flaherty and unanimously all in favor by all members of the Commission in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Ballard, Substitute Secretary

The next scheduled Monroe Township Environmental Protection Commission meeting is Monday, February 24, 2019 at 7:00pm.

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the tape-recorded proceedings of the Environmental Protection Commission Meeting of January 27, 2020 and serve as only a synopsis of the proceedings.

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