

**Readington Township
Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2023**

OPEN MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hendrickson at 7:05 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

Members in Attendance

Neil Hendrickson - Chair
Robert Becker
Jerry Cook
Steve Foster
Jonathan Heller
Cassandra Ward
Jeff Charney – joined 7:22 pm

Members Absent

Susan Masinda
Mario Orlandi

Special Guest

Allison Wheelan – NJ Watershed Ambassadors Program

Minutes

It was moved and seconded, to approve the minutes for December 6, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of 2023 Meeting Dates

It was moved and seconded, to approve the proposed dates for the 2023 Environmental Commission meetings. The motion carried unanimously.

LOI/Freshwater Wetlands

None

AOC (Areas of Concern)

None

Correspondence

PSE&G - Bridge Replacement Application - 480 Route

Mr. Becker provided a map to all members showing the location of the bridge referenced in the correspondence; member briefly discussed this piece of correspondence.

New Business

1. Report from Clinton Township December Meeting

Chair Hendrickson attended the December Clinton Township meeting and met Allison Wheelan who reported on various activities she was working with the Clinton Township EC on. Chair Hendrickson would like to see more collaboration with neighboring townships. He is planning to attend the Clinton Township EC meeting in February. The members discussed other visits made to the Raritan Township and Somerville Borough EC meetings.

2. Sustainable Jersey Grant Opportunities

An email was sent out regarding a grant opportunity from PSE&G for schools. Mr. Becker stated there was one for Green Acres that was sent to the Mayor.

3. Environmental Commission Logo

The members are interested in creating/having an Environmental Commission logo. It was suggested to have a large oak tree and a river incorporated into the logo.

4. Meeting with DEP – Update

Representatives from Readington Township met with a representative from the DEP and toured the township. It was considered a productive meeting.

5. Environmental Commission Annual Report – Draft

Chair Hendrickson created a draft version of the Environmental Commission Annual Report that will be provided to the Township Committee. Members were asked for their feedback. Mr. Foster complimented the Chair on the report and thought it looked great.

Other Business:

1. Plastic Ban - Update

The state is reporting that the plastic bag ban has been a success so far and that millions of single use plastic bags are no longer being used.

2. Deer Management

Chair Hendrickson reported that based on the most recent numbers reported, the township is ahead of the number of deer harvested at this time last year. Mr. Heller reported that a reassessment of the deer via two (2) methods – roadside and drone – will be completed which will show how effective the deer management program is. It was noted that the team of people working on the deer management program this year have done a great job with communication of this program to residents.

3. Adopt-A-Road

At this time there is not much of an update. DPW would like to schedule a clean-up day this year. Coordination with the DPW director is key to making this program work but currently the DPW director's schedule doesn't allow much time to work with the EC on this subject. Some ideas put forth from the EC members: put something in the Readington News announcing this program and asking for volunteers; put something in the electronic backpack at the schools; enlist the help of other organizations and the Green Team; order reflective vests with Readington Township printed on them as well as the Sustainable Jersey Logo. Chair Hendrickson will continue to work on scheduling time with the DPW director to move forward on this topic.

4. Textile Recycling/Clothing Donation Bins

There are five (5) donation bins located in Readington Township. Mr. Becker reported that he has verified that the clothes donated are put to good use. It is possible that not all bins have been approved by the township but should be. Once this occurs, the EC would like to promote the locations of the bins to the area residents.

5. Brownfields Update

No update to report; there has been no response from the DEP to requests for more information.

6. Road Salts Testing

The DPW director has requested some baseline information on specific locations so he can compare readings to what the state reports. Members discussed locations that should be tested. Ms. Wheelan volunteered to try to get some testing strips from the watershed. Chair Hendrickson will work with Mr. Orlandi to ensure that all locations are accounted for and will look to utilize Ms. Wheelan for assistance with the testing.

There was a brief discussion on the climate monitoring stations that Chair Hendrickson and Ms. Ward are currently volunteering to maintain. This work is being done as part of a grant that was awarded to RHA. Mr. Heller asked about the possibility of getting these stations put in Readington streams. He asked for some numbers regarding the funds needed to accomplish this. He suggested that this may be helpful in getting C1 status on Readington streams.

7. Ash Tree Injections

Chair Hendrickson has been working with the township administrator on identifying contractors who can continue these injections. Mr. Becker will provide the data the contractors need to submit bids including the tree tag number, the location and the last date treated.

Site Plan Review and Comment

None

Public Comment

1. Update from Planning Board meeting

Chair Hendrickson reported that the memo sent from the Environmental Commission to the Planning Board expressing their concerns with the RedCom application was taken very seriously by the planning board.

2. Stream Cleanup & Tree Seedling Giveaway

The members briefly discussed stream cleanup and how the adopt-a-road/road cleanup efforts will greatly impact the amount of trash that ends up in the streams.

3. Stewardship Committee

Mr. Heller reported that it is possible that a Stewardship Committee will be created this year and will look to work more closely with RVCC as well as manage grants (forestry) and study the environmental benefits of township open space properties. This is just in the planning/formation stage.

4. Tree Ordinance

This ordinance needs several revisions and Chair Hendrickson is continually working with Christina Schwartz, Land Use Director, and Ron Christy, DPW Director, on changes that need to be made. It is a long process. Members discussed various situations encountered around the township.

*Environmental Commission Meeting, continued
January 10, 2023*

Adjournment

It was the consensus of the commission members to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Radziewicz
Advisory Boards Secretary