

Rahway Environmental Commission

MINUTES

Thursday, January 13, 2022

7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:23 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
Mr. Jordan Parham, Second Alternate Commissioner
Ms. Joanna Miles, Council Liason
Ms. Gina Holmes, Clerk

Absent: Mr. Eric Hausker, First Alternate Commissioner

FLAG SALUTE

MINUTES

Approval of minutes of the Regular Meeting on Thursday, December 2, 2021

Motion: Commissioner Keane

Seconded: Commissioner Parker

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SPEAKER

None Scheduled

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)
No meeting, next meeting is scheduled for late February, 2022.

Letter to UC Commissioner Chair Al Mirabella – Bazega Park – Chairman Robinson called Victoria Durham a couple of weeks ago but has not heard back from her. The new UC Commissioner Chairperson is Rebecca Williams.

Letter to UC Parks Director Ron Zuber – Bramhall Road County Park site – Director told Chairman Robinson that he will be putting money into the next budget to address this site. Environmental Commission should make recommendations.

Tree Inventory - \$43,000.00 grant received

Rain Garden – Educational Signage; Outdoor teaching area; letter to City for support of curb cut was reviewed and approved to get mailed with minor changes.

Sustainability Jersey Application – the Grant Application has been assigned to Dan Lee, City Engineer

LEED Requirements for redevelopers – Letter to the Redevelopment Agency approved to get mailed.

Recycle Content Bill passed in November, referred to Assembly Appropriations Committee and then to Senate then to Governor.

Two grants applied for which we do not have the status on yet – Urban Park (DEP) and NJ Historic Trust.

NEW BUSINESS

Jordan Parham was appointed as Second Alternate Commissioner at January's council meeting. Mr. Parham works at Trailside Nature & Science Center, is a board member at the Rahway River Watershed Association.

Two bills that will be going before the Assembly/Senate/Governor:

Recycled Content Bill – please call Governor's office to have him sign – 609-292-6000
Limited Use of Pesticide Bill also awaits Governor's signature.

UC Hub – 1/19/21 meeting was postponed until 2/8/22 virtually from 7-8:30 p.m. Lauren Skowronski will be discussing the future of the Hub and what each town wants to accomplish. Someone from Environmental Commission should attend. Request was made to ask about the TREX program at the UC Hub meeting.

Heather Miara Union County Recycling Dept. – Environmental Specialist 1. Her responsibilities include education and clean communities program.

Recreation Dept. will be holding clean ups at City parks in the summer.

AR-14-22 – Resolution Entering into an Interlocal Agreement for the Mayor's Council for Rahway River Watershed Flood Control Municipal Cost Sharing – towns include Rahway, Cranford, Kenilworth, Maplewood, Springfield, Garwood, Union and Millburn (lead agency). All towns agree to put aside money towards the alleviation of flooding.

A new Ordinance was introduced at the last Council meeting amending an Ordinance about property maintenance. The new Ordinance states that private property that back up to channels & waterways will be the property owners responsibility to keep the area clean and safe. If owners do not, the City will give them a warning then have it cleaned and bill the owner.

ANJEC's first webinar is scheduled for 1/20/22 at 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. – Storm Flooding in NJ & Storm Preparedness.

The Rahway River Watershed Association is applying for a large grant to restore lower Essex St. Park along with the City of Rahway, Phillips 66 and Autobahn. This will include nature trail and benches.

6/4/22 – Kayak event from Rahway Yacht Club to Carteret
6/25 & 6/26/22 – Riverfest Event
6/14, 6/15 & 6/21/22 – Stream School & Water Monitoring

6/14, 6/15, & 6/16/22 – NJ Future – Stormwater & Flooding Planning & Redevelopment Conference. Rahway River Watershed Association Board Meeting next week.

Peggy sent resignation letter to Mayor Giacobbe.

Michelle Gil & Eric Hausker were reappointed.

Commissioner Rolong voiced her concerns about Rahway turning into a heat island and suggested we send out mailers to residents or something in the Rahway Review informing residents of the hazards. Commissioner Keane suggested placing an ad in Our Town.

SITE PLAN REVIEW/PLANNING & ZONING BOARD ITEMS

DEP has approved API Foils plan to put a new warehouse behind their existing building.

The Pine St. Development project by Barnett St. (now a 15 townhouse project - instead of 10 townhouses) still has not been approved by the DEP.

Iva St. – developer wants to build on a house on a tiny lot. Environmental Commission did not approve plan and this goes before the Zoning Board next week.

382-386 W. Grand (corner of Irving St.) – developer will be building on empty lot – apartments with offices on 1st floor. They will be planting trees & shrubs.

Witherspoon St. – convert house into Hindu Temple and turn backyard into parking lot. Environmental Commission did not approve this.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

ANJEC membership

ADJOURN

The next Regular meeting of the Environmental Commission will be held Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Rahway River Watershed Association, 337 E. Milton Ave., Rahway. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Motion: Commissioner Rolong
Seconded: Commissioner Parker
Unanimously approved

At: 8:59 p.m.