

Rahway Environmental Commission

MINUTES

Thursday, March 10, 2022

7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:17 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
Ms. Gina Holmes, Clerk

Absent: Mr. Alexander Parker, Commissioner
Ms. Michelle Gil, Commissioner
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, February 10, 2022

Motion: Commissioner Carchia

Seconded: Commissioner Paszek

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SPEAKER

None

HEARING OF CITIZENS

Mike Smalling, Director of Rahway Public

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

Letter to UC Chairman of Open Trust Fund Al Mirabella – Bazega Park – Victoria Durham will be speaking with Al Mirabella soon and will let us know when their meeting is.

Letter to UC Parks Director Ron Zuber – Bramhall Road County Park site – Union County Executive Budget released including a playground for Bramhall Park, waiting for actual budget.

Tree Inventory – Paul Cowie & Associates, who also does Management Plan, started inventory which should take 8-9 months to complete. A bonus of having this inventory done will show all of the available planting sites. Suggestion was made to put an article in the Rahway Review to educate citizens on the importance of trees. Chairman Robinson will speak with Lauren and Joe in Administration. A suggestion was made to invite Paul Cowie to a meeting.

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 – Our letter was distributed at the 2/16/22 Redevelopment Meeting. Chairman Robinson will be calling Mr. Landolfi.

Environmental Justice Community Engagement Session was held on 2/24/22 in Elizabeth which Chairman Robinson attended. Representatives from DEP & EPA were present and had an question & answer session. Councilman Brown, Chairman Robinson and a Rahway resident

spoke about the incinerator in Rahway and putting facilities such as this in minority areas. The DEP will follow up with Rahway. Website is www.nj.gov/dep/ej/

The Food & Water Watch group is still fighting the plant in Keasbey.

There was an article in the UC Source Newspaper for the ribbon cutting on 3/2/22 for the Solar Farm in Linden, NJ.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Robinson handed out membership forms for Rahway River Watershed Association; Friends of Rahway River Parkway; Merchants & Drovers Tavern and Friends of Rahway Library and encouraged everyone to join.

UC Hub – Rahway will hold the next meeting at the Merchant & Drovers Tavern on 4/27/22. The Rahway River Watershed Association will be represented by Commissioner Carchia as the main speaker. We have to submit a letter to the Merchants & Drovers Tavern for permission to use the facility for this meeting.

Protecting municipal stormwater rights update – Sample Resolution from ANJEC will be completed and submitted to Councilwoman Miles hoping Council will also adopt.

Free Salem Oak Seedling/Arbor Day Friday, 4/29/22 – Seedling to be ordered from NJ Forest Service Nursery

Shade Tree Board/Commission – Shade Tree Board is advisory/Shade Tree Commission is power over trimming, planting and removing of trees and shrubs. The City of Rahway is considering forming a Tree Board and later transition into a Commission. This would include 5 members, 2 alternates including a representative from Public Works and a member from the Environmental Commission. Suggestion was made to include this in our Master Plan.

City Community Garden update – new fence being installed – ready in about 2 weeks

Earth Day Events/Annual Rahway River Clean up – 4/23/22

Rahway Live Well Event – 6/4/22 at Rahway Train Plaza, Environmental Commission will have a table and Mike Smalling will be looking into purchasing a tent for the Environmental Commission.

ANJEC Grants – due 5/2/22 – Millennium Strategy is the company who does the grant writing for the City.

A2065 Bill on Plastic Bags – State Assembly trying to weaken bag ban. ANJEC is working hard to stop this. Chairman Robinson will email everyone the information to contact State Representatives.

3/23/22 webinar sponsored by ANJEC – Preparing for State Wide Plastic Bag Ban from 7 – 8:30 pm.

5/19/22 – Union County will be hosting multi-park clean ups. They are looking for volunteers.

The Trailside Center has many activities scheduled for families and senior hikes.

It was discovered that deer get COVID and spread it to people.

Commissioner Rolong discussed Ms. Wenson Meir’s composting project in Metuchen

Rahway River Watershed Association:

6/25 and 6/26/22 – Riverfest – tents supplied by the City; 2 bands booked; looking for people for tables; waiting on Fire Department for bonfire approval

Monthly walks – tbd

Tap article on RRWA published

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 had a few issues and did not issue approval. They will be back next month.

The Pine St. Development project by Barnett St. (now a 15 townhouse project - instead of 10 townhouses) has been approved by the DEP.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

None

ADJOURN

The next Regular meeting of the Environmental Commission will be held Thursday, April 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at 337 W. Milton Ave., Rahway, NJ. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Motion: Commissioner Rolong
Seconded: Commissioner Carchia
Unanimously approved

At: 9:40 p.m.