

Allentown Environmental Commission (AEC)

P.O. Box 487, 8 North Main Street

Allentown, New Jersey 08501

6 May 2021

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called on to order on Zoom by Chairperson Bill Cotte at 7:01 p.m., and the following statement was read:

“In compliance with the ‘Open Public Meetings Act’, Chapter 231, PL 1975, Section 5, adequate notice has been given of this meeting by posting a Notice in the lobby of the Borough Hall, a public space; on the Borough’s website, Face Book page, and Twitter account and by transmitting a notice to two newspapers, THE TIMES and the ASBURY PARK PRESS, as required by law.”

Those present on Zoom were: Nancy Tindall, Patricia Brown, Bill Cotte, Rick Jakober, Janice Buchalski, Jennifer Elder Brady, Wil Borkowski, Elaine Saullo, and Council Liaison, Councilwoman Martha Johnson. A quorum was present.

Approval of agenda - Motion by Jennifer Elder Brady, 2nd Rick Jakober; motion passed

Minutes Review

A motion was made by Rick Jakober and 2nd by Janice Buchalski to approve the April 1, 2021 meeting minutes; the motion was passed.

Communications

- Correspondence - Email to Janice Buchalski from NJDEP Endangered & Non-Game Species Dept. Re: the birds at Mercer Corporate Park and wetlands...Habitats are not all regulated; Upland buffers are not regulated.

Public Participation (limited to 3 minutes) - None

Borough Council Report - Borough Council Liaison, Councilwoman Johnson – nothing to share

Old Business –

- Stormwater Ordinance – Update – Jennifer Elder Brady reported that the Borough Engineer, Carmela Roberts, Council President Elder, and Mayor Fritts had a discussion concerning the new NJ Stormwater regs regarding the increase in square footage. Water quality does not have to be treated. Jennifer will rewrite the ordinance with the information about the square footage changes for major and minor development.

Nancy Tindall stated that the Borough needs to lead by example for flood and water quality from point and non-point sources. Princeton has a committee to deal with stormwater and she will seek information from Barbara Vadnais on the committee. Jennifer suggested they download and look at Princeton's stormwater ordinance. Princeton considers anything ¼ acre and above as major development. Nancy will work with Jennifer, and she will speak with someone at Stoneybrook Watershed. Hightstown approved a new stormwater ordinance on March 1, 2021

- 20 Church Street use variance request – Update – Jennifer Elder Brady prepared a document to Ian Hill, of Van Cleef Engineering, Planning Board Engineer, to review the AEC's concerns regarding impervious coverage and traffic issues. The AEC recommends impervious coverage. Ian agreed with the Commission's concerns; and the application was not approved. The applicant will need Borough's approval for their Dept. of Health & Human Services (DOH) license for the primary school.
- Borough Master Plan Natural Resources Inventory/Environmental Resources Inventory (NRI/ERI) – Update – Bill Cotte, Patricia Brown, Rick Jakober, and Nancy Tindall will have a phone conference with a rep from Princeton Hydro to get advice regarding the best way to write a proposal for an updated NRI/ERI. In an effort to complete an application for the Greenteam to secure the Bronze rating in the borough, the Environmental commission would like to update the NRI/ERI. We will either have Princeton Hydro update the current document from its original writing of 2003, or have Thomas Planning Associates do it. Rick said that the Borough's NRI was outside the 10 year requirement for Sustainable Jersey, and there no longer were ANJEC grants available. Nancy Tindall will speak with the Borough's CFO, June Madden to see if funds will be available. Jennifer Elder Brady suggested asking Andy Thomas, Borough Planner, to give a quote for GIS mapping/base drawings. Rick said that not a lot has changed with development in the Borough and should be relatively easy to bring the updated version to the current date. Jennifer said there are specific databases to use that would be helpful. Should the Borough send this out to bid? Nancy Tindall stated that it doesn't need to go out to competitive bids...for professional services the threshold would not be reached. She said the # 1 criteria should be that the mapping be in a different format.

New Business

- Proposed Water Ordinance – Bill Cotte reported that Councilwoman Torsiello is working on a proposed model Water Ordinance that appears to be too restrictive. Rick Jakober said the requirement for Sustainable Jersey is not problematic. Jennifer Elder Brady questioned how it would be policed? Nancy Tindall asked do we even know where the ordinance came from? NJ Future model ordinance? Sustainable Jersey? Should the AEC take up water conservation? Rick stated Sustainable Jersey provisions limited the amount and days of the week; provided ideas for smart controllers and incentivized to change to smart controllers. Jennifer Elder Brady asked if there be a section regarding watering the grass. Rick said that Sustainable Jersey had a 3 year plan for implementing parts of the ordinance. He will send out a link of resources to members for better understanding. Patricia Brown suggested putting information on the AEC FaceBook site

to promote awareness for water conservation. Jennifer said it would be good to establish guidelines about what happens to the water to and from the ground water.

- Recycled Content Bill Resolution – the AEC will work on a Draft resolution in support of a proposed NJ statute for additional legislation requiring producer responsibility for the recycling of products and product packaging. Patricia Brown will send out the proposal and will make adjustments according to responses. Nancy Tindall made a motion to recommend that Borough Council adopt the resolution. Rick Jakober 2nd. The motion was passed. Nancy also questioned if it would be appropriate for the AEC to adopt its own resolution? We should write letters to our representatives in support, as well.

Other Business –

- Pending Forestry bill - Jennifer Elder Brady said that ANJEC has information on carbon effected trees.
- Warehouses – Janice Buchalski asked if the AEC, as a commission, can send a letter to County and State officials to be better heard in opposing warehouse sprawl and local warehouses being built on Allentown’s borders? Senate President Sweeney has proposed a bill, S3688, amending and supplementing the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) to add new requirements for municipalities and developers when approving a development application for a retail warehouse. Elaine Saullo made a motion that the AEC draft a letter to Senator Sweeney, Patricia Brown 2nd. The motion was passed. Nancy Tindall proposed we look at the NJ Farm Bill and look at inter-municipal input. Let the Borough know what we are doing. Rick Jakober asked what can we do? Where can we about our Commission’s rights without approval of Council? Jennifer Elder Brady recommended asking ANJEC. Bill Cotte said that the AEC presented the NRI and the MLUL gives the AEC the right to comment and the applicant needs to automatically check with the AEC as integrity of the review process. There should be a copy on the borough’s website of the checklist. Jan stated that Allentown’s code 2-58.3 Environmental Commission stated the Commission’s powers. She will email members the link and information. Nancy and Bill Cotte asked if it makes sense to form some subcommittee to work on details of an application?
- Update on AEC budget – Budget for 2021 is \$1150. ANJEC dues are \$375 for members. Bee City USA membership fees \$100.
- Bee City USA – Janice Buchalski , Patricia Brown, and other volunteers will be planting a Pollinator Garden in Heritage Park May 18-19.
- UFRES 4th graders –Jennifer Elder Brady suggested the AEC help purchase reusable water bottles Nancy Tindall said it will promote environmental stewardship. Elaine Saullo asked if they could be stainless steel which are more expensive. A motion to support was made by Jennifer and 2nd by Patricia Brown to have an e-vote after Jennifer finds out prices and other information and then an authorization for action.

Adjournment There being no further business, a motion was made by Janice Buchalski & 2nd Rick Jakober to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 p.m.; The motion passed.

Next Regular Meeting 3 June 2021 7:00 PM on Zoom