

Allentown Environmental Commission (AEC)
P.O. Box 487, 8 North Main Street
Allentown, New Jersey 08501
14 January 2025
Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order in by Chairman Bill Cotte at 7:05 p.m., and the following statement was read:

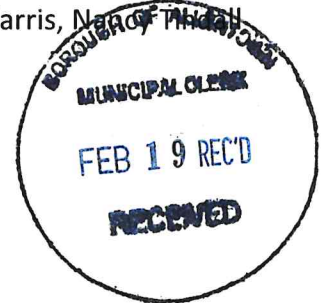
“In compliance with the ‘Open Public Meetings Act’, Chapter 231, PL 1975, Section 5, adequate notice has been given of this meeting by posting a Notice in the lobby of the Borough Hall, a public space; on the Borough’s website, Face Book page, and X account and by transmitting a notice to two newspapers,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

Flag Salute

Role call - Present: Bill Cotte, Rick Jakober, Patricia Brown, Jennifer Elder Brady, Wil Borkowski, Keith Clayton, Greg Westfall and Councilwoman DeKranes; Absent: Jerry Harris, Nancy Thadall and Angela Guerrera. A quorum was present.

Reorganization

- Chairman appointed by the mayor Bill Cotte
- Vice-chair motion to elect Rick by Wil, 2nd Keith; motion passed.
- Secretary motion to elect Pat by Greg, 2nd Wil; motion passed.
- Education and stewardship motion to elect Nancy –by Wil, 2nd Bill; motion passed.
- Social Media motion to elect Rick by Wil, 2nd Pat; motion passed.
- Liaison to Sustainable Jersey/Green team motion to elect Keith by Bill and 2nd Greg; Motion passed



Chairman update – Bill Cotte - Bill sent out Greg and Nancy’s letters for our Stormwater workshop to Environmental Commissions within our watershed area. There have been 3 responses, thus far.

Public comment: Dee Burek 10 Nolen Drive, Allentown, NJ. Dee reported her case regarding the Borough’s ordinance issue with the court, plea for change in the ordinance for pollinator gardens, was dismissed. Rick, Pat, and others will work on proposals to the ordinance from Bee City USA.

Minutes- Motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2024 meeting by Keith, 2nd Greg; Jenny abstained; motion passed and minutes approved.

Communications - Correspondence -none

Old Business

- EV Charging – Keith Clayton –spoke about a Municipal Parking Lot on the Lakeview Dr. basketball courts, as a possible location for charging stations. There is enough power for 2 charging stations. There needs to be an onsite inspection before moving forward to see if the area can be trenched and power lines installed. They may be able to leave it just gravel afterwards. Greg asked how the location was chosen. Keith responded that there were 3 locations proposed. The Borough does not require 3 bids if it's under \$1,700. They looked at what would do better in the location with the power and amp charge, and what might be closer to downtown attractions. There will be a consult with the next week or two. Voltrek will install. Install and maintenance will be through grant moneys. Typically, some municipalities will charge for the service to pay off the grant. Jennifer asked, paid or unpaid, who pays for the electricity? Keith said that there are some State funded grants to pay for some of the hours. Wil stated that there are 3 levels of chargers, so that will make a difference. Keith said there are adaptive chargers that can manipulate the amount of charge as per “free charge” or paid. There are grants for the installation and utility itself.
- Composting Update – Nancy Tindall - None
- ROSI Inventory Update –Jennifer Elder Brady – no report; still hasn't heard back
- ERI Update – Rick Jakober –has done a rough draft, taking information from the previous ERI and Master Plan. Some information does not change. The draft needs help with the non-point source pollution, water contamination, at 148 South Main St. Allentown, triangle and former gas station site. Jenny stated that the site is still ongoing contamination remediation. Rick is also checking into “heat islands” and has used information from the Sustainable Jersey site to determine the sources. The maps indicate differences in temperature and show a 30 degree difference in temperature between the warehouses in Robbinsville and Allentown. Jenny recommended still using the original Word documents and reference the old ERI but use the updated information. Rick said Sustainable Jersey is a lot of help with resources. The biological resource section has shown that there are approximately 350 observed species. The Nature Serve Explorer Pro shows critical habitat. It is best as a web based document to link points. There is also the LIDAR topography technology which is a remote sensing method that uses light/laser to measure ranges (variable distances) to the Earth. Bill spoke with Councilman Mike Drennan regarding our budget of \$1500. It will be reviewed and see if the Borough would make payment for the ERI. Jenny suggested we put a draft proposal together, since professionals were involved for the Master Plan revision. Greg said that Princeton Hydro did the previous ERI in 2002 which is the foundation for the Master Plan. There was a \$2500 grant. There was an issue with a pre-existing sewer system and septic tank collapse that could present a natural hazard. The septic systems predate 1970's. Jenny said that that was an issue for the Department of Health. Rick will send out an email the AEC members for comments and will add items, i.e. Cisterns, water quality, etc. He noted that riparian zones were never mapped.

- AEC will be hosting a workshop with other EC's in Allentown's watershed – ANJEC will provide the agenda. 3 municipalities thus far, have signed up for the workshop; Plumsted, Millstone, Robbinsville.
- Riparian Buffers – Riparian Buffers - Angela Guerrero and Greg Westfall –looking at the 2018 Master Plan revision. No official format given for riparian buffers. We should also take a further look at steep slopes. Jenny worked on a draft. She said it depends on the category of the stream for 50' buffers. Should reference the State regulations for NJDEP Land Use Standard Steep Slopes. She will re-circulate the draft. Rick sent out the ordinance already in place.

New Business -Projects for 2025

Committee Reports:

- Borough Council Liaison- Councilwoman DeKranes – 1) The Borough Council will review the goals of each commission and committee for 2025. 2) She spoke of the Department of Interior grant opportunities for outdoor youth programs that will be given in early February. It will be an environmental steward program for counties and municipal governments to apply for. 3)
- Watershed Ambassador Update- no report.
- Planning & Zoning –Jennifer Elder Brady –The Planning Board had their reorganization meeting. She brought our comments and summary notes for the La Piazza expansion.
- Parks & Public Spaces – Wil Borkowski- no report.
- Bee City USA– Jennifer Elder Brady- will check that the Bee City USA dues were paid. There is a Pollinator Pathway in the North East. She will help draft an ordinance of support.
- Recycling – Pat Brown – nothing new
- Education & Stewardship – Nancy Tindall
- Sustainable Jersey & Green Team – Keith Clayton – said that Laurie Roth will re-do the meeting schedule for 2 meetings per month. It is on hold for now. It is not part of the reorganization packet. The Green Team is a subcommittee of the Environmental Commission.
- FaceBook- Rick Jakober – continue to send Rick updates and information related to our environment and commission.

Other Business -

- Bill sent out a new members list.
- Pat asked if there were any regulations for street salting and residential salting for icy conditions. How much is enough? People salt prior to any weather events. What are they using? Is it safe for pets, dog walking, the environment, or water ways? Our Watershed ambassador used to have test kits. Bill will reach out to our new Watershed ambassador to inquire. Rick stated that people should be using magnesium chloride.
- Greg reported that there was sediment in Allentown Lake/Conine's Pond. We should look at options for funding to dredge the lake. He also stated that he's had to call the Soil Conservation

Department several times regarding soil issues in the Mercer Corporate Park development. Neighbors living along Indian Run reported soil movement from the development into Indian Run and sent photos and documented the soil issues.

- Bill said that there will be a commission's and committee's chairs meeting. They will discuss how they can help each other and also work with the businesses in the Borough.

Adjournment -There being no further business, a motion was made by Keith Clayton and 2nd by Wil Borkowski to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.; motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Next Regular Meeting - Thursday, February 6, 2025 7:00 p.m. in person at Borough Hall and on Zoom.