

# **Hammonton Environmental Commission**

## **Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 11, 2020**

### Call to Order – 7:02PM

Present: Bachalis, Donio, Matro, Menzel, Murphy

Absent: Carr, Caruso-Cafiso, Crowley, Hozik,

### Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of February 2020 Minutes – Postponed until April meeting

### Correspondence

1. HETI Services to Riggins Oil – Contamination cleaned.

### Committee Reports

Town Council – Councilman Oliva – New Tax Collector approved; Resolution of Support for Sustainable Jersey grant application approved (Master Plan initiative); Bike path bids rejected (too high); Safe Routes To +School sidewalk grant consultant approved; Water tower to be operational in April; NJ League of Conservation Voters green infrastructure grant discussed.

### Dispense with Regular Order of Business

Motion: Donio; second: Menzel. Approved by acclamation

Presentation by Kaitlin Barakat, NJ League of Conservation Voters – Ms. Barakat discussed the recent NJLCV announcement of grant opportunities to municipalities in the Delaware River Watershed to investigate and develop stormwater utilities to help fund maintenance and improvement of stormwater management systems. She clarified that the grant would also cover municipalities in the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer.

### Tree Removal Applications:

1. Marie Fucetola, 319 Central Avenue. One tree, no replacement. “Dead”. Ms. Fucetola was present in the audience, and presented her application in person. Motion to approve: Donio; second: Menzel. Approved 5-0.
2. Karen Oliva, 360 N. Chew Road. Three trees, no replacement. Needles and branches too much to clean up, am disabled”. Ms. Oliva presented her application in person. Motion to approve: Donio; second: Matro. Approved 5-0.

Return to regular order

Motion: Menzel; second: Donio. Approved by acclamation

### Committee Reports

Land Use Board – Councilman Oliva – Solar ground array approved

Parks and Recreation Commission – Commissioner Bachalis – Lake Park rain garden design approved

Lake Water Quality Advisory Committee – Commissioner Bachalis – Rain garden at Library to be installed in May; Lake vegetation study recommended to Council.

Green Committee – Commissioner Menzel – Eye Opening Film and Lecture Series on April 16, Regenerative Agriculture

Bicycle Advisory Committee – Commissioner Murphy – First meeting held with Hammonton School Administration regarding Bike Rodeo scheduled for May 9.

Greater Egg Harbor River Council – Commissioner Bachalis – No report.

### Old Business –

#### 1. Work Plan Updates

- a. Pollinator garden – Action steps plotted, meeting held with Public Works regarding assistance.
- b. CFMP
  - i. Increase Town canopy – Pending CSIP grant activation
  - ii. Annual Report to DEP – Submitted, pending confirmation of approval.
  - iii. Intern – Bachalis to submit request to Environmental Stewards program
  - iv. Arbor Day activity – Crowley, Caruso-Cafiso, and Matro to coordinate
  - v. iTree – Bachalis will request dates from all Commissioners to meet in Town Hall to become familiar with iTree software and data.
  - vi. CSIP grant – Council rejected the Planting Plan; consultant is re-writing to adjust timeframes and (perforce) tree species.
  - vii. Update tree brochure – Commissioner Menzel will review.
  - viii. Tree City USA application – Pending intern acquisition.
- c. Public communications
  - i. Facebook – Hammonton Area Species Survey posted to our page.
  - ii. Press release/guest columns – Bachalis authored a Gazette column about a citizen science initiative, the Hammonton Area Species Survey, using the iNaturalist phone app. All Commissioners are encouraged to download and use the app, and to spread the word.
  - iii. Commission/Council presentations (incl. annual report) – Bachalis working on a 2019 report for Council. Menzel has invited the Hamilton Green Team to present in April about their Adopt-a-Storm-Drain project.
  - iv. Commission Town web page – Bachalis has been sending past Commission Minutes to Town web administrator; will copy Menzel on all future submissions.
  - v. Outreach
- d. HOPE collaborations
  - i. Lake Clean Up – Final checks to be made to be sure all elements are in place.
  - ii. Green infrastructure – Bachalis will forward the NJLCV RFP to all members

- iii. Green Day – Green Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 19. Bachalis recommends the Commission begin planning the form of its participation beginning no later than the May meeting.
    - iv. Sustainable Jersey – Ongoing meetings with the Green Committee.
  - e. Plastic bag public education- Materials purchased. Consulting artist has begun construction. All Commissioners are encouraged to collect and ask their contacts to collect plastic bags and red Solo cups. NB: this is NOT to encourage the unnecessary purchase or use of these items.
  - f. Commissioner training
    - i. Tree “issue” focused training – Bachalis will contact Arborist regarding additional training topics available.
    - ii. ANJEC Basic training (“Fundamentals”) – Reminder about the ANJEC session at NJM on Saturday, March 28. All Commissioners encouraged to attend, as part of the “host” commission.
    - iii. Additional ANJEC training
    - iv. USDA UCF webinars – Commissioners encouraged to try to access these webinars. Not only are they informative, but participation also assists in our re-certification with DEP each year.
    - v. iTree – Bachalis will confer with Town Hall staff re: accessing this software.
    - vi. NJ Shade Tree Federation conference – Mark your calendars: Thursday and Friday, October 22/23, 2020. Commissioner Donio notes neither she nor Commissioner Hozik have received notice of their CEUs from last year’s conference; Bachalis will inquire.
  - g. Master Plan elements – No movement in Town as yet. Sustainable Jersey application completed.
  - h. Open Space review – Bachalis will inquire if Town is completing a review and expansion of the ROSI.
- 2. Dedication by Rider Resolution – No response from request to approve this item by Council. Bachalis will follow up.
- 3. 12<sup>th</sup> Street Tree Complaint – Bachalis noted he had consulted with the Town’s Code Enforcement Officer, and both concluded that there is no remedy for this plaintiff short of this neighbor cooperating with him. Bachalis discussed the issue at length with plaintiff, and pledged to keep this matter under consideration for new information or avenues of resolution.
- 4. Enforcement – Bachalis collected lists of area companies that should receive the letter, will confer with Code Enforcement regarding next steps.
- 5. Salem Oak placement recommendation – Commission deliberated at length regarding each of the six sites suggested over the past two months, considering positive and negative aspects of each. After due consideration, the Commission unanimously approved a recommendation to Council that the Salem Oak seedling be planted (ultimately) in Oak Grove Cemetery. Motion to approve: Matro; second: Murphy.

#### Tree Removal Applications

- 3. Joseph Pantalone, 10 Carriage Way. Seven trees for g-b solar array, no replacement. Motion to approve: Donio; second: Murphy. Approved 4-0-1, Menzel abstaining.
- 4. Jason Potter, 62 Samuel Drive. One tree, no replacement. “Dead”, “Close to house, pool, fence”. Bachalis will inspect.

5. Domenic Gibase, Jr., 441 Bellevue Avenue. One tree, one replacement. “Dangerous, overgrown, property damage”. Applicant not only already removed tree before application approval, but apparently also cut down three additional trees with potential bole diameters of 30, 27, and 29 inches. Matter will be referred to Code Enforcement.
6. Ronald Shourdes, 633 N. Egg Harbor Road. Three trees, no replacement. “Bark beetles, trees are very large and large branches always falling, want to remove before becomes a problem”. Motion to approve: Donio; second: Murphy. Approved 5-0
7. Marisol Andujar, 309, W. Pleasant Street. One tree, no replacement. “Tree is old”. Motion to approve: Menzel; second: Donio. Approved 5-0
8. Nicholas Farrizio, 11 Oak Road. Two trees, replace with Arborvitae (?). Motion to approve: Donio; second: Matro. Approved 5-0.

#### New Business

1. Commission self-evaluation – Bachalis distributed a “Commission self-evaluation” from ANJEC for Commissioners to complete and share at next meeting.
2. Commissioner Donio noted additional enforcement action seems necessary for tree removals at Block 2818, Lot 15, multiple trees removed, and no application.

Adjournment at 9:45 PM.