

# **Hammonton Environmental Commission**

## **Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 13, 2024**

Call to Order: 7:05 p.m.

Present: Bachalis, Bethmann, Cafiso, Carr, Hozik, Berenato, Menzel

Absent: Crowley, Niedoba, Berenato

Hammonton Gazette Reporter: Donald Yamasaki

Guests: Chris Obrupta, Bob Vettese, Helen & Debbie from NJDEP, Rebecca French Mench; Tom Besselman, Pemberton Township; John Bee

Pledge of Allegiance

Motion to Dispense with Regular Order of Business: Motion: Menzel; Second: Cafiso. Approved by acclamation.

Presentation by Chris Obrupta, PhD., Rutgers University regarding the Hammonton Creek Watershed Protection Plan

Motion to Return to Regular Order of Business: Motion: Bethmann; Second: Cafiso. Approved by acclamation.

Committee Reports

- Town Council – Rodio; No report.
- Land Use Board – Hozik; The board has been spending most of their time on the draft of the Master Plan. They did approve the construction of a pole barn. The Mt. Carmel Society was also approved to add a lean-to on the side of their building.
- Lake Water – Bachalis; The committee has been terminated.
- Great Egg Harbor River Council – Bachalis; No report.
- Green Committee – Menzel; There are more garden talks coming up. The community garden opens on April 20<sup>th</sup>. The committee is working with Main Street on sustainable plantings. The green market will now be held on 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays from June through September.
- Parks & Recreation – Cafiso; Lou Cappuccio was reappointed as chairman. There are 2 new members. The committee will absorb the responsibilities of the Lake Water Quality committee.

Tree Removal Applications:

1. Town of Hammonton, various removals of street trees along Bellevue Ave. and 12<sup>th</sup> St.; the commission requested a meeting with the landscaper onsite on 3/13/24 at 3 p.m.
2. Vine Street Properties, 116 Vine Street. One tree, no replacement. Motion to approve: Bethmann; Second: Hozik. Approved 6-0.
3. Stephanie DeCicco, 476 11<sup>th</sup> Street. One tree, no replacement. Motion to approve: Cafiso; Second: Hozik. Approved 6-0.

4. Jose Raul Ramirez, 51 & 57 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Motion to table until site visit: Cafiso; Second: Hozik. Tabled 6-0.
5. Roy Thorstensen, 627 Anderson Ave. 13 trees. Motion to table until site visit: Cafiso; Second: Bethmann. Tabled 6-0.
6. Luis Rodriguez, 281 Chestnut St. One tree, no replacement. Motion to approve: Menzel; Second: Bethmann. Approved 6-0.
7. James Jackson, 801 7<sup>th</sup> St. Multiple trees. Motion to table until site visit: Cafiso; Second: Carr. Tabled 6-0.

Old Business: None

New Business

1. 2023 UCF AAR application was submitted.
2. Tree City USA application was submitted.

2024 Actions

1. 2024 Community clean-up that was scheduled for March 2 was cancelled due to weather. Looking to reschedule for the fall.
2. Action to approve a \$425 contribution to the Historic Preservation Committee. Motion to approve: Cafiso; Second: Carr. Approved 6-0.

Presentation from John Bee: Mr. Bee was not on the agenda but asked to be able to speak to the Commission regarding the trees at the West End development. He sold the property that is going to be developed and does not agree with the removal of some very old, large trees along the street. He wanted to share his thoughts on the importance of preserving such trees within the town.

Adjournment: 10:00 p.m.