

Pennington Borough Environmental Commission

Agenda for February 24, 2025, 7:30 PM

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Joann Held, Jim Fuger, Kieran John, Nancy Fishman, Andy Jackson, Emily Broeg, Brian Friedlich, Andrew Seeder

Guests: Nine student guests from the Pennington school (introductions were not made), Margo Andrews, Pennington School teacher, and Sheila Baker Gujral, ANJEC

Notetaker: Nancy Fishman

1. Call to Order / Roll Call Meeting commenced at 7:40

2. Approval of Minutes from January 27, 2025:

Motion to approve by: Joann Held_ *Seconded by:* Andy Jackson

Ay_ 8_ Nay_ 0_ ABS_ 0_

3. Public Comment None

4. Administrative Items

- **February Commission & Committee Chairs Meeting**

Kieran reported that discussions during the Committee Chairs meeting centered around how to make information from Committees more accessible to the public. With a key plan to have committee Chairs set up as Zoom hosts and links posted on the Borough website. Betty Sterling will inform us once this capability is ready. Additionally, there will be one email address that all committees will use to interact with residents. Kieran reported that the Community government week will be cancelled this year and redesigned in future years.

- **Key Events in February & March**

- Recycling webinar this Thursday, February 27 at 7pm. All the systems are go and we thank the Borough Administration for helping us with this project.

5. Community Engagement

- **Collaboration with The Pennington School** (*Margo Andrews & PS student, Kieran/all*)

- Maddie Carr (Pennington School student) discussed the projects that are being done in their Environmental Science in Action Class. She then asked if the Environmental Commission felt that flooding was a concern for residents of Pennington. Andy Jackson took the lead in answering, explaining some of the issues and concerns

around flooding in the Borough. Andy also offered to come and talk with students and mentioned Susan Bristol, of the Watershed Institute, and Andrew Lloyd, of NJDEP, as great resources. A number of PEC members had other resources to offer, and a plan was made to send all information to Kieran to coordinate the flow of information.

- **Guest Speaker: Strengthening Our EC Connection with ANJEC (Sheila Baker Gujral, ANJEC)**
 - Sheila gave a short introduction to ANJEC, an overview of current initiatives, and services. All Committee members expressed appreciation for all that ANJEC does and their intention to continue to use ANJEC's expertise. There were no questions.
 - **Community Conversations: Recycling – Beyond the Basics (Jim, Joann, Nancy, Kieran)**
 - Kieran and Jim led a final review of the details for the February 27th webinar. Final update on speakers, content, and logistics and an overview of publicity efforts for the event.
-

6. Strategic Projects

- **ANJEC Community Grant – Interactive Arboretum Experience (Kieran, Emily, Joann, Nancy, Nell)**
 - Kieran provided pictures of potential signage for the entrance to the arboretum. EC members were enthusiastic about the designs. Emily has found a company to produce the QR code plaques that will be attached to the trees. The website integration is moving slowly but should be ready this spring.
 - The Eagle scouts are interested in additional projects in the Arboretum.
 - A grant application was made to the Native Plant Society of NJ. This would enable additional planting in the Arboretum.
- **Community Energy Plan Development (Brian, Andy, Joann, Andrew, Kieran)**
 - The PEC will have a full update next month. Work is going as planned.
- **2025 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report for Municipal Operations (Andy)**
 - Andy reported that he is waiting for data from the Borough and attempting to untangle where the information comes from so that this report will be easier in the future
- **National Wildlife Federation Community Habitat Program (Emily)**
 - This is a project that will be done in conjunction with Hopewell Township. Emily will be in contact with the project lead in HT and have an update next month.

7. Communications

- **EC Social Media Presence** (*Kieran*)
 - We now have permission to post information on Face Book as the PEC. We will start with information about the upcoming webinar on recycling.

8. Continuous Learning

- **Environmental Commission Checklist for Site Planning Reviews** (*Kieran, Andrew, Emily*)
 - Emily and Andrew will work on updating the current checklist to guide EC input on site planning applications. Andy pointed out that the current checklist is being used.
- **America Is All in Campaign** (*Kieran*)
 - PEC members reviewed www.AmericalsAllIn.com – and after a short discussion felt there was no downside to supporting this effort.

9. 2025 Environmental Commission Strategic Plan Discussion (*Kieran*)

- PEC members agreed with the updated **2025 EC Strategic Plan**.
- Motion to approve the PEC Strategic Plan as a working plan for 2025, recognizing that this is a living document that may be changed over the course of the year.

Moved by -Kieran John, Second by Andrew Seeder

Ayes 8 Nays 0

10. General Updates

- **Borough Council Updates** (*Dan Rubenstein*) *absent*
- **Planning/Zoning Board Updates** (*Andy Jackson*)

The fifth element for the Master plan (5/12) has been approved and will be put up on the Borough website.

The State now has a new Master Plan – there is no law that the plan must be followed, but it would be valuable for the PEC to review and use components.

- **Open Space Updates** (*Nancy Fishman*) *none, next meeting March 19, 2025*
- **Green Team & Sustainable Jersey Updates** (*Joann Held*)

There was a very successful metal recycling event on February 8th.

Water will be the theme for this year's Green Team. This includes quality, supply and stormwater management

11. Adjournment: __9:10PM

Next Meeting: March 17, 2025, 7:30 PM