

Pennington Borough Environmental Commission

Minutes for February 26, 2024, 7:30 pm

Zoom Virtual

Notetaker: Brian Friedlich

1. Call to Order/ Roll Call

Attendees: Kieran John (Chair), Joann Held, Jim Fuger, Andy Jackson, Nancy Fishman, Brian Friedlich, Yasmine Zein, Dan Rubenstein

Unable to attend: John Valenza (Borough Council Liaison), Michael Abrahamson

Member of Public: Nell Haughton

2. Approval of minutes from 22nd Jan 2024:

- No comments. Andy Jackson moved to approve minutes. Seconded by Nancy Fishman. Dan Rubenstein abstained. Approved.

3. Public comment

- No public comment.

4. Administrative Items

- Michael Abrahamson would like to step down from alternate position. Mayor is working on appointing an alternate member.
- There are conflicting dates on the calendar for April. We will have April meeting on April 15th.
- Q1 Commission Chair Meeting on 5th Feb (Kieran J)
 - i. Commission chair meetings occur 3 to 4 times of year with chairs of commissions for cross collaboration.
 - ii. Proposed a common email address for each of the commissions as a way for public to contact commissions (not finalized yet).
 - iii. Local government week in April - a way for the public to learn about local government. There is a working group – Kieran and Andy are on it. If you want to be involved in brainstorming, contact Kieran via email.
 - iv. Reminder that there are quarterly newsletters and email blasts. Looking for 2 email blasts a month.
- Renewal of Nancy Fishman term as EC rep to Open Space (Kieran J)
 - i. Jim made motion, Joann second; approved.

- Highlights from Watershed presentation at Council Meeting on 29th Jan (Kieran J)
 - i. Mike Pisauo gave a talk about MS4 permitting and why it is required.
 - ii. Talked about impairments to water and flooding issues.
 - iii. The Watershed Institute is coordinating working with a consultant on a Watershed Management Plan.
 - iv. Performing this across municipalities that are in the Stony Brook Watershed.
 - v. Discussion around the cost – further work and coordination is required.
 - vi. Need more discussion with public works.
- Notice of Upcoming Events Feb & Mar (all)
 - i. Thursday walk-through on 2/29 at 9:30AM with Rick Smith, an area of focus will be to observe Pennington's stormwater infrastructure.

5. New Business

- 2024 EC Priorities (Kieran J /all)
 - i. Kieran reviewed plan and approach to priorities.
 - ii. We should start thinking about communications items – website and newsletters; adopt plan for communications.
 - iii. No concerns with priorities plan from members; Andy would still like to be involved with Carbon Neutral.
 - iv. Future meetings will touch on 4 main priority areas and establish milestones.
 - v. Kieran will follow up with council & Jim Kyle on pushing for finalization of ERI.
 - vi. Andy recommended that ERI will be used as the conservation element of the master plan.
- Pennington Day (Kieran J /all)
 - i. Kieran will reserve ANJEC table games
 - ii. Kieran encouraged team to think about what it is we want to communicate as an EC to public.
 - iii. EC booth location will be determined by Pennington Day Planning Committee
 - iv. Potential Topics:

1. Arboretum - Jim still has sign for Arboretum – signup for volunteers for work at Arboretum.
 2. Stormwater management – Brian Friedlich to reach out to Watershed Ambassadors about getting EnviroScape model.
 3. ANJEC games were good; Jim Fuger noted the trivia questions were not all great. Jim suggested coming up with supplemental questions.
 4. Composting.
 5. Group signup to re-stencil inlet frames.
 - v. Need for more prizes/handouts.
 - vi. Date of Pennington Day – May 18th.
- ANJEC \$1,500 Community Grant (Kieran J /all)
 - i. Kieran encouraged EC to apply for this grant and to identify uses for funding.
 - ii. Arboretum – our EC applied for this grant last year but it was not approved – likely because Arboretum was previously awarded seed money through ANJEC.
 - iii. Deadline is April 26th.
 - iv. Joann will share a copy of last year's application.
 - v. A potential idea to explore may be trail enhancements at Kunkel Park - Brian can prepare an aerial map of trail enhancements.
 - Update on plan for EC review of Master Plan elements (Andy J)
 - i. 3 things EC is responsible for:
 - Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability
 - Conservation Element – June 12th – ERI needs to be approved before then.
 - Climate Change Vulnerability – Yasmine completed, Rick Smith will review, police chief will also review. Andy will circulate for comment.

6. Updates:

- Borough Council updates (John Valenza)
 - i. None
- Planning/Zoning Board updates (Andy Jackson)

- i. Landfill – council asked planning board to determine if it is an area in need of redevelopment. It has been declared an area in need of redevelopment.
 - ii. Jim Davy and Nadine Stern have joined the planning board.
- Open Space updates (Nancy Fishman)
 - i. No updates
- Carbon Neutral Workgroup updates (Brian Friedlich)
 - i. Application was submitted to Betty on Wednesday for the Community Energy Planning (CEP) grant. The deadline for the grant was extended to May. Application will be submitted by Borough.
 - ii. Carbon Neutral workgroup will start meeting again while waiting for grant application. (Andy, Joann, Brian, Kieran)
- Green Team & Sustainable Jersey updates (Joann Held)
 - i. Mercer County Sustainability Coalition green gathering was a great success.
 - ii. Over 7 tons of metal collected at metal collection event! The township would like to do it again next year. Pennington EC members volunteered at the event.

7. Old/Unfinished Business

- None.

8. Future Agenda Items

- None discussed.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

10. Next Meeting: March 18, 7:30pm