

Pennington Borough Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes, May 15, 2023, 7:30 pm
Zoom Virtual

Attendees: Joann Held (Acting Chair), Dan Rubenstein, John Valenza, Jim Fuger, Andy Jackson, Kieran John (Notetaker).

Unable to attend: Nancy Fishman, Brian Friedlich.

1. Public comment

There were no comments from the public.

2. Review of past minutes – April 17, 2023

Motion to approve by Dan Rubenstein, seconded by Jim Fuger. All in favor.

3. Administrative Items

Pennington Environmental Commission's (PEC's) ANJEC grant application was submitted on time, but unfortunately did not win approval. Despite this, work to develop an enclosure for native plants in the Pennington Arboretum will continue with costs covered from other sources as originally planned. Thanks to all involved in creating & submitting the ANJEC application.

4. Borough Council Report (John Valenza).

- a) John reported that a joint board of health meeting with Hopewell township will be convened September 2023. A key topic at this meeting will be deer management. Dan discussed plans to share potential options & recommendations ahead of this meeting. He will coordinate directly with John V and Kit.
- b) Joann mentioned that there may be 2 potential candidates with suitable professional backgrounds that may be interested in participating as PEC ALTs. John V to follow up with Mayor Jim & Katy A.

5. Planning/Zoning Board Report (Andy Jackson)

Andy reported that the Master Plan Reexamination report was presented to the public on May 10th during an open Planning Board meeting. No concerns were expressed, and a motion to adopt the report was passed. The report included a recommendation to develop a new Master Plan by 2025. Volunteers are being identified to assist with the development of the necessary elements required for the new Plan.

6. Pennington Day (PDay) Planning (May 20)

- a) Pennington Arboretum (Jim F). Jim created a poster showing the arboretum location. Joann will provide an easel for PDay. Signup & informational sheets have been developed with a plan to ideally recruit 10 volunteers for 2 hours on 4 Saturdays in June. Names can be added to Sign Up Genius. If required post June, Dan Pace generously offered access to Sourland Conservancy volunteers to complete any outstanding work.

- b) Organic waste (Dan R). Dan plans to create a trifold informational brochure as a handout for PDay. Dan will coordinate with Joann to ensure printouts are available. There was discussion about the potential for an online boroughwide poll (with links to the trifold) to collect data on public interest regarding municipal / public composting. Such data might be used to support potential future ANJEC grant applications. Further work will be needed to assess the feasibility & logistics of doing this post PDay.
 - c) ERI (Andy Jackson). Andy will create a brief summary & outline of key ERI content / components for PDay. Andy plans to ask Katie Ronollo to print this document ahead of time. John V offered to pick up copies from Borough Hall and circulate to Jim or Kieran on PDay morning.
 - d) Carbon footprint (Kieran J). Kieran will pick up 'Cut your Carbon Footprint' Knowledge Game Wheel from ANJEC and bring to PDay booth. Kieran to purchase candy & Joann to provide other items (pencils, stickers, toys) as participatory prizes. Andy will share with PEC members (for informational purposes only, not to be handed out on PDay) a draft memorandum he is preparing on Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions generated by Pennington Borough operations which compares levels in 2022 vs. 2018 baseline.
 - e) Joann shared information about the new PEC banner which will be available for use on PDay.
 - f) Plan is for EC tent to be set up around 9am. Materials can be left on Kit's driveway ahead of time if needed.
 - g) Joann will recirculate latest PDay schedule / roster to ensure we have adequate coverage to staff the booth during morning and afternoon.
7. Open Space Report (Nancy Fishman). Nothing to report at this time.
8. Carbon Neutral Workgroup (Brian Friedlich). Next meeting is scheduled for noon, June 1st. Andy drafted & circulated a draft memorandum to be sent to borough council that outlines energy use and GHG emissions in 2022 versus baseline (2018).
9. Green Team and Sustainable Jersey Update (Joann Held)
- a) Green Team is organizing a 'green gathering' meet-and-greet with other related organizations in our area, such as FoHVOS, Delaware Greenway and Sourlands Conservancy. The Watershed offered to host this meeting, evening of June 22nd. More details from Joann will be forthcoming.
 - b) Pennington Farmers Market opening day is May 27.
 - c) Hopewell Township applied for Sustainable Jersey Certification at Bronze level. It was discussed that Pennington Borough should explore similar certification next year.
10. Ongoing Business
- a) Watershed Institute is hosting stormwater training on May 18th at 10am. Joann will forward details should EC members be interested in attending.

11. Future Issues.

- a) MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Permit: training, public outreach, funding.
- b) Deer Management. Dan will report on this at a future meeting.
- c) Developing a Vision Statement for the Environmental Commission. Perhaps an opportunity to talk this summer when things are quiet?
- d) New elements for Master Plan.
- e) Engagement with S Club (environmental club at local Pennington high schools) to identify junior EC volunteers. John V to check with Mayor Jim as a first step.

12. Next Meeting – Jun 19th, 7.30am.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm

Notes submitted by Kieran John.