

Pennington Environmental Commission

Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2025 – 7:30 PM

Zoom Virtual Meeting

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM. Members present included Nell Haughton, Joann Held, Andy Jackson, Brian Friedlich, Nancy Fishman, Dan Rubenstein, Jim Fuger, Kieran John. Guests: Jeannemarie Ryder (PSEG) & Jason Meyer (Chair, EDC)

Absent: Andrew Seeder

2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the November 17, 2025 EC meeting were approved.

- Motion to approve: **Joann**; Second: **Nell**. Motion carried.

3. Announcements

General announcements were made regarding December and early January activities.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Strategic Projects

5. Discussion with PSE&G – Residential and Commercial Energy Efficiency Programs

Guest: Jeannemarie Ryder, Customer Outreach Specialist, PSE&G

Jeannemarie Ryder provided a detailed overview of PSE&G's residential and commercial energy efficiency programs, with an emphasis on how these resources could support Pennington's Community Energy Plan (CEP) and future community outreach.

Key topics included:

- Appliance rebates, recycling programs, and HVAC incentives
- Home energy assessments, weatherization, and comfort partner programs
- On-bill repayment options and interest-free financing
- EV charging incentives and utility-supported infrastructure

- Behavioral energy tools and reporting, including “My Energy” and smart meter data
- Small business and municipal energy efficiency programs

Commission members asked questions regarding data transparency, appliance recycling requirements, billing impacts for homes with EVs or heat pumps, and the future of time-of-use and peak pricing. Broader discussion touched on storage, vehicle-to-grid technologies, and consistency of utility messaging as electrification expands.

The EC noted that while many programs exist, awareness remains low, and agreed that clearer, non-overwhelming communication to residents and businesses will be important. PSE&G offered support for future outreach, materials, and potential participation in community events.

6. Conversation with the Economic Development Commission (EDC)

Guest: Jason Meyer, Chair, Economic Development Commission

Jason shared an overview of the EDC’s mission, structure, and current priorities. He described the EDC’s role as an advisory body to Borough Council, focused on supporting local commerce, strengthening Pennington’s identity as a walkable town center, and serving as a liaison between businesses and municipal government.

Key discussion points included:

- The EDC’s work on the commercial element of the Borough Master Plan
- Emphasis on walkability, mixed-use development, mobility, and downtown vitality
- The importance of coordinated signage, wayfinding, and borough-wide communications
- Opportunities to attract visitors, support small and home-based businesses, and leverage regional activity
- Shared interest in collaboration between the EC and EDC, particularly where environmental goals align with economic vitality

Commission members discussed potential areas of overlap, including waste reduction, energy efficiency, green business practices, EV charging, and placemaking initiatives. Both commissions expressed interest in identifying one or two concrete collaborative projects in 2026.

Communications and Planning Updates

7. EC Site Planning Checklist

This item was deferred till January and when Andrew Seeder is available.

8. Community Conversations – Stormwater and Watershed Focus

An update was provided on planning a Community Conversation focused on stormwater, flooding, and watershed protection. Based on survey feedback, these emerged as an important topic.

Potential speakers from watershed-related organizations were identified. Next steps include coordinating dates, finalizing speakers, and aligning logistics with Borough staff. The event is tentatively targeted for late January or early February, pending outreach and promotion timelines.

9. Master Plan Community Survey

A brief reference was made to the Master Plan community survey and its relevance to EC priorities, particularly around stormwater. A more detailed discussion was deferred to a future meeting when key contributors can participate.

10. General EC Communications Update

Upcoming newsletter items were discussed, including recycling-related announcements and potential inclusion of energy efficiency information learned from the PSE&G presentation. Coordination on content and timing will continue offline.

Standing Updates

11. Updates from Committees and Boards

- **Borough Council:** Members were encouraged to attend upcoming discussions related to fair housing and provide environmental perspective where relevant.
 - **Green Team:** No formal update beyond what was covered during the meeting itself.
 - **Shade Tree Commission / Open Space:** Brief mention of a potential open space opportunity; details remain sensitive and under review.
 - **Planning and Zoning Board:** Updates provided on Master Plan sequencing and upcoming land use work.
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12. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

The meeting adjourned at approximately **8:55 PM**.

Next Meeting: Monday, January 26, 2026 at 7:30 PM (Zoom)