

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
February 14, 2018

8:00 p.m.

Chairwoman Kate Murphy called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. in Room 212, middle level of Chatham Borough Hall. Chrwmn. Murphy announced that all legal notices had been posted for this meeting.

The roll call was taken:

Name	Present	Absent
Kate Murphy (Chair)	X	
John Tancredi	X	
Ben Lampert		X
Kevin Murphy		X
John S. Dey	X	
Steve Cheng		X
Pat Soteropoulos	X	
Councilman Len Resto	X	
Kyle Muir		X
Torri Van Wie		X
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Also present:

Dr. Rozella G. Clyde, member of the Borough's Green Team

Public Comment

There was none.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the January 10, 2018 EC meeting were approved as amended.

Liaison Reports

Planning Board

In Mrs. Van Wie's absence, Ms. Holler noted that the February 7, 2018 Board meeting had been cancelled. The next meeting Planning Board meeting will be held on February 21, 2018.

Borough Council

Council Member Resto reported that at the last meeting, Topology gave a presentation concerning redevelopment of Post Office Plaza. Topology explained their research showing that the plaza is in need of redevelopment. He stressed that eminent domain will not happen. Mayor Harris had informed Council Member Resto that any developers who may do construction in the plaza must follow green practices. Council Member Resto added that people have requested that some green spaces be provided by anyone who proposes a development in the plaza.

Council Member Resto also reported on the Borough Council's recent public discussion on vacating an existing pathway on Vine Street.

On other matters, Council Member Resto reported that the County, at the request of a resident, removed a mature 100-yr.-old oak tree. The County had never notified the Borough or the Shade Tree Commission that this tree would be removed. The County claimed that these type notifications were not in their procedures. Council Member Resto informed the County that those procedures should be changed.

Chwmn. Murphy asked what was the reason given for the removal of the tree.

Council Member Resto said the tree supposedly blocked the view of the resident when he exited the driveway. Council Member Resto felt a mirror could have been installed to give the resident a view of oncoming traffic. The police had informed him that this particular tree had never been a contributing factor in any traffic accident.

Council Member Resto reminded Commissioners that a public meeting for the redevelopment of Post Office Plaza will be held on March 20th.

Pilgrim Pipeline

Council Member Resto reported that the pipeline issue is "silent, but not dead".

Sustainable Jersey Silver Certification

Chwmn. Murphy reported that the Green Team held a meeting with Mayor Harris on January 30th. An outline of activities was created. Council Member Resto noted that Dr. Clyde has offered her time to help the Green Team, after she returns from an April vacation.

NJ Mayor's Climate Summit

Chwmn. Murphy reported on the Climate Summit that she had attended. She felt that the Summit was very well done. Chwmn. Murphy noted that Mrs. Van Wie has written an article about the Climate Summit for the Chatham Courier. Mrs. Van Wie's article describes what the Chatham High School students had learned from this summit.

Ms. Soteropoulos and Council Member Resto noted the dates of some future summits.

April Community Eco Event

Chwmn. Murphy noted that Mrs. Van Wie was interested in holding this educational event. Some thought was given as to whether this event could be held at the Library or at one of the schools. This matter will be revisited at the next Commission meeting.

Commissioners briefly discussed the Sustainable Jersey Gold Standard.

Turf fields and pesticides

Ms. Soteropoulos summarized her research on TruGreen. The only ingredient that TruGreen uses for pesticide is grub control. However, TruGreen is using a number of ingredients for weed

control. Ms. Soteropoulos had concerns about some of TruGreen's ingredients and the timing of TruGreen's spraying on the athletic fields. Council Member Resto will be talking with Mrs. Nauta, Board of Recreation Coordinator, and Mr. Torello, DPW Director, about the spraying of the fields. He will be in touch with Ms. Soteropoulos on this matter.

Quiet Communities

Chwmn. Murphy reported that she and Mr. Dey have participated in conference calls with Jamie Banks, who is with the non-profit organization, Quiet Communities, and Julie Kolehhouse-Diplas. Mr. Dey felt Quiet Communities had a good idea, however, it may be premature. Council Member Resto agreed with Mr. Dey's comment, adding that Quiet Communities would have to give a presentation to the Borough Council.

Dr. Clyde asked if the leaf-blower situation had to do with private use or commercial use.

Council Member Resto answered both. He noted on the municipal level (DPW), it had been discussed at the last Commission meeting. Commissioners had felt that there may be enough money in the budget to purchase electrical leaf-blowers.

Mr. Tancredi pointed out that the electric leaf-blowers may not be a viable option; however, he believed that the DPW will give these types of blowers their best shot. He also noted that the Commission has offered to buy the extra batteries to keep these electric blowers in operation.

Mr. Dey reported that he had emailed Mr. Williams, the Borough Administrator, asking for the Borough's options for electric-blowers. The DPW could try these electric-blowers for a season and report back to the Commission on the results of these blowers.

Dr. Clyde suggested that the decibel levels of these electric-blowers be reviewed.

Mr. Tancredi stated that the electric-blowers operate 20 decibels less than the gas-powered blowers. Ear protection will still be recommended.

Related to this topic, Mr. Dey brought up the research he had done on the certification of landscapers doing lawn maintenance. Mr. Dey had pulled up on the computer Rutgers University and discovered the event on this topic had been cancelled. Mr. Dey suggested the Commission create a certification of best practices for lawn maintenance and see if the local landscapers will participate in this program.

Commissioners discussed the ear protection gear that local landscape workers should be wearing. Some of the workers do not wear this protective covering over their ears. The DPW workers are required to wear ear protection when operating leaf-blowers. Mr. Tancredi pointed out that the Borough cannot mandate this type of protection for private landscape companies.

Mr. Tancredi suggested an educational program on leaf-blowers could be held for the public.

Chwmn. Murphy suggested this program could be included in the April Community EcoEvent.

Facebook Page

Chrwmn. Murphy asked Council Member Resto if the Commission was allowed to have a Facebook Page. He answered yes.

Boy Scouts

Mr. Tancredi had nothing to report.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Tancredi asked if any of the Sustainable Grant money was still available for the Commission.

Council Member Resto stated that he still has to check with Janice Piccolo about that matter; however, he felt that grant money was now gone. There is usually a time-limit in place,

Chwmn. Murphy reminded Council Member Resto that another Quiet Communities conference call is scheduled for this Friday at 8:30.

Mr. Tancredi asked if the Commission had done anything further on the Home Energy Assessments. Council Member Resto said the Commission will have to go through a RFQ to qualify the company that the Commission will recommend to residents.

Dr. Clyde brought up that Earth Day 2018 is on April 22nd. The theme is plastics. She gave Commissioners the website address for Earth Day. Perhaps the Commission could think about holding their April Community EcoEvent on Earth Day.

At 9:03 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 14, 2018, 8:00 p.m., Room 212, middle level, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

