

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

March 10, 2021

8:00 p.m.

Chairman Torri Van Wie called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m.

Commissioners were present at this virtual meeting by way of Zoom. Chrnm. Van Wie read aloud the Statement of Adequate Notice. All legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Torri Van Wie, Chrmn.	X	
Patricia Soteropoulos, Vice Chrmn.	X	
Benjamin Lampert	X	
Joseph Treloar	X	
Yana Doyle	X	
Susie Robertson	X	
Rozella Clyde	X	
Ernest Dorflinger	X	
Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Public Comments

There were none.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

The Commission approved the January 13, 2021 Shade Tree Meeting minutes as submitted.

The Commission approved the February 10, 2021 Shade Tree Meeting minutes as amended.

Reports/Pending Business

Planning Board – Torri Van Wie

Mrs. Van Wie reported that the Board had listened to plans proposing a new yoga studio to open on North Passaic Ave. Mrs. Van Wie had asked the owner if there would be any asbestos removal. The owner stated that there was not going to be any. Mrs. Van Wie had asked about the efficiency of the proposed heating system to be installed. The owner testified that everything will be done to follow extreme energy conservation measures.

Mrs. Van Wie also reported that the Planning Bd. will discuss the handicap access measures being undertaken by local businesses.

At Mrs. Van Wie's request, Council Member Mathiasen gave an update on the River Road Development Project. Council Member Mathiasen reported that the Financial Agreement has been approved by the Borough Council. The application will be coming soon before the Planning Board. Council Member Mathiasen noted that no public comments had been made on this project at the Council Meeting, probably because three public hearings had been held to keep the residents in the loop about this development.

Borough Council – Council Member Mathiasen

Council Member Mathiasen reported that the Borough Council approved their new storm water regulations that were based on Best Practices. Mr. DeNave informed her that these regulations are amendable if Commissioners had any recommendations regarding stormwater. The Council also approved an increase in the Borough's solid waste bills. This is because the recycling costs are now extremely high. One more year remains on the recycling contract. Borough Council is looking at other options for recycling.

Council Member Mathiasen noted that a survey has been made available to learn residents' views on local recreational facilities.

Council Member Mathiasen also reported that the Borough budget is coming up soon. The Borough Department heads have been asked to keep sustainability in mind as one of the goals and objectives for their budget requests.

Dr. Clyde discussed an article she had recently sent to Mrs. Van Wie about Westport CT buying a Tesla 3 police cruiser for their police department. This cruiser has a 310-mile battery charge. Dr. Clyde suggested this information be forwarded on to the Chatham Police Department. Dr. Clyde reviewed the benefits of these electrical vehicles, financial and otherwise, for a police department.

Mr. Treloar felt that Tesla's Model X may be the best choice for a police car, since it carries such weighty equipment. He reported that electric police cars should last five times the number of miles, longer than a regular police car.

Council Member Mathiasen noted that Mr. Williams, the Borough Administrator, is not asking for any new police cars for this year's budget; however, she will forward the information on to him. She reminded the Commission that Chatham Borough has a small police force. Every police car has to be able to function many jobs. When police cars are stationed at an accident or crime scene, many times all their lights and equipment will be going for hours. Their energy cannot drain away.

Council Member Mathiasen also felt that most would not enjoy seeing their property tax payments going towards a Tesla police car.

Chrmn. Van Wie suggested this topic be re-visited at a future meeting.

Returning to the stormwater regulations, Dr. Clyde said she would like to have Mr. DeNave, the Borough Engineer, attend an EC meeting to discuss the impervious coverage situation.

Energy Aggregations Update

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that she and Council Member Mathiasen had met with the consultant who is responsible for bringing together the Hunterton Co-op which consists of 17 municipalities that are joining together to get renewable energy. A municipality can opt-in or opt-out of this program. Chatham Borough can join whatever it wants. The requisite first step is for the Borough to pass an ordinance to hire an energy consultant. Chrmn. Van Wie would like the Borough to pass this ordinance, thereby giving the town the option of joining this Co-op.

Council Member Mathiasen believed the ordinance could be done in the next couple of months. She had reported to the Borough Council that she and Chrmn. Van Wie had met with this consultant, who is known by Mr. DeNave. She hopes a phone conference can be arranged in the future with this consultant.

After further discussion, Council Member Mathiasen said she would go ahead and set up this phone conference. Chrmn. Van Wie is invited to join in this phone conference.

EV Charging Station Ordinance Update

Ms. Soteropoulos explained that the ordinance had been reviewed by the Borough Planner. The planner had some questions for Mr. DeNave. After Mr. DeNave answers the questions, the ordinance will go to the Borough attorney. After the Borough Attorney reviews the ordinance, it will go before the Borough Council.

Climate Action Resolution & Plan

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that a sub-group meeting was held from the Environmental Commissions of Chatham and Madison, and the NJSMA group. Discussions, pro and con, have been held to decide whether time should be spent to do a Climate Action Plan.

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that Mr. Dorflinger has come up with a good resolution that, if approved, basically brings to the fore-front the

possibility of climate focus practices being followed across all branches of the Borough and their activities.

Mr. Dorflinger explained that the resolution's goal would be to broaden awareness of climate action. Discussion can be held to see how people feel about climate action and what education would be needed to get Chatham residents on board.

On the Zoom screen, Chrmn. Van Wie put up a graph showing the numbers that the two Chathams must meet in order to achieve their emission reductions. So far, the Chatham have just reached only 200 EVs. We have to reach 1700 EVs in order to reach our NJ mandated 80% by 2025.

Chrmn. Van Wie felt that the real reason of writing the Climate Action Plan is to drill down on buildings, fleets, energy, and create numbers. It was Chrmn. Van Wie's hope to reach 5% as an objective for this year.

Dr. Clyde said the word about EVs should be sent out to people.

Chrmn. Van Wie said a serious effort should made to reach 12% emission reductions.

Chrmn. Van Wie stated that she has reviewed the Princeton Plan. She has created a template which was overlaid by Peter Freed's template.

Chrmn. Van Wie explained in simple terms what a Climate Action Plan was and how it would protect Chatham Borough. It was Chrmn. Van Wie's hope that Chatham Borough will work hard at making the Climate Action Plan work. She and Mr. Dorflinger are willing to work on it and hopefully more Commissioners will become involved.

NJMSA

Chrmn. Van Wie discussed holding an info session on the Climate Action Plan, and inviting mayors, and interested Council Members from the four neighboring towns.

Chrmn. Van Wie brought up Energy Aggregation. Morris Township has entered the Hunterdon Co-Op. The Info Session will be sponsored by NJSMA to discuss the Climate Action Plan and Resolution. Council Member Catherine Wilson could be asked to help with this discussion. Energy Aggregation will be the second topic for this gathering.

Regarding another NJSMA activity, Chrmn. Van Wie reported that all of the towns involved will hold a June meeting. Updates will be given on all of the projects undertaken by the different NJSMA groups.

Acceptance of yearly goals

Dr. Clyde discussed the progress made on the document giving the EC's Vision & Mission Statement.

Council Member Mathiasen made some suggestions. She pointed out this document will help the Commission focus on what they want to accomplish.

After further discussion, Dr. Clyde made that the Commission accept these yearly goals with the amendments made tonight. Ms. Doyle seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners voted aye. The motion passed.

Sustainable Jersey update/discussion

Dr. Clyde reviewed the three ordinances that the Mayor and Borough Council must pass for the Borough to obtain Sustainable Jersey. Janice Piccolo will help with this process. The Green Team will be meeting next Tuesday.

Calendar of April Earth Month Events

Dr. Clyde reviewed the five events being held in April to celebrate Earth Month. The first event will be a zoom program on coyotes sponsored by the Great Swamp Association.

Another Earth month event, the Tri-Town Garage Sale was explained by Ms. Robertson. In order for a homeowner to participate, a fee was paid, and application was filled out and their residence would be included in the Tri-Town garage sale map. The fees collected would be donated to the Great Swamp Watershed Association. Another Tri-Town Garage Sale will be held again in October.

At 9:35 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission meeting will be held on April 14, 2021, 8:00 p.m. It will be a virtual meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

cc: Mayor Thaddeus Kobylarz
Chatham Township Environmental Commission