

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

June 8, 2022

8:00 p.m.

Chrmn. 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. Mrs. 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	
Pat Soteropoulos, Vice Chrmn.	X	
Rozella Clyde	X	
Joseph Treloar		X
Ben Lampert		X
Yana Doyle	X	
Susie Robertson		X
Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Public Comment

Valerie Clark, a resident, reported that not all the businesses in downtown Chatham do not participate at all in recycling practices. She has seen in some of the dumpsters of these businesses, containing not just the regular garbage but cardboard boxes, cans, and bottles. Are these businesses excluded from following recycling practices?

Council Member Mathiasen answered that it is her understanding that these businesses are required to separate out their bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard. She will double-check the ordinance on this situation. Council Member Mathiasen pointed out that the municipality is not required to collect all these items from businesses. A private scavenger would have to be hired by these businesses.

Ms. Clark stated she understood the collection end of it; however, shouldn't there be a separate dumpster for at least cardboard. She pointed out that she has seen this disorganized recycling going on for quite a while and it's been reported to the Mayor and some of the Council Members.

Council Member Mathiasen suggested the Commission send an email to Glen Turi, the Borough's Zoning Official and also Steve Williams, Borough Administrator, asking for clarification on what is required for these businesses and their recycling.

Ms. Clark answered that Mr. Turi and Mr. Williams have already been included in various emails with photos of the various dumpsters in question.

Council Member Mathiasen stated she will check with Mr. Turi and Mr. Williams to see what the status was on this situation. She pointed out that some of the businesses do not have a separate recycling place to dispose of bottles and cans.

Ms. Clark expressed more concerns about the contents of the dumpsters, particularly the cardboard boxes sharing the same space as thrown-out food, bottles, and cans.

Chrmn. Van Wie felt that it should then be made clear to the local food businesses that better recycling practices, particularly with cardboard, has to be followed.

Council Member Mathiasen suggested this topic be included in next month's agenda. In the meantime, she will reach out to the Borough Attorney for a summary on the ordinance regarding recycling and dumpsters. She will also touch base with Mr. Turi, the Zoning Official. Council Member Mathiasen felt the disorganized recycling was really a result of laziness.

At Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos's suggestion, Council Member Mathiasen will forward the summary of the ordinance to Commissioners.

Chrmn. Van Wie noted a course of action could then be decided on. The first step could be a verbal conversation with the businesses in question. Commissioners could find out whether these businesses have a designated bin for the deposit of cardboard and other items.

This topic will be on next month's agenda.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Dr. Clyde made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2022 EC meeting as submitted. Council Member Mathiasen seconded the motion. The minutes of May 11, 2022 were approved as submitted.

Mrs. Doyle made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2022 EC meeting as submitted. Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos seconded the motion. The minutes of April 13, 2022 were approved as submitted.

Reports/Pending Business

Borough Council Liaison Report

Council Member Mathiasen reported that revisions to the plans associated with Post Office Plaza have gone through the Chatham Borough Planning Board and the Borough Council. She didn't have the latest in terms of the exact contract with the affordable housing developer. There is a sub-committee that is working on the approval of this contract. An RPF process was done to find a suitable developer. Only one has responded. Council Member Mathiasen noted that a charrette still has to be held with the public to decide on the design. On June 22nd, the Borough goes before the Judge to find out whether these plans are in compliance with the Consent Agreement.

On other matters, Council Member Mathiasen noted that there is a lot of controversy on Joint Recreation currently. A meeting is being held tonight.

Council Member Mathiasen announced that a Borough Clerk has been hired. This candidate has worked as a Municipal Clerk before. She also has land use experience.

Returning to Post Office Plaza, Chrmn. Van Wie and Council Member Mathiasen discussed Madison's recent affordable housing structure which will have close to net zero in regard to energy. Would that be doable financially for Post Office Plaza?

Council Member Mathiasen indicated she would like to meet with Rachel Ehrlich, Council Member of Madison, and see how that net zero energy was accomplished. Council Member Mathiasen felt the biggest issue would be the cost for the Post Office Plaza building. As it gets closer to the design of the building, it should be certain that the units all have updated energy-star appliances, good insulation and good windows. Summing up, Council Member Mathiasen said she will arrange a meeting with Council Member Erlich who has a great deal of experience on zero energy projects.

Planning Board Liaison Report

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that conversations will begin with the Planning Board about the Borough's Master Plan – whether it should be completely re-written or

re-written in a significant way. This topic was to be discussed at the June 1st Planning Board meeting; however, that meeting was cancelled for some reason.

Council Member Mathiasen said she will find out what is going with this matter. She was aware that Chrmn. Favate had been concerned about the cost of doing a new Master Plan. Council Member Mathiasen pointed out that there is money in the budget for up-dating the Natural Resources Inventory in the Master Plan. She pointed out that the last Master Plan had some ideas that are completely out of step with today's thinking. She would like to see it entirely re-done. Somehow the money can be found for this project.

Dr. Clyde agreed that the Borough should go back to square-one, creating a whole new Master Plan, looking at other municipalities that are in similar size to Chatham Borough.

Chrmn. Van Wie suggested a subcommittee be formed to look into formulating a new Master Plan. A member of the Environmental Commission should serve on this subcommittee as a pre-cursor.

Regarding the Natural Resources Inventory, Dr. Clyde felt that more areas would need to be covered besides the Borough's flora and fauna.

Mrs. Doyle pointed out that the new Natural Resources Inventory should be done before the Master Plan project because it's needed in time to meet the deadline of the next Sustainable Jersey which will be in Spring 2024.

Mrs. Doyle believed the Borough Council would have to pass a resolution to give the green light to the Environmental Commission to work on this new Natural Resources Inventory.

Chrmn. Favate asked Mrs. Doyle to email her that requirement, so such a resolution can be added to the next Borough Council agenda.

Related to this, Chrmn. Van Wie noted that Dr. Clyde had shone some Budget numbers from a Borough Council meeting that revealed the Environmental Commission had a budget allocation of \$111,000. Is this accurate?

Council Member Mathiasen explained that some of the federal Covid recovery money had been allocated into this year's municipal budget. Chatham Borough had set aside about \$150,000. A specific conversation will be held to carefully

decide on where to spend that sum of money. Council Member Mathiasen felt that money could be used to do a proper Master Plan.

Mrs. Doyle suggested the topic of flooding should be included in the future Natural Resources Inventory. She and Dr. Clyde discussed the most efficient way to download updated flood maps.

Council Member Mathiasen suggested Sustainable Jersey could be asked if they had a sample resolution where the Council would authorize the Commission to go ahead and work on a Natural Resources Inventory.

Charging Station Update

Chrmn. Van Wie reported, in regard to the installation of a charger at the Municipal Building, George will do a site visit on Tuesday, June 21st. He should be able to give an estimate on the installation. Chrmn. Van Wie noted that the Commission has the funds allocated for this installation. George, at Bryan Electric East, will help the Commission to decide on the cheapest and most feasible location for the charger. Council Member Mathiasen suggested that Steve Williams, the Borough Administrator, and Tony Torello, the Director of Public Works participate in this visit. She will talk with Janice Piccolo about the funding issue for the chargers.

Dr. Clyde noted that she has looked at the three different kinds of networks for charging stations. She believed the Electrify America seems to produce the fastest chargers. Motorists can use their credit cards on them. Perhaps some of the local business owners could think about installing chargers in their vicinity.

Chrmn. Van Wie asked if any of the Commissioners would be willing to write the grant for the fast-charging station.

Dr. Clyde offered to work with Joe Treloar on writing the grant. She will reach out to Mr. Treloar to see if he would be willing to work on this project with her.

Gold Star Energy – status update

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that NJ MAS and the Madison Environmental Commission are now inviting residents to attend an upcoming webinar on Tuesday, June 21st, 7:30 p.m. Frank Curran of Green Solar will speak to residents about solar panels that track the travels of the sun, instead of staying in one place.

Chrmn. Van Wie also reported that a meeting was held with the Madison-Chatham Joint Sewage facility. The facility is moving forward with the grid concept of putting up solar panels at that location. She felt that Mayor Kobylarz seemed enthusiastic about this project. Chrmn. Van Wie asked if someone from the Commission would attend the regular meetings at the Joint Sewage Plant to make sure the solar panel project does not fall by the wayside.

Dr. Clyde noted that she has been waiting 4 years to take a tour of the Joint Sewage facility. She asked Council Member Mathiasen if this could happen in the fall.

Council Member Mathiasen said either a tour could be scheduled; however, the Joint Sewage meetings are always open to the public. Hopefully these meetings are now in-person, not by Zoom.

Chrmn. Van Wie offered to send Dr. Clyde the email of Chris Manak, the Director of the Joint Sewage Plant. Dr. Clyde can arrange a time for a tour with Mr. Manak.

Madison Borough's Environmental Check-list

Chrmn. Van Wie noted that the check-list is four pages long, very detailed. She asked Commissioners how this check-list should be presented to the Borough Planning Board.

Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos asked Chrmn. Van Wie to email her the checklist which she will then give to Greg Xikes, her husband who belongs to the Planning Board. Chrmn. Van Wie will copy Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos in as well.

Council Member Mathiasen pointed that the checklist is really a Land Use issue. She noted that Planning Board is also looking into updating the Borough Code with the help of Glen Turi, the Borough Zoning Official. Mr. Turi has found things that are problematic in the Code. The checklist will be the list of environmental considerations to be taken into account when a property is being developed or re-developed in the Borough.

Chrmn. Van Wie suggested that Commissioners review the checklist before the next meeting, and think of any corrections or suggestions. The checklist can be included in next month's agenda. The final version can be forwarded to Mr. Xikes who could present it to the Planning Board.

To speed this project along, Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos suggested that Commissioners, on an individual basis, email their corrections and comments to Chrmn. Van Wie. Chrmn. Van Wie and another Commissioner could review these responses. Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos offered to review the corrected check-list with Chrmn. Van Wie. The finished product can be given to Mr. Xikes to present to the Planning Board.

Fishawack Day – June 11, 2022

Dr. Clyde reported that the Commission's table has a designated space in the south parking lot at Railroad Plaza. She noted that Mrs. Robertson has made some excellent exhibit and panels. Mr. Treloar has seed packets to give out. Kid-friendly giveaways will be available. Used crayons will be collected. There will be a free raffle for Paw Patrol's "Rocky & his Recycling Truck". Dr. Clyde reported that a good schedule of volunteers has been organized to staff the EC table and displays. Lisa Allocco from the Green Team will be helping out. All is needed is good weather that day.

At 9:12 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission Meeting will be on Wednesday, July 13, 2022, 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

cc: Mayor Thaddeus Kobylarz
Chatham Twp. Environmental Commission