

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

December 14, 2022

8:00 p.m.

Chrmn. Susan Robertson called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. in Room 301, Upper Level, Chatham Municipal Building. Mrs. Robertson read aloud the Statement of Adequate Notice. All legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Susan Robertson	X	
Pat Soteropoulos	X	
Rozella Clyde	X	
Joseph Treloar	X	
Ben Lampert	X	
Yana Doyle	X – arrived at 8:30 p.m.	
Allison Slater	X – arrived at 8:15 p.m.	
Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen		X
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Val Clark, an interested resident, was also present.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos made a motion to approve the follow EC draft minutes with the suggested edits made by Dr. Clyde:

October 12, 2022

November 9, 2022

A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present approved these two sets of minutes. Mr. Lampert abstained from voting on the November 9th minutes because he was absent from that meeting.

Public Comments

Val Clark reported she was present at tonight’s meeting to hear Council Member Mathiasen’s report on food waste. She felt that a year from now there will be no incentive in the Borough to compost. A lack of interest in recycling will result. Ms. Clark felt that currently the only incentive for recycling is to keep the squirrels out of the green garbage bags.

Ms. Clark also expressed concern that undesirable items will soon be put out for bulk pick-up, such as tires, technical waste, TVs, etc.

Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos didn’t think a TV set could fit into the new garbage bins. She also pointed out a number of residents pay certain companies to have their compost taken away. Vice

Chrmn. Soteropoulos felt that most people in the Borough were very committed to the recycling process.

Chrmn. Robertson noted that people will decide on one of the 3 sizes given for their garbage bin. The actual pricing for the new garbage system still has to be decided on. Chrmn. Robertson agreed with Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos's belief that most Chatham people are conscientious about recycling.

Mr. Treloar explained to Ms. Clark that currently every household in the Borough receives the same Solid Waste bill; however, the green trash bags – the size and number used by a household varies. The green bags cover the tipping fees. Using these new different-sized bins, the amount of garbage produced by a household will become more evident. The cost of having the garbage company come to your home to pick up the green bags is due to go up \$300 in the next year. A price per gallon, will now be charged instead.

Mr. Treloar noted that the solid waste bill can be sent out on a quarterly basis, like the Borough water bill. He and Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos explained how the size of a bin can influence a family's solid waste bill. When done right, composting can reduce a garbage bill. A smaller bin would suffice.

Ms. Clark felt that food waste should go in a landfill.

Mr. Treloar disagreed, explaining how methane is produced in a landfill. He believed that composting is the best way to make the food waste return to the earth. No methane will be escaping.

Chrmn. Robertson invited Ms. Clark to attend next month's Commission meeting when Council Member Mathiasen will be present. This topic could be further explored. The Commission has a number of other topics to cover for tonight's meeting.

EC-GT Membership – Chrmn. Robertson

Chrmn. Robertson noted a Resolution has to be presented at the Reorganization Meeting of Chatham Borough in January, naming the members of the Borough's Green Team. Chrmn. Robertson needs these names for the Borough Clerk by this Friday.

Dr. Clyde reported that she had recently submitted a plug for interested residents to consider joining the Green Team. Those interested can contact her.

Dr. Clyde reviewed with Chrmn. Robertson six names for the Green Team. Some names were removed, others were added.

Chrmn. Robertson gave the list of names to Dr. Clyde to do any further updates.

Planning Board Liaison Report – Chrmn. Robertson

Chrmn. Robertson reported that the Planning Board recently memorialized the resolution approving the extension to be made to Charley's Aunt Restaurant. She briefly reviewed the

application with Commissioners. Chrmn. Robertson had suggested some energy-saving measures the restaurant could take in their renovations.

Chrmn. Robertson noted that in the new year, the Historic Preservation Commission will be reviewing the plans for the affordable housing units for Post Office Plaza. The Planning Board will then review the plans.

Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos suggested that the Commission could create a list of energy-saving installations that could be done for the units at Post Office Plaza.

After further discussion, Chrmn. Robertson suggested a letter be done in January to the developer giving ideas on how to save energy. Dr. Clyde suggested solar paneling could be installed in the parking spaces around the new units. The panels would also protect vehicles from inclement weather.

Food waste - composting

Dr. Clyde reported on a current webinar she recently attended on food waste. Mrs. Doyle pointed out that New Jersey is so far behind on food waste and composting. She understood that community composting is cost prohibitive; however, the state won't do anything until the towns push for such programs. The towns should try and make it more cost effective. Java has municipal funded programs.

Chrmn. Robertson and Ms. Slater discussed possible drop-off locations for compost. Ms. Slater has reached out to a number of local entities to see if a community drop-off location could be set up. The drop-off location needs to be unlocked. The people who sign-up for the drop-off location are the ones who pay for it. Ms. Slater suggested a multi-town meeting could be held with Java.

Ms. Slater suggested a separate meeting in January to discuss this matter further. Commissioners felt that would be a good idea.

"Bear Aware" presentation at the Chatham Library

Chrmn. Robertson reported that Jessica Romeo from Chatham Township has reached out to her and proposed a bear awareness program at the Library this coming February. They had tried holding such an event a while back, but Covid had impacted the attendance. Chrmn. Robertson noted that the Commission has been asked by Ms. Romeo to share the cost of the program (around \$80) to be presented by the Morris County Park Commission. Ms. Doyle and Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos discussed possibly recording a tweet to alert residents of this program and boost attendance. Chrmn. Robertson concluded that the EC will pay for half of this presentation. The invoice will be sent to Janice Piccolo.

Charging station(s) – Mr. Treloar

Mr. Treloar will save his update for the new year.

Mr. Treloar and Dr. Clyde discussed at length what level of charger should be installed in the Borough. Mr. Treloar felt that Level 3 would be too expensive. Level 2 would be a more feasible choice.

Environmental Resource Inventory – Chrmn. Robertson & Mrs. Doyle

Chrmn. Robertson reported that Mrs. Doyle is looking at the existing inventory and is deciding what material should be kept and what should be eliminated. Chrmn. Robertson noted that in the new year, the EC can decide what research they can do on their own, and what areas professional help would be needed. A proposal for the new ERI will be created in the new year. She noted that the EC has about \$5500 in their budget. Chrmn. Robertson reported that the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment will be done by Kendra Lelie, the Borough Planner, and some of that material can be reproduced in the ERI. This project will be re-visited in the new year.

How Green Are You?”

On other matters, Ms. Slater reported on a recent meeting of the new Chamber of Commerce, which includes businesses from both the Borough and the Township. About 50 businesses were in attendance. At the meeting Ms. Slater represented the Borough Environmental Commission. In the goody bags distributed to attendees were copies of the letter explaining “How Green are You?” The green footprint buttons were given out. Ms. Slater also gave a little talk on businesses being green. All in all, the attendees were very enthusiastic at this gathering.

Chrmn. Robertson confirmed with Ms. Slater that on the EC website she will be putting up the business names who have committed to green practices. The gentleman who runs the AT & T business on Main Street will be organizing a Directory of Businesses soon. Chrmn. Robertson thanked Ms. Slater for representing the Environmental Commission.

Focus for 2023

Chrmn. Robertson stated that more members are needed for the Green Team, especially to help with the upcoming Sustainable Jersey project. Dr. Clyde reported that she had posted requests for additional Green Team members on the Community Forum’s Facebook page.

Mrs. Doyle suggested that the EC consider partnering with other communities and environmental groups. Maybe high school or college students who are interested in the environment could be invited to participate.

Dr. Clyde discussed the Environmental Fair that was held in the Madison schools.

Before adjourning, Chrmn. Robertson briefly reviewed the EC’s goals/projects for 2023: the Environmental Inventory, the Sustainable Jersey certification, educating the public on recycling,

At 9:07 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary