

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

July 11, 2018

8:00 p.m.

Chairman Kate Murphy called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. in Room 212, middle level, 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, Chrwmn.	X	
John Tancredi		X
Ben Lampert		X
John Dey	X	
Patricia Soteropoulos	X	
Kevin Murphy	X	
Torri Van Wie	X	
Joseph Treloar	X	
Kyle Muir		X
Council Member Len Resto	X	
Liz Holler, Minutes Secretary	X	

Also present:

Rozella Clyde, member of the Borough Green Team

Yana Doyle

Public Comments

There were none

Motion to Adopt the Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Van Wie made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the June 13, 2018 Environmental Commission meeting as amended. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as amended.

Liaison Reports

Planning Board

Mrs. Van Wie discussed the LEED certification the Commission hopes to have with the Planning Board regarding the Post Office Plaza Re-development. She felt it would be a good idea for the Commission to see the RFPs and RFQs as they go out. Mrs. Van Wie suggested that some Commissioners serve on the steering committee which will review all the submitted RFQs (Request for Qualifications). Council Member Resto felt that Mrs. Van Wie would be an excellent candidate to serve on the Steering Committee. He will speak with Councilman Hoffman about this matter.

Related to that topic, Mr. Treloar noted that there are certain requirements to obtain the gold star category for Sustainable Jersey. To reach that standard, an energy audit has to be done of what a town is using. That amount has to be reduced every certain number of years. Other activities have to be undertaken, such as solar-friendly zoning. Mandatory points for the gold certification could be earned by future buildings in town having solar paneling.

Mrs. Van Wie pointed out that everything has been done to reach the utmost in energy efficiency at the municipal level. She felt that solar-friendly accomplishments would be the next step. Mrs. Van Wie explained a two-prong approach that the Borough could take: 1) Encouraging homeowners to put solar paneling on their houses and 2) Look into energy aggregation in the residential sector.

Mr. Treloar brought up the possibility of making the construction permit process easier for those property owners who are considering installing solar panels.

Mr. Dey questioned how effective would solar paneling be in Chatham Borough with the Borough's tree canopy.

Dr. Clyde suggested aerial photos could be taken of areas in the Borough where the tree canopy may be conducive to solar paneling.

Mr. Treloar discussed solar companies that lease solar paneling. Also, he had read in a recent NY Times article, that solar paneling increases the value of a house.

A suggestion was made tht Mrs. Van Wie write an educational article discussing the different solar options, vendors and the different costs involved.

Commissioners discussed the possibility of solar installations in one of the school parking lots and/or the train station parking lot. Council Member Resto pointed out that the Chatham train station parking lot belonged to the Borough.

Mr. Treloar discussed how alternative energy companies operate.

Mrs. Van Wie explained how a German town earned money by selling their energy back. She felt revenue could be generated by post office plaza. Either well-considered solar energy could be installed on the plaza or another means of energy efficiency. Mr. Treloar brought up that some people would be concerned about the solar paneling being unattractive. Another concern would be whether the paneling would be adequately sealed to prevent leakage.

Mrs. Van Wie suggested a write-up be put on the Commission's website or newsletter addressing people's concerns about solar paneling.

Chrwmn. Murphy said this issue will be re-visited at a future meeting.

Borough Council

Council Member Resto had nothing new to report.

Organic Landscaping

Council Member Resto reported on the concerns that have come up regarding using organics on town properties. Borough officials would like to see how organic treatments will work on the Borough Hall lawn and the Library lawn. A push-back resulted, claiming that just because an organic treatment was being used, didn't mean it was necessarily safe and effective. Information could be obtained for other Council Members clarifying which organic landscaping means are considered good and which are bad.

Mr. Dey pointed out that the Borough did not follow all the recommendations made by Lincoln Landscaping. The aeration and the top-dressing wasn't done due to budget constraints. The Borough Hall lawn and the Library lawn have been mowed shorter than the recommended three inches. Mr. Torello, DPW Director, had informed Mr. Dey that he had instructed the lawn service to cut at three inches. Burn-out on the grass is now happening. Council Member Resto said he would contact Administrator Williams and DPW Director Torello that, when cut, these lawns have to be kept at three inches.

Ms. Soteropoulos asked Council Member Resto to contact Mr. Torello about the aeration being done on these lawns. She had understood that the Borough DPW would be doing the aeration, not the lawn service.

Mr. Dey brought up two possible options in the future - do nothing to the grass or go organic.

Commissioners discussed putting together a flier on the use of organics on lawns.

Mr. Murphy reported on the signs that have been put on the two lawns, explaining the treatments being done on the grass. Mr. Murphy had also written articles for the local papers about the lawn treatments and the non-treatments being done.

Summing up, Chwmn. Murphy stated that a flyer will be done on this subject. Lawn aeration will be addressed in the flyers.

Recycle Coach

Council Member Resto recommended a subcommittee be formed for Recycle Coach. He felt **Susie Robertson** would be a good leader. Council Member Resto felt that a definite decision has to be made on what items are recyclable and which aren't. He felt the Borough Calendar is not in sync with what the Morris County MUA puts out. Chwmn. Murphy noted that there will be a meeting with Recycle Coach representatives on July 18th, 10 a.m. at Borough Hall.

Sustainability Fair

Chwmn. Murphy noted that the Environmental Commission will have a table set up at the Fair. The Commission should think about what information they would like to have available on the table. Also for the Fair, Mrs. Van Wie reported on the contacts she had made with companies selling electric cars. One company was Jaguar. Mr. Treloar hoped Nissan could provide one of their electric cars. Chwmn. Murphy will be in touch with Commissioners to see who can help out the day of the Fair.

Environmental Commission Newsletter

Commissioners discussed how the newsletter could be put together. The newsletter could feature articles from the Commission's subcommittees. Starting out, the newsletter could be published once a year. Possibly, if there is a strong response from residents, additional issues can be generated. Chwmn. Murphy suggested that the newsletter focus on environmental matters on the local level. Council Member Resto felt that recycling would be a major interest.

Mrs. Van Wie offered to put together a survey monkey for people to indicate the topics that should be focused on in the newsletter. Commissioners discussed how to distribute the newsletter. Council Member Resto pointed out that many people follow the community forum on the Chatham Facebook. Mrs. Van Wie will work on the survey monkey.

Eco Film Series

Chwmn. Murphy suggested starting this program again. She and Mr. Treloar discussed the legalities of showing these eco documentaries at the Library. Mrs. Van Wie suggested that the Commission's survey monkey ask people what type of environmental films they would like to see.

Pilgrim Pipeline

There was nothing new to report.

Boy Scouts

There was no report at this time.

Miscellaneous

Commissioners decided to cancel their August meeting. (Later on, it was discovered in the Annual Resolution, that there was no Environmental Commission meeting scheduled for August 2018).

On other matters, Chwmn. Murphy reported that the Board of Recreation is hearing complaints from parents about the Community Rain Garden close to Memorial Park Pool. The parents felt that bugs from the garden are bothering their children playing in the pool. As a result, some parents indicated that they will stop going to the Memorial Pool. Chwmn. Murphy visited the rain garden area and didn't find any insects flying around. Council Member Resto offered to visit to observe see what is happening. Some other Commissioners may be joining him.

Before adjourning, Mr. Dey, who also serves on the Borough's Technology Commission, briefly reported on the See-Click & Fix-It program that is being considered for the Borough.

At 9:10 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 12, 2018, 8 p.m., Room 201, middle level, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Minutes Secretary

cc: Mayor Bruce Harris
Chatham Twp. Environmental Commission