

Rahway Environmental Commission

MINUTES

Thursday, June 8, 2023

7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7: 06 p.m.

ROLL CALL

On a call of the roll, the following Commissioners and Officials were present:

Mr. Jeffrey Robinson, Chairman
Mr. Joseph Paszek, Commissioner
Mr. James Keane, Commissioner
Ms. Clea Carchia, Commissioner
Ms. Michelle Gil, Commissioner
Ms. Leslie Rippon, Second Alternate Commissioner
Ms. Gina Holmes, Clerk

Absent:

Ms. Denise Rolong, Commissioner
Mr. Eric Hausker, First Alternate Commissioner
Ms. Joanna Miles, Council Liaison

FLAG SALUTE

MINUTES

Approval of minutes of the Regular Meeting on Thursday, May 11, 2023

Motion: Commissioner Rippon

Seconded: Commissioner Keane

SPEAKER

None Scheduled

HEARING OF CITIZENS

Pranita Bijlani, 103 Princeton Ave., Rahway – spoke with Groundskeeper Elizabeth who has money to do a tiny forest and she suggested the Bramhall Road location and he will look into it.

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter from NJ Dept. of Agriculture re: Spotted Lanterfly Program – would like to see the host tree's (Tree of Heaven) removed instead of chemical usage. Commissioner Keane will speak with Rutgers and email everyone about what type of pesticide is recommended.

RVSA Notice of Violation – 665 E. Lincoln Ave., Rahway – Sunrise Pharmaceuticals failed to submit monthly discharge monitoring report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Jordan Parham resignation/Environmental Commission vacancy – hoping that Ms. Bijlani will finish his term.

UC Air Traffic Noise Advisory Board - (Chairman Robinson is the EC rep to this Board)
No Meeting

Bayway CAP – (Commissioner Paszek is the EC rep to this Board)
No Update

Letter to UC Commissioner - Bazega Park – on Agenda but nothing to report

Letter to UC Parks Director - Bramhall Rd. – Chairman Robinson spoke with Victoria Durham Drake and County is leaning leaving exactly how it is. Commissioner Rippon suggests that Mayor Giacobbe approach the County with our suggestions/plans. Commissioner Keane suggests to start with a tiny forest of flowering trees.

Rain Garden – rain garden looks good. The County hired someone to repair the Central Ave. bridge.

Legislative Update – Flood Hazard Rules/Inland Flood Hazard Rules on DEP website (400 pages) Floodplanes are update and New developers must address stormwater runoff with up to date forecast.

Proposed Keasbey Power Plant – Ms. Bijlani informed the Commission that there will be a rally, a march to Assemblyman Coughlin's office and on 6/13/23 at the Environmental Justice meeting

in Perth Amboy the DEP will be there taking comments. She will forward the rally information to everyone via email

NJ Electric Vehicle Ordinance – no update

Flowscoot electric scooter business – Chairman Robinson emailed the owner but still has not heard back from him about his application.

NEW BUSINESS

Fountain in pond at Rahway River Park – Chairman Robinson will ask Ms. Durham what the purpose of the fountain is, how it is powered and why the lights are on at night.

Shade Tree Committee – Bob Markey is back on the Committee. A member of the Environmental Committee must sit on the Shade Tree Committee and Commissioner Keane would like to fill the vacancy (Jordan Parham resigned).

City tree inventory:

6738 street trees
288 stumps
5764 vacant spots

The City should only plant the amount of tree's that can be maintained. Chairman Robinson suggested that everyone try www.treeequity.score which is an analyzer developed by America Forest. He noticed that Capobianco area was very low and will speak with Jennifer Wenson Muir. Commissioner Carchia suggested looking into another site with lots of useful information – I-treetools.org

RRWA updates:

Programming is finished for the Spring.

9/30/23 – 10/1/23 – Riverfest

Water & Pathogen monitoring starts on Thursday at 8:00 a.m. and will run for 18 weeks

Army Corps of Engineers are resuming to study projects to help with flooding. Commissioner Carchia attended a 2 day meeting where the Army Corps gave a presentation of the studies and on the 2nd day they broke into groups to discuss the studies.

SITE PLAN REVIEW/PLANNING & ZONING BOARD ITEMS

RDF Rahway Urban Renewal Project – Planning Board approved the plans however they do not have the necessary permits yet. The ground floor will be a parking garage.

Site application at old Corey & Ragan Funeral Home – Zoning Board meeting residents were there fighting against it and the Zoning Board denied the application.
Cannabis Retail site application – Planning Board meeting – 6/27/23

PAYMENT OF BILLS

None

ADJOURN

The next Regular meeting of the Environmental Commission will be held Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Merchant & Drovers Tavern, St. Georges Ave., Rahway. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Motion: Commissioner Carchia
Seconded: Commissioner Keane
Unanimously approved

At: 9:06 p.m.