

Environmental Commission

October 22, 2014

Attendees: Mark Herzberg, Joe Schaffer, Dorothy Rasmussen, Dan Hirsch, Angela Dohl, Brian Weeks, Sharon Burke, Beth Strom

The minutes from September were reviewed and approved.

**Communications:**

Mark reviewed three editions of the DEP bulletin, and there was nothing pertaining to Metuchen

Mark referred to an email regarding rally in support of the Open Space ballot question

Mark also referred to a mailing from ANJEC on the benefits of Open Space.

Mark noted that the County is progressing on the Open Space parcels for the Middlesex Greenway Extension.

**Fair:**

We reported on the Metuchen Country Fair held on October 18. We agreed that attendance was good – we had some good conversations with people who stopped by the tables – and several influential people stopped by and asked questions. They focused on the rain garden and there was a good amount of discussion about the Greenway being closed.

There was an even stream of people almost all day and people had suggestions about putting the Petition on-line. People also liked the pictures of the kayaking. They also said that we should have a Facebook page.

Jackie Gibson spoke to Beth at the fair about the rain garden and she thought we should go ahead with this at the Edgar School/Edgar Woods.

Joe also provided samples of pervious paver, which he has spoken about. Many people at the fair thought these were great ideas.

**Dismal Swamp:**

Brian said that they are going back into the swamp on Saturday – they expect 4 or 5 people and they will focus on the trees right under the surface of the water.

The county is taking action against the Pantagis Diner for extending their parking lot into the Greenway. The County is pretty good at enforcing the right of way.

**Sustainable New Jersey:**

Dorothy is planning a get together between the Environmental Commission, the Shade Tree Commission and the Green Team to look at the sustainable NJ application and figure out ways to get more points. They were looking at October 29, at 7:00pm.

We are currently at 85 points and need 150 points, and are looking at some additional priority programs, such as a prescription drop off program. We do not have an on-going program and don't have the resources in our Police Department. All we need to do is start a program to get people to take their old meds to Edison, who do have a program. This might get us the points.

Mark has spoken to Fred Hill about rigid recycling. Fred said that we do not have room for additional items and doesn't know who would take them.

Angela mentioned that Monroe held a Green Fair and distributed a booklet with lists of what they do and how to be more green. We can do this and put all of our information into a little booklet.

Brian did mention that he got some information from the town Administrator. They identified what was done and what was not done. They basically took the easy to do stuff, including lighting in some of the older town buildings like the Library, the DPW and the Senior Center.

There was a consensus that we should check to see if the HVAC and furnaces are within the direct install program.

#### **Planning:**

Dan said that he had nothing new to report. We discussed the Whole Foods project, and the basic layout – this should be coming before Planning in December. The issues that this location raises include storm water management and traffic control issues.

#### **Cornell Dubilier Site:**

Brian spoke some about the Cornell-Dubilier site in South Plainfield, at the end of Oak Tree Road not far from the Bound Brook. This is an EPA site and they are dealing with a groundwater issue. The soil at this site is contaminated with PCBs and other chemicals, including significant TCE contamination. They have determined that they cannot remediate the property, but can only try to reduce the spread. The EPA will re-route the Bound Brook and dig up the worst sediment.

The Middlesex Water Company gets some of their water from near these sites. They had been treating it and claims that it met standards. They have shut off these wells and the contamination has spread to the Park Avenue Well Field. One of the issues is that many polluters contribute to the pollution that exists there.

Angela said that Middlesex Water typically does a great job monitoring and treating the water and in deciding when to stop using the water.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07