



BOROUGH OF SHREWSBURY

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Minutes of the Reorganization Meeting Shrewsbury Environmental Commission

Wednesday, April 13, 2011

Municipal Building, Sycamore Avenue, Shrewsbury, New Jersey 07702

Chairwomen Jill Gwydir began the meeting at 7:35pm by leading the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Presiding Officer's Statement in compliance with P.L. 1975 c.231, the Public Open Meetings Act.

Roll Call was taken by Secretary Bonnie Brookes. Present were Chairwoman Jill Gwydir and members Susan Binns, Robin Blair, Kathy Loder-Murphy, Hans Zweerink, Associate Member Mark Deganhart, Alternative Member Dr. Patrick DiBello and Council Liaison Jeff DeSalvo.

Approval of Minutes from March 9, 2011 Meeting

A few corrections were brought to the attention of Board Secretary Brookes to be corrected. Ms. Loder-Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2011 meeting. Ms. Binns seconded the motion.

Zoning

Chairwoman Gwydir stated that there had been many applications for solar panels in the Borough this year. She explained that there was an outdated ordinance on 'utilitarian devices', which the zoning officer categorizes solar panels under, requiring such devices to be screened and covered from the public view, defeating the purpose of solar panels. She continued explaining that this also impacts the height and the angle that people are allowed to install solar panels. Chairwomen Gwydir explained that someone had requested to use solar panels as a fence, which is something to consider as it becomes incorporated into the master plan. She also pointed out that local businesses were starting to look at solar panels as an option including Colex on Shrewsbury Avenue who has them installed in a commercial area.

Chairwoman Gwydir expressed the fact she believed that beneficial energy systems should be allowed to be installed and stated that there was a statement from the State that said something to that effect but was aimed more at institutions. Mr. Deganhart asked if we could copy another municipality's ordinance in regards to solar panels to which Ms. Blair stated that it should be copied from the State's policy. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that the municipality should make it easier for residents to install solar panels.

Councilman DeSalvo stated that both the municipal complex and the school should have solar panels installed on them like Manalapan has on all their schools. He explained how the Sun Run is installed for free and the company then sells the electricity.

Chairwoman Gwydir suggested that the Environmental Commission should write a letter encouraging and recommending the Zoning Board rewrite this ordinance. A motion was made by Dr. DiBello, seconded by Ms.

Binns to open the meeting to the public for discussion.

Gigi Blair, 41 Obre Place, stated that she was having issues installing her solar panels through Trinity Solar. She explained that she had received a message that her construction permit was approved and work could be started. Then she received a call stating that she did not have zoning approval to have them installed because of ordinance 94-8:31A which regulates utilitarian devices with screens. Ms. Gigi Blair stated that a house on the corner of Samara and Sycamore Avenues had solar panels installed on their house and did not have the same issue with zoning in addition to her neighbors who removed their old solar panels from the 1990's because they were not efficient. She stated that she is going through an expensive variance process to have the Zoning Board make a decision. Ms. Gigi Blair referenced a ruling by the Corzine administration, S13-022, which states that solar panels are inherently good. She stated that the Christie administration in S9-21 on April 27, 2010, states that solar panels should be exempt from impervious coverage.

Chairwoman Gwydir stated that she would include this information in the Environmental Commission's letter to the Zoning Board.

Ms. Gigi Blair stated that she spoke to Borough Attorney, Martin Barger, and Zoning Board Attorney, Kevin Kennedy, in addition to meeting with Senator Jennifer Beck. She stated that she was glad that the Environmental Commission was going to write a letter to the Planning Board to draft a new ordinance.

Chairwoman Gwydir stated that the Borough should be encouraging change and this is how ordinances get changed. She stated that Silversteins on Broad Street also has panels. Councilman DeSalvo stated that he thought the variance was unnecessary. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that she would include other municipalities' ordinances with the letter to the Zoning Board. A motion was made by Ms. Kurdyla, seconded by Ms. Binns to close the meeting to the public.

Earth Day Fair

Various members offered their time and assistance to set up on Friday, April 29th. Ms. Robin Blair stated that the Garden Club will bring their own table to sell plants. Councilman DeSalvo stated that the Drug Alliance would be bringing their own table and the firehouse will provide four tables for the event. Various other members offered to bring tables to the event. Ms. Loder-Murphy questioned how many reusable bags the Commission wanted from Trader Joe's and stated that they would be donating a \$25 gift card. Ms. Binns responded between 50 and 100, as many as they are willing to donate. Ms. Robin Blair stated that Dean's Market was considering participation and is looking over the information. Chairwoman Gwydir stated that Bagel Masters will donate two dozen bagels. Ms. Binns explained that Bagel Masters normally donates three dozen and the Commission buys three dozen and the cream cheese, in addition to munchkins, for the refreshment area. She stated that they will not need water bottles just cups for water.

Ms. Binns stated the fair will be inside if the weather is not good but has it planned for outside with the tables set up in the boxes on the court yard and lunch for volunteers in the mediation room. Ms. Binns stated that gift cards and the reusable water bottles would make good raffle prizes. She stated that she will need people to help an hour before and after the event to help set up and clean up after.

Councilman DeSalvo stated the Girl Scouts will have an activity for the Fair and the Police will collect expired prescription drugs as well. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that Clean Ocean Action has a game at the Fair where the kids have to guess how long before pieces of trash decompose.

Ms. Binns listed the organizations that would be participating. She stated that biodegradable dog waste bags

had been donated along with Seventh Generation samples.

Ms. Robin Blair stated that in the past the sponsor sign had been donated. Ms. Binns stated that last year Doug Milnes had created the sign and many sponsors and donators expect it as recognition. Mr. Degenhart suggested printing out the company's logos on 8 ½ x 11 paper and hanging it up which Ms. Binns agreed.

Ms. Robin Blair explained that the Garden Club had been planning on unveiling the donated rain barrel to the Historical Society at the Earth Day fair before they were aware the Mayor would be on vacation and suggested to continue without him and make the presentation around 10am. She also stated that the Old Monmouth driving tour of historic locations is that day and the Shrewsbury Historical Society would be open to the public. Ms. Robin Blair also mentioned that she had sent a thank you letter to Paul David for the years of donations.

Ms. Binns stated that originally the Environmental Commission was going to dedicate a tree for Herman Allan at the event but decided to wait for another day.

Mr. Zweerink asked if the Audubon or Littoral Society would be participating in the Fair. Ms. Binns stated that she had reached out to both organizations but they normally have larger events to attend and asked everyone to reach out to everyone they could. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that the school sent out a flyer today.

Ms. Binns asked if the Environmental Commission would be charging to recycle electronics if non-residents wanted to participate. Councilman DeSalvo stated that he would speak to Borough Administrator Tom Seaman. Ms. Binns stated that it would not cost the commission any additional money because they are charged one flat fee and questioned the amount that could be charged and suggested \$10 or \$20 per car load.

Ms. Gwydir stated that the Environmental Commission table would have the reusable water raffle and pledge and will also collect e-mails. She stated that Councilman Menapace offered to volunteer. Ms. Robin Blair stated that Jay and Leslie Eaton also offered their time.

Ms. Binns stated the recycling truck would be arriving at 8am and they should be there to set up. She stated that they would get all the tables to the Borough on Friday night along with the chairs.

Fort Monmouth

Chairwoman Gwydir stated that Councilman Menapace received a report from Fort Monmouth that was looked over by Vince Cheevy of Cranmer Engineering, who created a report was on the environment of Parkers Creek. She stated that there was good news, the two locations of concern are at normal levels or slightly elevated but not a concern. Dr. DiBello stated that the main issue is they used a lot of chemicals for electronics and then just dumped them in the Creek. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that Councilman Menapace spoke with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and they are okay with the readings. She explained that this has been an ongoing process since 1995 and should have been a Superfund Site. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that the baseline environmental study was not released yet.

Dr. DiBello stated that they tested the wells and the results will probably be the same for the aquifer. Chairwoman Gwydir stated that the baseline would be testing the soil which will show if chemicals leached out from all the dumping in the 1950's and 1960's with no pit or clay. Dr. DiBello stated that the only fact this issue has come up is because the army is leaving the base and if they hadn't decided to move the military it would never have cleaned the area. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that this was an expensive clean up where they had to remove soil and build retaining walls, all done by an outside contractor. She stated that it was still an ongoing process but it looks like Shrewsbury will be okay. Mr. Degenhart asked how many tests were conducted to which Ms. Binns stated that it was 30 samples over 10 years. Dr. DiBello stated that the testing would have to be ongoing. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that some areas on the Fort were so bad they had to be fenced off and will never be able to be used again and that she has the report if anyone is interested to read it.

She stated that Councilman Menapace will be presenting this information to the Council.

Rain Barrel Workshop on Saturday, May 21, 2011

Ms. Robin Blair stated that the Workshop is first come, first serve, and they already have 25 interested parties. She stated that there was an ad for the program in *Red Hot Red Bank* and anyone who wants to participate should contact Diane Crilley. Ms. Robin Blair stated that everything is settled with the Shrewsbury Hose Company #1 and they decided to go with the Rutgers kit which she and Sue Milnes will pick up. She stated that they ordered 30 but have the option of returning unused kits. Chairwoman Gwydir thanked her for the good job and hard work.

Sustainable NJ

Chairwomen Gwydir stated that the meeting was cancelled this month between the Fair and vacation . She stated that they are working on a large tree management project worth 50 points. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that she will complete the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) if it does not get completed before Ms. Binns moves to Rumson.

Ms. Binns stated that the ERI would be finished and that Shade Tree wanted to meet with her concerning the document in May and give her their portion of the document. She stated that the Borough staff will then scan it in and possibly have Frank make the maps and if not just use the old ones. Ms. Binns stated that they are deleting three maps from the ERI and need to update it to include new developments and streets that have been added since the last map was completed. She stated that the ERI is valid for another three years but is expired according to Sustainable NJ.

Mr. Degenhart asked if they would be able to use Google Maps and Chairwoman Gwydir explained that it has to be a legal GIS map. Ms. Binns stated that every town must have an Environmental Commission and every commission must have an ERI.

Hydrofracking

Mr. Zweerink stated that he had attended a very good meeting of the League of Women Voters who had a presentation by the Delaware Environmental Commission on hydrofracking. He explained that it was a process where sand and chemicals, which can impact the water supply, are forced through the ground to collect natural gas and is something that people should be aware of. Mr. Zweerink stated that this process only collects 10% of the natural gas and hence not an effective method.

Councilman DeSalvo stated that in Texas they believe that this process has caused mini earth quakes. He stated that this process allows you to get gas from locations you couldn't in the past.

Mr. Zweerink stated that President Bush's Clean Water Act left this out of the law. Ms. Binns asked what the Federal Government is doing about it to which Mr. Zweerink stated they were staying on top of it and explained that much of this gas is being exported in liquid form. Chairwoman Gwydir stated that they should do something like mineral rights similar to developer's rights and that the Commission will keep an eye on it.

Other

Frank Clark's retirement from the Department of Public Works was discussed and the Borough's plan to rename the Mediation Room was explained.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Loder-Murphy to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sue Binns and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Attest: _____
Bonnie Brookes, Commission Secretary