



BOROUGH OF SHREWSBURY

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Minutes of Meeting
Shrewsbury Environmental Commission
Wednesday, March 9, 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, Deidre DerAsadourian, Dr. Patrick DiBello, Hans Zweerink, Kathy Loder-Murphy, and Council Liaison Jeff DeSalvo. Pat Kurdyla entered the meeting at 7:41pm.

Approval of Minutes from February 9, 2011 Meeting

Dr. DiBello made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2011 meeting. Ms. Binns seconded the motion.

Planning

Ms. DerAsadourian stated that at the last Planning Board meeting wind energy systems were discussed but no action was taken on the topic. She explained that wind turbines could not be located too close to a structure and would need 11 mph winds to make enough energy to be profitable which is not plausible for Shrewsbury. Ms. DerAsadourian stated that during the reexamination of the Master Plan, wind and solar energy will be considered. Chairwomen Gwydir explained that she and Councilman Tom Menapace did not attend the meeting because they were informed that wind turbines would not be discussed.

Ms. DerAsadourian stated that the wind turbine ordinance that they were looking from Sustainable NJ was based on the kilo wattage, not distance, and it had already been reviewed by the Borough Engineer, Dave Cranmer. Dr. DiBello asked at what elevation you would obtain 11mph winds. Ms. DerAsadourian explained that the turbines would have to be taller than trees and expressed concern over the fact that for a 200 foot turbine could potentially shadow a house and the volume of noise that could be produced. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that she would like to look at other municipalities' ordinances and explained that at the moment the Borough has

nothing to control the building of turbines. Councilman DeSalvo stated that there are building height restrictions in place. Ms. DerAsadourian stated that was discussed and that height of the turbine is based on acreage. Dr. DiBello questioned if the government would subsidize wind energy like they have with solar panels, stating that the initial cost is not worth it unless there is a government subsidy. He feared that if wind energy flopped, proving not to be cost efficient, that the turbines would be abandon. Ms. DerAsadourian informed the Commission that the ordinance states that after 18 months of non-use the turbine would have to be removed. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that she does not think that wind turbines will be an issue for Shrewsbury but the Borough should protect them because more people are looking into green energy and it also helps with the Sustainable NJ certification. She explained that the Borough will receive points towards their Sustainable NJ certification for the ordinance and possibly \$500. Mr. Zweerink asked if similar municipalities had turbines. Chairwoman Gwydir stated she would look into it.

Ms. Binns asked what the timeline for the reexamination of the Master Plan. Ms. DerAsadourian stated she was not sure but that it was important to get the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) done to be incorporated into the Master Plan. Ms. Binns stated the Boroughs ERI was valid for another three years but they are currently working on it. She stated that it is not going to change much and should only take a few more months to complete. Ms. DerAsadourian asked if three year expiration of the ERI was correct.

Zoning

Chairwomen Gwydir stated that there is no representation from the Zoning Board on the Environmental Commission currently and asked what could be done to change it. Secretary Brookes explained that she looked into the situation and was told that the Environmental Commission did not have a liaison but were just lucky in the past to have members on the Zoning Board. Chairwomen Gwydir questioned if the Commission could get a copy of the minutes and or have a member attend the Zoning Board meeting.

Other

Chairwomen Gwydir welcomed new member Hans Zweerink and asked him to introduce himself. Mr. Zweerink stated that he lives on Beechwood Drive, retired from Merck, and a volunteer at Lunch Break. Dr. DiBello expressed that he believed that Mr. Zweerink had a lot to offer to the Commission and would have been a great advisor to the now defunct Shrewsbury Borough School (SBS) Club.

Sustainable NJ

Chairwomen Gwydir stated that the Borough just conducted an energy audit at the municipal building and received a block grant to replace the lights with LED lights. She stated that the Commission needs to make sure that the audit fits the requirements of Sustainable NJ.

Chairwomen Gwydir stated that there was a meeting with SBS, Rutgers, Bob Wentway from DPW, and Master Gardener concerning the rain garden at the school. She explained that they will start digging in May and the kids have completed the brochure and are currently working on a list of native and colorful plants. Chairwomen Gwydir stated the location of the garden would be under the roof by the bell circle. She stated that the DPW would be preforming the digging,

and that the plants will be from Sickles. Dr. DiBello expressed concern over the fact that the Grove West brings kids in from Rumson County Day School to take care of their community garden. Ms. Binns explained that the SBS club was going to do that one day a week, but due to budget cuts there is no club this year. She also stated that you cannot take public school children out during the school day like a private school.

Ms. Binns stated that the Shade Tree Commission has created a subcommittee that was completely redoing their portion of the ERI and it may take a few more months to finish. Chairwomen Gwydir explained that the woodland management is a huge extensive project with many sections. She stated that this project is worth 50 points towards Sustainable NJ certification. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that the purpose of the program was to become a sustainable community. She stated that 200 communities have signed up to participate and Oceanport has recently achieved their certification. Chairwomen Gwydir informed the Commission that the ERI is worth 20 points and the rain garden is worth 10 points. She explained that the Borough must complete two priority actions and have 150 points to become certified. Currently the Borough has 55 points.

Ms. DerAsadourian stated that the Borough could obtain points through the walk to school program that was discussed at the last meeting. Ms. Binns stated the main issue with the program is safe routes and documentation. Ms. DerAsadourian stated that it could help the traffic issue at the school and the Superintendent, Brent MacConnell, was excited and willing to start the program as soon as we have a procedure in place. She explained stating after a certain number of trips the students would receive a homework pass. She continued that the students would need parental permission to participate and the rules would have to state that at no point in the trip can the student be in a car. Chairwoman Gwydir suggested going to the Sustainable NJ website to see where this would fit in. Mr. Zweerick asked if there were safe bike routes in Shrewsbury. Ms. DerAsadourian recommended changing it to a bike/walk to school program. Ms. Louder-Murphy stated bike routes it was looked at years ago but didn't work out.

Councilman DeSalvo asked if the catalog campaign could give the Borough points and was told it would have to be investigated. Ms. Louder-Murphy questioned if the water bottle resolution could be used for Sustainable NJ. Ms. DerAsadourian asked if the Borough could get points for passing a resolution stating that businesses must give people the choice of paper or plastic. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that Councilman Menapace is looking into something similar where businesses would be rewarded for being green. Ms. DerAsadourian stated that she would love to work with Councilman Menapace on this project and believe that people would choose paper if given the choice.

Recycling and Earth Day Fair

Chairwomen Gwydir stated that Starbucks is willing to be involved and the kids at SBS are working on the passport. Councilman DeSalvo stated that the Cub Scouts are working on a ring toss and will provide information on their campaign to cancel catalogs. He said that the 2nd graders are visiting other classrooms asking other kids to tell their parents to cancel catalogs and gave them a 1-800 number to call. Ms. Binns suggested that they could have a table at the fair. Dr. DiBello said that he thought it was a good program because you cannot keep up with the catalogs.

Ms. Louder-Murphy stated that Trader Joes may offer an initiative like a gift certificate to be raffled off for people dropping off electronic recyclables. Mr. Zweerink stated that he thought it would be a good promotion because then people will spend more. Ms. Binns asked members seek donations from local businesses and stated that she would provide a letter from the Environmental Commission if a business requested one. Secretary Brookes stated that Qdoba offered to provide lunch for 25 volunteers. Ms. DerAsadourian stated that Lowes has yet to call her back concerning the light bulbs and Project Porch Light will not participate due to a lack of funding until May. She stated that she had someone interested in selling cookbooks for local fish and speaking out against bracking. Ms. Binns listed some of the fair participates including Master Composter, the Garden Club's plant sale, Shade Tree, a rain barrel display with Ms. Blair, a rain garden table, and solar panels. She stated that the only give outs that she has at the moment is dish detergent from 7th Generation and dog waste bags.

Ms. Binns stated that she did not know how to set up for the fair without a tent and tables but could set up the day before if it was in the Borough Hall. Councilman DeSalvo suggested using the courtyard area. Secretary Brookes asked if the Shrewsbury Hose Company has any tables that the Commission could use for the event. Councilman DeSalvo said he would look into it. Ms. Binns stated that the fair should be set up inside and move outside if the weather permitted. Various members offered help with set up. Mr. Blair stated that she would ask Mayor Burden to use the Historical Society's tables. Ms. Binns responded that she would rather have tables from the Hose Company because the Historical Society only has two and they are clunky. Mrs. Blair stated that she would call Paul David and inform him that the Commission would not need any tents or tables this year. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that since lunch will be donated there will be some extra money for table clothes. Ms. Blair asked if the electronic recycling could be put up on the website and the marquee.

Ms. Binns asked if the Commission should use some of the reusable water bottles for the fair, possibly a raffle prize. Ms. Blair suggested that the Borough inform the Freeholders, who will be holding a meeting at the Borough next month, about the water bottle resolution. Ms. DerAsadourian questioned if a sign could be put up informing people of the resolution in the municipal complex and on the Borough's property. Ms. Binns suggested having people sign a pledge to not use plastic bottles to participate in the raffle.

Councilman DeSalvo asked if the Commission could charge non-residents to participate in electronic recycling. Ms. Binns explained that it was a standard setup fee and that it could be looked into. She stated that it could fall under donations and help pay for the event. She explained that currently the Commission puts 'Shrewsbury Residents Only' on everything and check IDs. Dr. DiBello motioned to allow non-residents to participate in the electronic recycling event. Chairwomen Gwydir tabled the motion until the next meeting.

Rain Barrel Workshop Update

Ms. Blair stated that the Rain Barrel Workshop will be May 21st from 9:30 to 11:30 and is waiting for the official okay from the Hose Company to use their building. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that they could allow people to prepay for the workshop at the fair. Ms. Blair stated that the next meeting would be March 22nd at Panera.

Public

Ed Kosberg, 91 Beechwood Drive, stated that he was on the Environmental Commission in the 1990's and asked that there be copies of the agenda available in the future. He asked if there were current regulations on solar panels and stated that the only thing that is keeping him from investing in solar energy is his age. Ms. DerAsadourian stated that it is being looked at by the Planning Board. Mr. Kosberg stated that he didn't believe people would be willing to switch to organic landscaping, moving away from pesticides. He questioned if pesticides were used on the game fields. Ms. Binns stated that she believed that they were federally banned from school property. Chairwomen Gwydir stated that they are working on this through Sustainable NJ.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Dr. Pat DiBello to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Robin Blair and the meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Attest: _____
Bonnie Brookes, Commission Secretary