

**PRINCETON ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting of January 22, 2014– 7:30 pm**  
**Meeting Room A, Municipal Building**  
**400 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ 08540**

**I. Opening Statement**

Adequate notice of this meeting as required by Sections 3d and 4a of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided and filed with the municipal Clerk.

**II. Wasserman opened the meeting at 7:39 p.m.**

**Present were:** Zemble, Fichtenbaum, Chorney, Rojer, Wasserman, Spindel, Welles and Crumiller

**Absent was:** Molina and Birge

**III. Approval of Agenda:**

A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the agenda with the change to add a discussion regarding the PEC ordinance.

**IV. Administrative Matters:**

a) **Vice Chair** – a motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to appoint Heidi Fichtenbaum as the Vice Chair of the PEC for the year 2014.

b) **Secretary** – a motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to appoint Debra Rogers as the PEC Secretary for the year 2014.

**V. Minutes:**

A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted to approve the minutes of December 11, 2013 as written and amended.

**VI. Public Comment:** Anne Neumann of “Save the Dinky” handed out a memo to the PEC regarding the “Save the Dinky” initiative and spoke about the detriments that will be caused by Princeton University moving the dinky station. She asked if the Chair or Vice Chair would be willing to write a letter to the papers in favor of the “Save the Dinky” initiative. She noted that there are several lawsuits and appeals pending regarding this issue. Wasserman noted that the PEC has spoken out in the past and are on record with its stance regarding this issue. It was mentioned that the PEC could file an *amicus brief* with the courts. Neumann said she would like to see something from the PEC, and the filing of a brief may in fact be too late and would like to see letters written to the papers. Wasserman suggested that if members are

interested in sending letters they should contact Neumann directly at [anne.neumann@verizon.net](mailto:anne.neumann@verizon.net). Crumiller noted that the town is being sued in one of the lawsuits and that the Commission as a whole should realize that they are an appointed body by the Town and by filing a brief, it would be helping legal action against the town. She said she would look into the matter and see if the PEC could file a brief.

Diane Landis, Executive Director of Sustainable Princeton introduced herself to the PEC and said she was in attendance to listen and see ways in which the 2 groups could connect.

## **VII. Discussions and Decisions:**

- a) **Council Updates:** Crumiller said the 2 recycling cans have been ordered for Nassau Street and should be in by the end of the month. She also noted that the tonnage numbers are down. Wasserman stated that the PEC would like to see the numbers with regards to garbage, leaves, recycling and composting (weights and dollars). Crumiller said she will try and get the numbers by next month from Hough. She also noted that Council will be having a goal setting session. Fichtenbaum stated that it is important to set up a framework and process. She noted that it should not take 6 months to get recycling cans ordered for the downtown area. She also said she would like to see the town start “greening” its ordinances. Chorney also noted that there should be an overall plan on waste. Wasserman stated that if anyone has goals in mind for council they should send them to Jenny.
- b) **PEC Goals:** Wasserman started the discussion by reading ANJEC’s definition of Environmental Commissions and that the various duties are of the PEC. He said at the last meeting he heard folks say they were interested in certain issues which included: a leaf ordinance, waste ordinance, broad waste management program, bicycle ordinance, environmental testing ordinance, resident education, parks commissioner, partnering with Sustainable Princeton and Princeton University and flooding. He asked the members to prioritize the issues and pick 2 or possibly 3 that the PEC would work on this year. Welles noted that right now she cannot find any grants that would help the PEC start to investigate/work on greening the ordinances; she stated that Sustainable Jersey does have a grant, but the deadline is in 3 days. She suggested working with the town Planner to get one or two of the ordinances “greened”. Spindel noted that Council should work “hand-in-hand” with the PEC to green some of the ordinances and this should be part of its goals for the year. Crumiller noted that they are currently working on adding sustainability to the historic preservation ordinance. She also noted that she thinks the historic preservation ordinance is going back to ZARC for review. Wasserman suggested that ZARC invite the PEC to its meetings.

Fichtenbaum noted that it would be great if the PEC could get a copy of the ordinances that being considered by ZARC and then the PEC could discuss which ones they would be interested in. Crumiller suggested that the PEC review the ordinances and then let council and ZARC know. Wasserman then polled the commission members to see which issues of the ones he mentioned previously were most important to everyone. It was decided that the 2 areas of most interest were a waste ordinance and a leaf ordinance.

- c) **SPRAB:** Wasserman noted that the PEC needs to appoint someone to be the liaison to SPRAB. He said they generally meet once a month and discuss the site plans of development applications. He noted that historically whoever was the SPRAB liaison was also part of the development review subcommittee. No one volunteered for this position – Wasserman stated that he will reach out to Molina and see if she is interested. He said that in the meantime he will help Fichtenbaum with the development review subcommittee.
  
- d) **Development Review Subcommittee:** Fichtenbaum noted that an application has been submitted to the Zoning Board and the PEC will be sending a memo regarding its environmental concerns with the application. She said one of the biggest concerns with the site is its steep slope area. She noted some of the recommendations which included but are not limited to; including food waste composting on the site, covered bike storage, LED lighting, lights for the sign should be directed towards the sign, native and adaptive plantings, orienting the building so that earth movement is minimal, reduce impacts on the site, slope stabilization, avoiding turf grass and to show the limits of disturbance on the wetlands to protect them. She also noted that she did not see a “green building checklist” included with the application, but the applicants should consider energy certified window and appliances, water conservation (low flow toilets) and she suggested that the applicants recycle as much of the demolition waste as possible. David Cohen the applicants architect said that he does have a copy of the green building checklist, however their application was submitted prior to this list being ordinated. Welles asked if the PEC can impose water conservation measures that are beyond what is required by code. Wasserman stated that it will be up to the Zoning Board to impose or not impose any of the advisory board/commission recommendations. Wasserman inquire about the turf grass recommendation. He noted that this will also be home and suggested that the owner may want to have some lawn space for the family. Fichtenbaum stated that the home is located in a forest area and that is different than having a home located on a neighborhood street. She said there is a lot of asphalt and it’s better to have a rain-garden/bio-swale than to have turf grass. Cohen said the applicant has no objection to this but would like to have a small area of turf grass on the site. He said with regard to bike storage, the applicant is concerned about the liability of having that – as it may encourage people to bike on Route 206

which is a very busy road. He said the applicant will continue to push back on this. Welles suggested that by including this in the PEC recommendations, it may promote bike paths. Wasserman noted that the recommendation for bike storage will remain in the memo. Cohen noted that the wetlands area has very steep slopes on the sides and there will be no way vehicles will be in the wetland area. Fichtenbaum noted that the area is sensitive and that the Engineer should include the limit of disturbance on the plans. Mr. Sacks, attorney for the applicant showed the commission that the limit of disturbance is shown on the plans. Wasserman asked if there were any other questions. It was suggested that the memo changed the wording from “no turf grass” to “minimal use of turf grass”. A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the memo with the amendment that the wording regarding turf grass is changed as noted above.

- e) **PEC Ordinance:** Zemble said she went through the former township and borough ordinances as well as ANJEC’s ordinance and developed a draft of an ordinance that is more understandable, she made it in plain English. She said she redesigned the PEC powers and added quite a few things to the ordinance in order to give the PEC more powers. Crumiller inquired as to whether this draft was reviewed by an attorney to ensure it is legal. Zemble said it has not been reviewed by an attorney yet. Zemble said the ordinance would allow for more liaisons as well. Crumiller said that the state limits the number of liaison’s a board/commission can have, but suggested that the PEC partner with more non-profit organizations (501(c3) non-profits. Wasserman asked Crumiller when the ordinance would be discussed. Crumiller stated that the draft will now go to a smaller subcommittee before it comes before council. Chorney asked Crumiller to inquire about liaisons and how many can be added. A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to send the ordinance to the Council subcommittee.
- f) **Board of Health:** Rojer said they Board has not had it reorganization meeting yet and does not have much to report. He said he is hoping to continue as the Boards liaison to the PEC.
- g) **Shade Tree Commission:** Crumiller said the STC is currently working on its ordinance.
- h) **Noticing Requirements:** The question was risen about whether or not the PEC subcommittees needed to “notice” its meetings. Wasserman asked Deb Rogers to follow-up on that and report back to the PEC.

**VIII. Adjournment:** A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Debra Rogers", is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Debra Rogers, Secretary**

Date Approved: February 26, 2014