

PRINCETON ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting, January 26, 2022 – 7:30 pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting,
Princeton, NJ 08540

I. Opening Statement

Land Acknowledgement: *"We gather today on the land of the Lenni Lenape. As members of the Princeton community, we aspire to show appreciation, respect, and concern for all peoples and our environment. We acknowledge the genocide and continuous displacement of indigenous peoples and the harm inflicted upon the indigenous communities and people of color across the country. We honor the Lenape and other Indigenous caretakers of these lands and waters, the elders who lived here before, the Indigenous today, and the generations to come. We further acknowledge the millions of enslaved Africans and their descendants on whose backs this nation was created."*

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.

I. Sands opened the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Present were: Sands, Walker, Soos, Persky, Tech-Czarny, Marcus-Levine, Watson, Zemble, Symington, Niedergang, Deiseo, Jones

Absent: Fichtenbaum, BOH Rep

Also Present:

II. Approval of Agenda: A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the agenda with the amendments that included moving the Reports from Liaisons prior to the discussion of the development application.

III. Minutes:

a) December 15, 2021

A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written and amended.

IV. Public Comment:

There was no public comment at this point.

V. Discussion/Decisions:

- a) **Council Update:** Niedergang announced Councilman Williamson completed his term on Council and then stepped down and Leighton Newlin was elected; Councilwoman Sacks gave an affordable housing update at the last Council meeting which included a lot of information on sustainability and energy efficiency features

that are being included; the municipality closed on the 153 acre Lanwin property on December 31st, 2021; at the January 24th, 2022 Council meeting an Ordinance was introduced to establish a Special Improvement District; at the January 10th, 2022 Council meeting, the Friends of Princeton Open Space was recognized for their fifty years of work; Council voted to abolish SPRAB in order to pave the way for a new advisory board; the stormwater ordinance revisions were also introduced at the Council meeting; Council authorized funding for flood plain mapping of Harry's Brook in the former Borough section of Harry's Brook; this is the last year of the trash contract and the plan is to have something in place for next year that includes trash and compost (the contract will include collecting the waste and taking it to a facility); the leaf and brush schedules are not out yet, but should be adopted by Council in the near future; the landscaper registration form is up and running on the municipal website and the arborist is currently doing all of the enforcement until a Compliance Officer can be hired; the mask mandate is scheduled to expire at midnight on January 31, 2022; there will be Covid testing at the old PFARS building on Harrison Street; the School Board referendum seems to have unofficially passed; lastly, there will be some sewer financial planning done at a work session by Council.

b) **Administrative Matters:**

- i. Welcome to the new member Donald Deieso
 - ii. Appointment of Secretary – A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve Deb Mercantini as the Secretary for 2022.
 - iii. Liaisons – Karen Zemble to Flood & Stormwater; Zenon Tech-Czarny to Planning Board. A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Liaisons.
- c) **Agenda:** Sands discussed the structure of the agenda and how this year each “goal” will have a Lead Commissioner and a Co-Lead Commissioner. Each “lead” person can send their agenda requests to Sands and Niedergang to see if there is time to place it on the current agenda.
- d) **Stream Clean-Up:** Sands noted the stream clean-up will be held on April 24th, 2022 from 9:00 am – 11:00 am – the location will be determined at a later date (although any location that is chosen must have ample parking for volunteers).
- e) **Annual Goals:** Sands discussed the goals and the “leads and co-leads”. Marcus-Levine will continue to be the lead on the development applications however everyone is encouraged to participate and send comments to Marcus-Levine prior to the meeting when the application is discussed. With regards to Open Space, Watson will remain the PEC lead on this, but Cindy Taylor (Open Space Manager) will be working on this. Watson noted that Taylor is working on a proposal for the ERI update. Plastic Bag Ban will continue to be led by Persky; Sustainable Landscaping Practices will continue to have Zemble as the lead in collaboration with Non-Toxic Communities and Quiet Princeton; Community Energy Planning Grant (BPU Grant) will be led by Soos and co-led by Tech-Czarny as Sustainable Jersey will be assisting with the grant – Princeton can apply to receive up to \$10,000.00 for community energy planning (it was suggested that Derek Bridger – Zoning Officer also be looped into this process). With regards to the Community Energy Aggregation

Program, it was suggested Princeton join the Essex County Coalition to secure a third party provider and the contract for the current provider has expired. Other goals the PEC is working on include (but are not limited to) research, county/state advocacy, environmental issues of interest (water quality) Zemble will lead this, electrification/net zero building for affordable housing (Fichtenbaum will lead this) and to encourage green building. A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the goal list for 2022.

- f) **Sustainable Princeton Update:** The application process has opened up for the Landscaper Transition Fund to help landscapers transition from gas powered equipment to electric equipment. Sustainable Princeton will be rebranding the “Great Idea’s” Speaker Series and will now be referred to as Sustainable Minds 2022 – which will include talks on stormwater, community solar and net zero energy building. Sustainable Princeton will be partnering with the schools on sustainable measures, education and with stormwater measures they want to do. There will be another Electric Vehicle Ride and Drive in the fall.
- g) **Flood and Stormwater Update:** Zemble stated Princeton University is starting a national project on stormwater runoff. A pilot study will be done where a computer model will be built for the Stonybrook and the town is asking if the same model can be done for Harry’s Brook.
- h) **Planning Board Update:** the 21 Wiggins LLC application was approved; the West Windsor Real Estate development application was moved from January 6th, 2022 to another date; there was a compromise reached for the historic homes on Prospect – they will not be demolished; the Dillon Gym application was approved; and lastly, the Planning Board had a lengthy discussion on the disbandment of SPRAB resulting in a recommendation to Council to disband the advisory board.
- i) **Development Application:**
 - i. Terhune Urban Renewal LLC
Prelim/Final Major Site Plan
North Harrison Street and Terhune Road
Block 7401, Lots 1.102 & 1.02
File #P2121-131P

The Commission had a lengthy discussion about the development application including adding the Flood and Stormwater Committee to the distribution list of PEC memos. Other topics discussed were the roof area of the trash collection; underground parking; stormwater (reduction of impervious surface coverage); green roofs; solar shading; being all electric; passive house and LEED certification; transportation/traffic; electric vehicle charging stations; bike storage; traffic study report should include all of the new development projects in the area; landscaping; minimal lawn area’s; environmental justice; building-energy; and impervious surfaces. A motion was made and seconded and the Commission unanimously approved the memo with the amendments that were discussed at this meeting.

- VI. **Adjournment:** A motion was made and seconded and the PEC voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Mercantini, Secretary

Date Approved: