



Princeton Environmental Commission Minutes
Meeting of Wednesday, 24 May 2023 at 7 p.m.
Virtual Meeting
Princeton, NJ 08540

Sands started the meeting at 7pm

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."

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 Princeton Clerk.

Meeting Attendees: Role	Team Member	Invited	Attended
PEC Chair	Tammy Sands	x	x
PEC Vice Chair	Anne Soos	x	x
PEC Commissioner Alt. 1	Chiara Smorada	x	x
PEC Commissioner Alt. 2	Randy Rutberg	x	x
PEC Commissioner	Lisa Marcus Levine	x	x
PEC Commissioner	Fredi Pearlmutter	x	x
PEC Commissioner	Inga Reich	x	Joined 7:35 pm
PEC Commissioner	Abel Smith	x	x
PEC Commissioner	Zenon Tech-Czarny	x	x
PEC Board Secretary	Eva Herzog	x	x
Board of Health Liaison	Rick Weiss	x	Joined 7:20 pm
Sustainable Princeton	Jenny Ludmer	x	x
Council Liaison	Eve Niedergang	x	x
Public/Guests	Susan Bristol, Watershed Institute Cindy Taylor, Open Space Coordinator Star Willmarth	x	x



Minutes

1. **Approval of Agenda** (Sands)

Changes to the agenda:

- Addition of the Letter of support for the Food Scrap Program
- Move ERI update ahead of Council Reports

Motion to approve: Soos; Second: Tech-Czerny; unanimously approved

2. **Approval of Minutes** (Sands)

2.1. 26 April 2023

Motion to approve: Levine-Marcus; Second: Soos; unanimously approved

3. **Public Comment**

4. **ERI Update** (Taylor)

- Ecotone contract was ended leading to change in timelines as new contractor needs to be selected leading to some delay; alternative firms include Land Conservancy of New Jersey Data and Stuart Green (tbd);
- Soos asked if Master Plan would be affected; Taylor confirmed that data (e.g. protected lands, green space desert data,) that Ecotone had already prepared can be reused as relevant to support the Master Plan; Taylor will provide the remaining analyses (incl. connectivity, public access)
- Question from Tech-Czarny if the ERI can inform and guide the Master Plan Open Space and Recreation subcommittee with regards to ecological conservation and rehabilitation/regeneration; Taylor confirmed she will inform to the extent she can;
- Question from Bristol if PEC has received a copy of the Watershed's comments on the Master Plan; Taylor confirmed she passed it on to the Master Plan Committee; Bristol will share the comments to PEC ([action item](#)).
- Bristol was interested in including additional maps into Master Plan, e.g. streams and water corridors to complement the connectivity plans; Taylor intends to share additional maps to Master Plan Committee which could be included but as she is not part of the committee itself so she cannot comment on feasibility and relevance

5. **Letter of support for Food Scrap program** (Sands)

- No comments by PEC members

Motion to approve: Smith; Second: Tech-Czarny; unanimously approved

6. **Council Report** (Niedergang)

- Plan to purchase 164 Heather Lane property for open space and connectivity, 12th June meeting for commenting
- Approval of application for funding from Mercer county for Lanwin property; Green acres and private fundraising expected to supplement
- Since new cart program has been introduced, a 16% waste reduction observed; Municipality will consider doing a survey to better understand root causes and changes in behavior leading to the reduction



- New ordinance on leaf and brush pick-up approved 5/23, reducing the number of pick-ups to reduce costs, to respond to MS4 permits that NJDEP issued to avoid storm drain carry-over, general environmental stewardship, safety reasons for bicycles etc.; registered landscapers have been informed; information will be posted publicly within the next few weeks; possibility for Princeton residents to bring leaves and brush to Environmental center in Lawrenceville; additional pick-ups will be done after major storms; Niedergang will share the new schedule with PEC ([action item](#))
- 84% increase in recycling program costs to municipality
- Farmers market return to Hinds Plaza approved
- Repairs to Spring Street Garage during summer, leading to reduction in parking spaces
- Meeting on poor cell phone coverage across Princeton incl. representatives from Verizon and Crown Castle; AT&T opted not to attend.

7. Discussions/Decisions & Liaison Reports

7.1. Appreciation of Commissioners, Partners & Participants (Sands)

Sands highlighted the excellent job and achievements of all commissioners and the progress already made on the annual goals, the exceptional support from partners

Green acres received awarded in response of grant supported by PEC for work on Mountain Lakes Reserve

7.2. Date(s) for In-person Meetings (Sands)

Proposal for 26 July (outdoors, under cover) and 13 December (indoors, Municipal building) - Eve will find and reserve space ([action item](#))

Motion to approve: Marcus-Levine; Second: Tech-Czarny

7.3. Microforest Project with PPS (Sands/Rutberg)

- Project progressing well
- Ludmer to call for district wide meeting and possibility of other schools also getting trees
- Sands attended the STC meeting to present the project and identify if the commission would be available to support efforts

7.4. Green House Tour & Video (Marcus Levine/Smith)

- Videographer completed recordings on 5/23 which will be edited further
- Update on Princeton future event held for public lands and open space; idea to partner with Dohm Ally to use artistic approach to create more awareness ([action item](#))

7.5. Green Development Checklist (Soos)

- Soos shared minutes from subcommittee that met on 5/11
- Group composed PEC answers to SJ for recertification on GDCL
- Group composed proposed steps to move forward on question if GDCL meeting current needs



- Soos plans to meet with Lesko to align and gain additional suggestions; any PEC member welcome to join (Tech-Czarny and Marcus-Levine indicated interest). Update 6/4: This meeting has been scheduled for June 16

7.6. Board of Health (BOH Representative)

- Recertification of health department regarding quality and community consideration ongoing

7.7. Sustainable Princeton (Ludmer)

- Upcoming events:
 - 27 May - Fundraiser at Rivett's backyard meadow
 - 10 Sep - Homeowner's event about Landscaping at Morven;
 - 22 Sept - Annual E-commuter fest
 - 23 Sept - Green Infrastructure training session for landscapers as family activity
 - 14 Oct - Annual Fundraiser
- Community Solar presentation to be included in one of upcoming PEC meetings ([action item](#))

7.8. Flood and Storm Water Commission (Smorada -dual member)

- Expansion of stormwater drawings staff
- Stormwater utility first focus group met discussing impervious area map and who is currently paying for storm water
- Facility tour planned with American Water, date pending

7.9. Planning Board (Tech-Czarny -dual member)

- May 4 Meeting on Hun School Poe dormitory application and May 18 meeting on Princeton University Schmidt Hall; many suggestions and sustainability features incorporated
- Master Plan Subcommittee meetings planned for end of June
- Soos asked about availability of certification chart/checklist used by architects during planning board review ([action item](#))

7.10. Waste Transition Team (Soos)

- Council approved the Waste transition team's plan on food scrap program; waste transition team will work on publicity and lottery to select the residents eligible for the pilot program which is expected to begin in mid-October
- Council approved resolution to community food waste reduction grant to expand from 2 to 12 sites
- Tech-Czerny was interested to expand to include plastic bags, film hard and recycle plastics

7.11. Recreation/CP South (Pearlmutter)

- Following the Open House and Surveys, the landscape architect prepared 5 plans for review; staged review including review by recreation department this week, followed by another public



meeting on 8 June to present selected plans; aspects such as wetlands will be part of second stage plans.

- Sands updated that PEC received the wetlands map and watershed from Sourlands Conservancy; planned to invite the Sourland Conservancy to present to PEC this summer; map is available for PEC members if interested
- Update from Sands that artificial turf white paper will be revisited to update and include additional supporting information; existing white paper posted on PEC website: <https://www.princetonnj.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9205/Princeton-Environmental-Commission-Artificial-Turf-Report-Dec-2021-PDF-?bidId=> ; Soos also offered to share additional document on the topic ([action item](#)); Niedergang shared that Hilltop Park artificial turf project was pulled back in response to concerns by PEC and others;

8. Any other business

Update from Watershed (Bristol)

- Watershed DEP mapping workshop was held last week; presentation on stormwater outfall inspection will be uploaded to Youtube and shared with PEC; Survey Monkey based form available that can be filled out on the field by residents
- Upcoming events: Twilight birding 3 June; Annual Solstice Run 21 May

9. Adjournment

Motion to approve: Tech-Czarny; unanimously approved