

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 10, 2023**

PRESENT: Jeffrey Lamborn (Chair), Helene Venizelos (Vice Chair), Sandra Benscoter (Secretary), Geraldine DeSapio, Roberta Harmon, Glen Denys, Gina Stravic (Borough Council Liaison) and Larry Cleveland (Planning Board Liaison).

Green Team: Paige Greenfield.

ABSENT: Geoff Keiser and Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo

Visitors: Sahel Abraham (Life Scout - Troop #84) and Chris Abraham (Parent)

Meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Jeff. This meeting is called to order in accordance with the open public meeting law. Notice of this meeting is posted on the Somerville website. A copy of this statement will be included in the minutes.

A vote for current officers and liaisons to hold their current positions was held. All members voted yes. Noted and carried unanimously.

I. MINUTES: November 2022 minutes. Minutes were approved on the motion made by Jeff, seconded by Helene, and carried unanimously.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

- A.** Sande reported no mail received.
- B.** Jeff was invited to participate in the DSA meeting on Jan. 23, 2023.
- C.** Helene posted on our social media the Christmas Tree recycling schedule. Encouraged residents to review the Borough website for further information.
- D.** Roberta updated our kiosk.

Sahel Abrahams presented his Eagle Scout Project to the EC members. Using his computer skill, he would create a data base for hazards on our walking trails such as fallen trees, erosion, signs down, etc. Residents would advise the location and the problem. Sahel, and scouts, would go to the site and take photographs.

A discussion was had with members and Sahel. He was advised there is an app currently in use in the borough to address problems. Members made some alternative suggestions and advised they would review and contact him shortly.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A.** Jeff discussed the End Of Year report, giving it good marks.
- B.** Welcomed new EC committee member, Geri DeSapio, and the 14 Green Team members.
- C.** Discussion continued concerning the proposed Warehouses on US Rt. 22 in Bridgewater.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Helene stated members need to have priorities completed for **Sustainable New Jersey** and brought to our **February 14, 2023**, meeting. July is deadline for everything.
- B.** 2023 EC Projects.
 - 1. Arbor Day – April 21, 2023 – distribute tree seedlings.
 - 2. Earth Day and Green Fair – April 22, 2023 – information and town clean-up.
 - 3. Fruit trees (\$ from Somerset Garden Club) planted at the Community Garden.
 - 4. Planting 175 trees from NJ Community Forestry Department.
 - 5. School outreach: SHS Sustainability Group and projects for Elementary School.
 - 6. Tree inventory and Ordinances.
 - 7. Opening of Community Garden in Spring.
 - 8. Street Trees in the Fall.
 - 9. Invite John Knox (Solar Me/Dogwood Farms) to do a presentation in December 2023.
 - 10. End of Year Report.
- C.** Gina discussed Green Infrastructure.
 - 1. ANJEC has a series on green infrastructure.
 - 2. State inserting new language in the rules concerning new commercial and residential Development.
 - 3. Invite Colin Driver, Director of Economic Development, to our meeting to clarify new laws.

V. REPORTS

- A.** Borough Council – Gina Stravic – Liaison
 - 1. Move ordinance forward for SNJ.
- B.** Planning Board – Larry Cleveland – Liaison
 - 1. Discussion of warehouses on Rt. 22, Bridgewater (see Old Business).
 - 2. Discussed resolution for permanent occupancy for A & A Somerville LCC's (2) 5 story buildings.
- C.** Green Team – Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo – Liaison - Update given by Geri.
 - 1. January – finalize application and contract for garden.
 - 2. February - advertising – flyers, social media, etc.
 - 3. March – applications go out – lottery – limited number of beds.
 - 4. April – announce lottery winners – consider Girl Scout badge – garden art.
 - 5. 12 beds – 2 raised – 1 wheelchair accessible – 8 other configurations.
 - 6. Keep one bed for Green Team.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Geri.

Seconded by Helene.

Meeting adjourned 9:35 p.m.

