

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 13, 2023**

PRESENT: Jeffrey Lamborn (Chair), Sandra Benscoter (Secretary), Geri DeSapio, Geoff Keiser, Rebecca Reitman Garofalo, Glen Denys, Roberta Harmon, Gina Stravic (Borough Council Liaison), and Larry Cleveland (Planning Board Liaison).

ABSENT: Helen Venizelos (Vice Chair).

VISITOR: Jefry Tineo

Meeting is called to order at 7:42 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.

I. MINUTES: May 2023 minutes. Minutes corrected on the motion made by Geoff, seconded by Glen, and carried unanimously.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

- A.** No EC mail at Borough Hall.
- B.** Notification of Bridgewater Super Fund Site (old Cyanamid site) restoration plan.
- C.** Somerville High School student, James Meister, interested in doing volunteer work.
- D.** Notification from ANJEC: Governor Murphy announces adoption of updated Flood Hazard Protection rules.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A.** Timarie continues to work on the EC logo.
- B.** Jeff will be going to Bridget's home to present her with a Barnes & Noble gift certificate and a small gift for her high school graduation. We wish her great years ahead!
- C.** Several members attended the virtual kick-off meeting for the Home Energy Efficiency Program by PSEG & SNJ.
 - 1.** Paige is coordinating the effort.
 - 2.** 180 households currently being served. The goal is 400 total households.
 - 3.** Marketing info will be supplied for EC to distribute.
 - 4.** An outreach plan is needed by July 14, 2023.
- D.** Helene is waiting for a response from SNJ concerning our application.
- E.** Boy Scout Troop 84 is interested in weeding the rain gardens in Carol Pager Park.
- F.** Eric Schenck of Fiat Ventures, along with 30 students, will remove invasive species along Peter's Brook behind the Girl Scout Tree Arbor on July 11 from 10am to noon.
- G.** Visitor, Jefry Tineo, suggested including volunteer information on our social media sites.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Jeff and Sande attended Raritan's Environmental Commission meeting.
 - 1. Shared our knowledge concerning grants, loans, ordinances, social media, etc.
 - 2. Discussed Raritan's share of Clean Communities money for their EC.
 - 3. Sandra given a name to contact at NJ Transit for a beautification project.
- B.** Downtown Streetscape with DSA
 - 1. Mike Kerwin, chair of DSA Board, invited Jeff to attend the meeting.
 - 2. Somerville EC was one of three organizations submitting suggestions to the Streetscape steering committee.

V. REPORTS

- A.** Green Team – Rebecca Reitman Garofalo – Liaison
 - 1. Les Floyd volunteered to paint a mural at the Community Garden. Discussion on location of mural followed.
 - 2. A Facebook group page was created for garden members to share information.
 - 3. The Green Team is planning an event in July for garden participants.
 - 4. Timarie will plan a fall workshop in the garden.
 - 5. Paul Soltis from the Wallace house will send suggestions on opportunities for EC to collaborate in future projects.
- B.** Borough Council – Gina Stravic – Liaison
 - 1. Council discussed redevelopment issues.
 - 2. The OEM building costs are escalating due to prevailing wage laws that were not factored in original proposal.
- C.** Planning Board – Larry Cleveland – Liaison
 - 1. Developers requested one retail space be changed to office space at the proposed "Avalon" Somerville Train Station Plaza area off South Bridge Street.
 - 2. Suggested a proposal for Mike Cole to research and include flood areas on the Somerville tax map.
 - 3. Changing offices in PO-R Zone (Professional Office) to residential is a current trend. Revised Land Use Ordinance going to Borough Council.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Geoff.

Seconded by Geri.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.