

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 12, 2022**

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

**ABSENT:** Janet Peranatonì

Green team: Colleen Reh Sweeney, Geri DeSapio and Grace Kollmer

**VISITORS:** Nandini Checko (ANJEC Rep.), Susan Lacerda, and Bridget Lacerda (GS Troop 60087).

Meeting was called to order at 7:40 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.

Bridget presented her GS Gold Award project to the members. She will be coordinating an Earth Day Swap: Homeowners will put items they wish to donate out on their front lawn. Bridget will have a table at the Green Fair, also.

**I. MINUTES:** March 2022 minutes. The minutes were approved on the motion made by Geoff, seconded by Glen, and carried unanimously.

**II. COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. No mail for EC this month.
- B. Patty Hunt (Somerville Comm. Director) sending EC info through E Connect.
- C. Rain Barrel rebates and Earth Day Fair posted on EC social media sites.
- D. ANJEC Environmental Commission webinar – several members participated.

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Roberta reviewed items placed in our EC kiosk.
- B. Dini suggested cigarette butt boxes on Main Street and ways to recycle restaurant food waste.
- C. Sande picked up the Salem Oak Seedling and care for it until it's planted on the Wallace House property.
- D. Geoff posted Earth Day information on the EC website.
- E. Glen and Geoff reported on the meeting of the Ad Hoc Rezoning Committee.
  - 1. Consideration of floor zones.
  - 2. Not build where it would be detrimental to Somerville.
  - 3. Specific zoning on Cliff Street buildings

- F. Tree Ordinance – Glen
  1. Reviewing model ordinances from other towns.
  2. Encourage good tree care.
  3. Focus on what we can control.
  4. Checking grants for tree inventory.
- G. Earth Day/Arbor Day Fair plans.
  1. Helene and Geri – forms went home to parents of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders wanting tree seedlings. Pick up seedlings on April 23 at the SHS parking lot.
  2. Owners of Surf, Turf and Earth and the owner of Bliss offered their facilities for programs.
  3. Helen, Gina and Sande will bring information boards to the fair.
  4. Jeff will contact Jason Kraska for Borough clean-up and seedling plantings maps.
- H. New Jersey No Plastic bill goes into effect on May 4, 2022.
  1. Helene and Jeff will do an informational video – BAG-UP.
  2. ANJEC webinar on May 3, 2022: Get The Facts About NJ Plastics Law.

#### IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Welcome Roberta to the committee.
- B. Rebecca will be chair and liaison of the Green Team.
- C. Arbor Day will be combined with Earth Day celebration.
- D. Planting of tree seedling with YMCA after school program children on April 22, 2022.
- E. Community Forestry Tree Plan rewrite postponed until the May meeting.
- F. May meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. across from the YMCA. Clean up of rain garden prior to meeting.

#### V. REPORTS

- A. Planning Board – Larry Cleveland – Liaison
  1. Corner of Main and South Bridge Sts. – 2 restaurants in building approved.
  2. South Bridge St.(old Lips Lounge) 58 apartments – parking underground approved.
- B. Borough Council – Gina Stravic – Liaison
  1. Rescue Squad fatality – boy on bike hit by truck. Suggestion EC work with Recreation dept. to sponsor a bike rodeo to encourage bike safety in community.
  2. Hospital not paying taxes.
  3. Christine Wessel from the American Tree Foundation is filling out grant on our behalf.
  4. Governor Murphy to speak on climate change vulnerability and land use elements.
- C. Green Team – Rebecca Reitman Garofalo – Liaison
  1. Looked into NEXTREX recycling.
  2. Submitted cost of Community Garden to Borough including \$3,559 for 14 planting beds. Borough donating \$3,000.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Colleen.

Seconded by Rebecca.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

