

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 8, 2022**

PRESENT: Gina Stravic (Chair), Jeffrey Lamborn (Vice Chair), Sandra Benscoter (Secretary), Geoff Keiser, Janet Perantoni, Helene Venizelos, Glen Denys, Larry Cleveland (Planning Board Liaison), and Thompson Mitchell (Borough Council Liaison).

ABSENT: Rebecca Reitman Garafalo.

Green Team: Geraldine DeSapio and Colleen Reh Sweeney.

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 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.

Welcome to our new Green Team member, Geraldine DeSapio.

I. MINUTES: January, 2022 minutes. The minutes were approved on a motion made by Janet, seconded by Glen and carried unanimously.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Garden Club of Somerset Hills is offering grants.
- B. Tom forwarded to group additional grant programs available.
- C. Colleen volunteered to help with grant writing.
- D. Sande reported no mail needing our attention.
- E. Geoff will contact ANJAC to verify our complete roster.
- F. Committee was approved for the Storm Water Committee.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Jeff reported EC has 515 followers on Facebook.
- B. 2nd quarter kiosk information will be updated in April.
- C. Geoff updated EC information in the Somerville website. Sent access info to members.
- D. Sande communicating with Paul Soltis (Wallace House) concerning the Salem Oak seedling planting on the Wallace House property. Waiting for conformation.
- E. Beautification project for NJT step access off Veterans Memorial Drive at a standstill.
- F. Jeff submitted report for volunteer hours and NJ UCF program's annual accomplishment report (AAR).
- G. Discussion on revised goals for the 2022 Work Chart.
- H. Helene advised elementary schools must apply by 3/15/22 if they wish to distribute free tree seedlings to 3rd graders.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Gina applied for \$2000 grant through SNJ for the Community Garden.
- B.** EV Charging Station Ordinance
 - 1.** Discussion to require new construction to add charging stations.
- C.** Need to update/rewrite Community Forestry Tree Plan.
 - 1.** Jeff is investigating grants and ordinances.

V. REPORTS

- A.** Green Team
 - 1.** Janet reported the meeting with the Fire Department concerning the community garden had a negative response.
 - 2.** Kevin says the town is being focused on keeping the original plan.
- B.** Planning Board – Larry Cleveland (Liaison)
 - 1.** New construction on the corner of East Main and South Bridge Streets will contain three restaurants.
 - 2.** Property across from the Police Station on South Bridge Street is scaled down.
 - 3.** Historical Committee will do a presentation to Planning Board at next meeting.
- C.** Borough Council – Thompson Mitchell (Liaison)
 - 1.** EC will tour Sewage Plant immediately preceding our February meeting.
 - 2.** Committee to investigate rezoning and rewriting ordinance.
 - a.** Public input.
 - b.** Flood zoning advisory committee.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Janet.

Seconded by Helene.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.