

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 14, 2022**

**PRESENT:** Jeffrey Lamborn (Chair) via telephone, Helene Venizelos (Vice Chair), Sandra Bencoter (Secretary), Geoff Keiser, Glen Denys, Roberta Harmon and Gina Stravic (Borough Council Liaison).

**ABSENT:** Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo, Janet Perantoni and Larry Cleveland.

Green Team: Geri DeSapio

Bridget Lacerda: Somerville H.S. EC Liaison

Meeting was called to order at 7:36 by Helene. 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 2022 minutes. The minutes were approved on the motion made by Geoff, seconded by Sande, and carried unanimously.

**II. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A.** Helen read communication notes sent by Jeff.

1. ANJEC: EC Round Table on Community Engagement: 6/14 at 7:00 p.m.
2. SNJ: Sustainability Summit 6/24, Holmdel, NJ, and \$2,000 grant award.
3. NJUCF: Urban Forestry study results and grants available.
4. Raritan EC: phone meeting with Emilie Stander (Chair).
5. NJ Future/FEMA/Somerset Cty.: discussions concerning stormwater utility.

**B.** Bridget will post items on Instagram for Somerville EC.

**C.** No EC mail.

**D.** Posted on EC social media sites: Vanderveer School 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students planting tree seedlings with EC members Helene and Geri.

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

**A.** Kiosk at Exchange Field current.

**B.** Advisory flood/rezoning committee

1. Modifying draft.
2. Glen addressed trees on property where an egress is proposed.

**C.** EC received Garden Club grant of \$750 for fruit trees and berry bushes.

**D.** EC applying for NJ Community Reforestation grant.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**A.** Discussion on EC mission statement.

**B.** Discussion concerning rewriting our current Forestry Tree Plan.

**C.** Glen will examine a process of removing certain size trees in the Borough.

- D. Roberta discussed additional things to recycle: wine bottle corks, crayons, yoga mats, old CD's, old towels, etc. and what facilities will take them.
- E. Summary of Vanderveer 3<sup>rd</sup> grade presentation by Helene and Geri.
- F. EC dinner at Juniper Hill, Clinton, N.J. on July 17, 2022, at 5 p.m. Respond by 7/12/22.

## **V. REPORTS**

- A. Green Team – Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo – Liaison
  - 1. Update on Community Garden.
  - 2. Members volunteered to plant vegetables and herbs in raised beds.
  - 3. Glen offered chicken 'poop' for fertilization of the beds.
- B. Planning Board – Larry Cleveland – Liaison
  - 1. Owners of old train station building asking the facility to be removed from the train station redevelopment plan to a B2 Zone, thus removing their parking requirements.
  - 2. Taco Bell on Rt. 2 will be allowed to move the takeout speaker to western side of building and be allowed to stay open until 1:00 a.m.
  - 3. PB had courtesy review of plans for the new police and fire HQ on Gaston Ave.
  - 4. Bridgewater PB will review a proposal to knock down several office buildings on Route 22 between Gaston Ave. and Adamsville Rd. to build 2 super-sized Amazon styled warehouses on the site.
    - a. Access will drive all truck traffic through Somerville and Gaston Ave.
    - b. Somerville PB and attorney working on response for this not to be approved.
- C. Borough Council – Gina Stravic - Liaison
  - 1. No conversation on Spot Zoning.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Geoff.

Seconded by Glen.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.