

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 13, 2024**

PRESENT: Jeffrey Lamborn (Chair), Sandra Benscoter (Secretary), Geoff Keiser, Timarie Diehl, Geraldine DeSapio, Jefry Tineo, Laurence Cleveland (Planning Board Liaison) and Glen Denys (Borough Council Liaison).

Green Team: Gina Stravic and John Guarino.

ABSENT: Helene Venizelos and Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo.

GUESTS: Kevin More (Resident).

The meeting is 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.

I. MINUTES: January 11, 2024. Minutes were approved on a motion made by Geri, seconded by Geoff, and carried unanimously.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Sande reporter communication concerning a DEP permit application by the South Bridge Garden apartments for a bio retention basin in their parking lot.
- B. The solar project on the borough landfill site is currently at a standstill.
- C. Tim will repeat some content that was previously posted on our social media sites.
- D. Geoff had a conversation with Patty concerning the addition of info on the EC Borough website.
- E. Jefry will continue updates on the EC kiosk.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Earth Day/Green Fair
 - 1. Confirm date (April 20, 2024) and time (11a.m.-2p.m.) with DSA for fair on Division Street.
 - 2. Somerville HD parking lot for educational display and pick up for clean-up supplies.
 - a. April 20, 2024, from 9a.m. to 10:30a.m.
 - b. Application and confirmation.
 - 3. Confirm with Rodney DPW's help.
- B. Discussion concerning the DEP's suggested Tree Removal/Replacement ordinance.
 - 1. Committee appointed to investigate an ordinance will include Jeff, Larry, Geoff, Glen, Jefry and Gina.

- C. Jeff reported the DSA Street Trees and Infrastructure Committee agree to replace three Main Street (East to West) trees a year.
- D. Geoff presented a flyer to be distributed for the planting of street trees for residents of Somerville.
 - 1. There is approximately \$9,600 in the account.
 - 2. About 16 trees can be planted: \$550 a tree to purchase and install 1 tree.
 - 3. A committee will post flyers in public places in Somerville.
 - 4. Announcements will be posted on social media sites.
- E. Parkview Playground meeting was attended by Jeff.
 - 1. Playground soil facts and documented actions were presented.
 - 2. A reviewer will determine the soil contents.
- F. Urban and Community Forestry 2023 and AAR submitted to Kevin.
 - 1. EC will work on a new UCF plan for 2024.
- G. Grants.
 - 1. Gina applied for a grant from the Arbor Day Foundation.
 - 2. The Green Team applied for \$1,000 grant from the Somerset Hills Garden Club.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. RideWise Invitation to a Municipal Advisory Council.
 - 1. A former EC member, Roberta Harmon, will join and update our EC on transportation and pedestrian safety.

IV. REPORTS

- A. Green Team – Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo – Liaison – report by Jeff.
 - 1. Discussion of moving the storage shed outside of the fenced area.
 - 2. Application for garden bed lottery around March 10, 2024.
 - a. Final submission due March 25, 2024. Drawing on April 9, 2024.
 - b. Planting will start April 22, 2024.
- B. Planning Board - Larry Cleveland – Liaison
 - 1. NJ Elixir received PB approval for a meadery in the former Indian restaurant on Main Street.
- C. Borough Council – Glen Denys – Liaison
 - 1. Glen reported the council was pleased with the flood photographs submitted by Tim and requested some photographs of the same area dry.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Geri.

Seconded by Geoff.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.