

Millburn Township Environmental Commission

Tuesday June 8, 2021 @ 7:00 pm
(virtual meeting via Zoom)

MINUTES

Members: Joe Barbanel, Mark Hubertus (MHS), Reade Kem, Jorge Mastropietro, Wendy Minocha, Priya Patel (chair), Odarka Stockert, Elizabeth Vollavanh
Absent: Edward Hilzenrath

Township Committee Liaison: Tara Prupis - absent

Secretary: Carolyn Scannelli

Call to Order: 7:01 pm

Commission Business:

- a. Open public meeting statement: *This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6-10: 4-21. Notice of this meeting has been published in the Item of Millburn and Short Hills, and on Tap as filed by the Environmental Commission and on bulletin board at Millburn Town Hall*
- b. Master Plan Environmental Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations:
 - i. Protect and manage critical environmental resources in the township.
 - ii. Improve the quality of life for residents.
 - iii. Minimize the environmental impact of the township on the environment.
- c. Acceptance of May 11, 2021, minutes - Joe Barbanel motion to accept, Jorge Mastropietro 2nd with all others in favor.
- d. Treasurer Report – Treasurer position open.

Public Comment: None

Communication:

- a. Millburn Green Team liaison (position open) – Wendy stated that Sustainable Millburn is asking for residents to take the Green Challenge, which can be found on their Facebook page. Taking the challenge will help the Green Team achieve Sustainable Jersey points.
- b. Millburn High School E-Club (MH) –Washington School's 5th graders were the recipient of Aquafest's water and environmental education activities this year. The materials were sent to the teachers to share with students. The EC club held its election and Noah Packman will be the new president.
- c. Millburn Township Green Schools Team (JM) – No report until September.
- d. Pedestrian Safety Advisory Board (TP) – No report.
- e. Bike Walk Millburn (JM) – Tour de Millburn registration is open for township residents. Meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 10.
- f. Downtown Area Vision Plan (PP) – Consists of three subcommittees:
 - 1) DPW site – Jorge is on this committee. Jorge indicated that the township is looking for public input on a new location for DPW. Jorge remarked that having people live within the downtown area makes it vibrant.
 - 2) Taylor Park Entrance – Priya is on this committee. Entrance only, by the gazebo and rose garden. Odarka suggested using a water collection system at the gazebo. Priya will pass her suggestion along.

3) Traffic flow – a presentation was made at the last Township Committee meeting.

Township Committee Report (TP) – No report.

Planning Board report (JM) – No new applications and nothing new to report.

Old Business

- ⇒ Stormwater Management/Green Infrastructure Ordinance (EV/JM/EH) – Liz stated that although Ed has completed the amendment, they have not reviewed it together. Priya posed two questions for clarification regarding the amendment: 1) redevelopment of “property sites” residential, commercial or both types of property sites, Liz will check and confirm.
2) clarification on lowering the threshold for minor developments from 500 sq. feet to 200 sq. feet; Liz stated that 200’ is mentioned in another document and they want to unify the numbers. Further review the amendment at next EC meeting.
- ⇒ Gas Powered Leaf Blowers Ordinance (JB) – Joe spoke with a landscape contractor who uses conventional equipment and handheld battery equipment. The contractor has a two-tiered pricing structure, environmentally friendly and conventional. Joe is waiting on a proposal for his home. Joe spoke with him about the economics and performance of the equipment. The contractor stated that the equipment cost for electric vs gas was the same. He uses solar panels on the roof of his truck to charge the batteries. The contractor stated that electric leaf blowers are not as powerful as gas, although the design of the equipment is changing. Electric leaf blowers are lighter and preferable to his workers. If the gas price stays the same, electric would be more economical. Joe is hoping to get some additional sufficient information to present to the Township Committee. Priya suggested talking to Deb Ellis, who is a retired Civil Rights lawyer, who advocates on the “right to private enjoyment” at your own home, regarding noise from leaf blowers. Joe will contact Deb Ellis.
- ⇒ Green Building Ordinance (JM/EV) – Jorge presented a slideshow of recommendations on how to build in a more environmentally sustainable way. Jorge explained that one of the codes used when constructing new buildings and renovations over 50% of assessed value is the 2018 IECC - International Energy Conservation Code. The presentation focused on energy usage on residential and commercial buildings and the need for high efficiency heating and cooling, daylighting, high efficiency lighting, insulation improvement, water conservation, addressing stormwater runoff, electric vehicle and bicycle parking for commercial and residential buildings. Another action Jorge suggested could be to mandate an energy audit for new constructions and renovations over 50% of the assessed property value. Jorge is open for suggestions and input from the EC members. He will also share this information with the code review subcommittee. He will look into the enforcement of the IECC code.
Priya suggested to include comparisons of similar towns to Millburn where they require green building requirements, such as Southhampton Village and similar towns. Also suggested was to list the top 3 achievable items, one being EV parking.
- ⇒ Open Space Trust Fund (RK/OS) – No update.
- ⇒ Food Waste Recycling Pilot (PP)
Diverted 8,422 pounds of organic food waste since February 1.
Program will continue to run through January 31, 2022. Receiving a lot of positive feedback. The toters have room and can hold more food scrap. More residents may be able to join.
- ⇒ Whittingham Triangle Pollinator Garden (EV/OS) – Slight change to path to create walkthrough area and 2 additional signs for (1) monarch waystation (2) pollinator pathway. Plans will be presented to Township Committee at 6/15 meeting. Plants are being picked up on June 22. New topsoil has been added.
- ⇒ Energy Efficiency/Carbon Footprint webinar series (WM) –
NJ Clean Energy webinar was held on June 7. Topics included Native landscaping, health of your home, and NJ Clean Energy. 47 registered, 19 attended. Will plan for a fall webinar. Open for topic suggestions.
- ⇒ Community Choice Energy Aggregation (PP) – Ordinance should be adopted at the June 15 meeting. If the town joins the cooperative, residents will be able to get a better rate for electricity

and, in addition, residents would be able to opt up to 100% renewables. Educational information would be available.

New Business

- ⇒ Tour de Millburn – September 12. Volunteers needed. Priya suggested allocating \$500 to help with their expenses. Jorge Mastropietro motioned to allocate \$500 and Joe Barbanel 2nd with all in favor.

- Next MEC Meeting: September 14. No meeting for July (as Priya is out of town) and August (for summer recess).

Joe Barbanel motion to adjourn, Jorge Mastropietro 2nd with all in favor.

Adjourn 8:18

Carolyn Scannelli
Minutes Secretary