

MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Tuesday, June 22, 2021

Manchester Township Municipal Building
1 Colonial Drive, Manchester Township, NJ

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Wells called the Regular Meeting of the Manchester Township Environmental Commission to order with the following statement: “Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with Open Public Meetings Act. Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was advertised in the Asbury Park Press and the Star Ledger.”

Time: 5:00 PM

This was followed with the Salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL:

Rory Wells	Present
William Cook	Present
William Foor	Present
Peggy Middaugh	Present
Genevieve Stavallo	Present
Gabrielle Fox	Present
Kristy Henry	Absent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

May 25, 2021 Regular Meeting

Ms. Middaugh made a motion to approve the May 25, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by Ms. Stavallo.

Roll call vote: Mr. Foor, Ms. Middaugh, Ms. Stavallo, Mr. Wells; yes. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ocean Windmill Project

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Peggy, for passing along the two names of potential speakers on this topic. I’m not sure yet if we should have the speakers at a regularly scheduled meeting, or a separate meeting. I would like to bring in two speakers – one in support of the windmills and one opposed – so we get a clear overview. Governor Murphy is in favor and wants to fast track this project as part of the master energy plan. Phase one initially calls for 99 structures, 15-20 miles out into the Ocean, off the coast of Atlantic City. The lines will run through Ocean County. Additional windmills further north in the next phase. One of my concerns is that the proposed bills relating to this project would essentially remove power from the local and county boards. Aesthetics and disruption of natural habitats are also a potential concern. There are benefits as well. I would like our Commission to take a stance on this.

Ms. Middaugh: There was a NJ Spotlight Roundtable discussion on this where a lot of your concerns are addressed. I emailed you all a link.

Mr. Wells asked Secretary Frazee to add this link to our website and create a separate section for the Ocean Windmill Project and Plastics.

OLD BUSINESS:

Brooksbrae Cleanup

Mr. Wells thanked Ms. Fox for her work on the Brooksbrae Cleanup.

Ms. Fox: Watershed Ambassador Emily McGuckin and I pushed the information out to people in Manchester via Facebook groups and sending flyers to the local schools. There were about 20 volunteers, and we collected about 20 bags of trash. Ms. Middaugh helped clear bags of trash.

Ms. Middaugh: Thank you, Gabrielle for making this happen, you did a great job. I had never seen that place before. I am concerned about the graffiti in the road near the entrance and also on about 50 trees.

Mr. Wells: I am meeting with the Director of Public Works on Thursday. I wonder if we could put up signs to respect the environment. We could also ask for more police patrol.

Mr. Wells asked Secretary Frazee to carry this item to the July agenda.

Secretary Frazee advised that the Mayor's office had received a complaint about the graffiti in the road, and it was reported to the County.

EV Pilot Program / Charging Stations

Mr. Wells: There is an EV webinar on Thursday that I plan to attend. This is a bifurcated project – attaining EVs for Manchester's fleet and bringing charging stations to the town. There are federal and state grants available. We need to decide on one or two locations and find out where the power would come from.

141 Office Park – Block 109, Lot 5

Mr. Cook: The Zoning Board is still hearing testimony on this application. It is for a warehouse subdivided for storage of materials by small businesses. The owner is leaving a lot of the area forested and is willing to plant trees all around the property.

3858 Ridge Avenue – Block 66, Lots 1 & 2

Mr. Cook: The Use Variance application was approved. The owner is very amenable to putting in charging stations. There will be an Environmental Impact Study included in the application.

Ms. Middaugh: As I understand, there are two lots they are looking to combine. One of the lots is completely forested. Does a variance have to be given out for this type of project?

Mr. Cook: Use variances are not given out easily. There are reasons the board approved it. It was a pretty long meeting. I will send you all some of the pertinent points as to why it should have been granted. We will see this again when a site plan comes before the board.

MEMBER REPORTS:

Mr. Foor: There will be two Planning Board meetings this month – the regular meeting is on July 5th and a special meeting on July 19th.

Ms. Middaugh: Sustainable Jersey is promoting the NJ Tree Foundation Tree Keeper's series of workshops starting June 30th thru August 14th. For more information, visit <https://njtrees.org/treekeepers-workshop-2021/>

I'm working with NJ Clean Energy on a volunteer basis, to help spread the word about the Clean Energy Program. There are a lot of people not taking advantage of these money-saving programs that also reduce the use of energy. A consultant from NJ Clean Energy is giving short presentations at the local association meetings. If you are interested, or know of any senior communities that might be, let me know.

Mr. Cook expressed interested in having NJ Clean Energy come to a Renaissance Men's Club meeting.

Mr. Wells asked Secretary Frazee to let him know if she hears anything from the county about the graffiti in the road.

Mr. Wells: I started watching a show about surviving in the wilderness called "Alone". The contestants have to survive in the wilderness for 90 days and the last one standing wins \$500,000. It really gives an appreciation for nature and being outdoors. I think that is one of the few benefits of the pandemic, people have been spending more family time and more time outdoors. A return to nature if you will. There is a higher demand for outdoor recreation equipment; Kayaks are hard to get right now. People have also been doing more gardening and home improvement projects.

We talked last month about how we know if developers comply with certain regulations. Oftentimes, builders have to post a bond, but this isn't necessarily the case for Pinelands Commission notices. Perhaps the inspectors would know the answer.

Mr. Foor: As part of the new stormwater management ordinance, I believe contractors are required to submit a maintenance plan.

Mr. Cook: Who will inspect basins to make sure they are being maintained?

Mr. Wells: Once the plans are approved, it might just be an integrity system. I will do some more digging. This may be something we can improve upon and make recommendations.

PUBLIC FORUM:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, on motion by Ms. Middaugh and seconded by Mr. Wells, the meeting was adjourned. All in favor, motion carried.

Time: 6:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Frazee
Commission Secretary