COMMERCIAL TOWNSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF November 14, 2023

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Chairperson Peter Manzelmann. He announced that the meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Present: Peter Manzelmann, John Dayton, Dustin Piccolo, Dale Schweitzer, Pat Smith and Lorraine Shourds. Also present: Mayor Mike Vizzard; Absent: Katie Dayton,

Minutes of September 12, 2023: no corrections needed, asked for correction regarding the building at the Residential Building at the Meerwald noted under the Land Use update, motion to approve by Lorraine, seconded by John.

**Old Business**

ANJEC Report- Orsted pulled out of the offshore wind development along the shoreline. They were the contractor so it seems as though that project is on hold because of tax reasons. Burlington County is now recycling pizza boxes and is educating people on how they can clean them so they can be recycled. Could be worth looking into how to recycle them for our township. Governor Murphy is threatening to cut $60 million dollars from environmental programs, ANJEC is encouraging environmental commissions to adopt a resolution and try to talk the governing body of the township to adopt the resolution as well. The resolution has already been written by ANJEC. Murphy also cut $60mil dollars yearly of land preservation and cleanup of hazardous polluted sites starting in Jan. 2024. He is also proposing on spending 10million dollars to extend the North and South Jersey turnpike and ANJEC would like a resolution encouraging using those funds towards climate friendly means of transportation. If we adopt them, we will send them into ANJEC. The group will read through the resolutions and vote to adopt them at our next meeting. Pat will take the lead in sending a copy of the resolutions out to be read through prior to the next meeting.

Sustainable Jersey- Membership status is currently on hold due to the end of the year. As we come into the new year John will look at the certifications, we have that we can renew for the upcoming year. We have been approved for some of the baseline and smaller projects. It has been a slow process to update our points but we should be able to push to continue in the new year.

Osprey Project- Sign progress: it was difficult to get started and find a sign manufacturer that we could work with through the grant and township. John did reach out to Seth who stated he would be able to make a sign for us, and it should be less than the original company. We have also reached out to Pete Dunne to get some informational text for the sign and has gotten photographs from his photographer if possible. If not there are a lot of other options to get pictures. We will work to plan an event around the unveiling of the sign.

TerraCycle Collection- Peter dropped off about 15lbs of materials from the post office, the Haleyville senior center and from Port Norris post office, as well as collecting the box back from the Laurel Lake counseling center and Bayshore center. We will also collect the box from the library. It is too difficult to collect from these locations.

Bluebirds /Purple Martins- Peter winterized the bluebird boxes in the park and asked others with boxes to winterize them. US Silica and Fred Hunt are working on 2 display signs at the park that will include information about the bluebirds and the Morie family history.

Facebook and Community Outreach- There have been some things posted recently, mainly regarding leaf cleanup and pumpkin use during the holidays. Peter would like to add a post about male gypsy moths and the controversial naming of these animals, so there is a push to rename these species to less negative names.

Land Use Board Update- there will be a new state police barracks built on land owned by the township. The only thing that seems to be of concern is that the landscaping is to be maintained by the township, but there is no irrigation being added to the property. Dustin recommended writing a letter stating our recommendations and maybe reaching out to Barber nursery to see about donating landscaping materials to help offset the cost. Next month they will be discussing an ordinance for the requirements for sale and growing of marijuana, so if the commission has any recommendations that would be helpful.

Resiliency Report- Commercial/ Maurice River Townships Partnership- Peter was not able to attend the last meeting, but Mike reported that he is trying to ensure that the township is aware of all of the requirements the state is asking the township to make, so Mike would like assistance in selecting the items that need to be done and coming up with a big vision for helping improve the resiliency of the township. We have been asked to help facilitate public meetings to help the community understand the needs. You can see the flood map at NJfloodmapper.org. It would be helpful to print out the map so that we can show the community if they are in the flood zone. Mike would like any recommendations we can to help improve flooding and resiliency.

US Silica- Peter met with Justo again and was given a list of things they were working on, such as spraying more water, fixing a shoot that is causing a loud banging noise and getting new trees planted. Peter did bring up concerns on Nobel St. Peter will continue to meet with Justo to ensure a positive relationship. John also reported that he did report a truck that sped through the intersection, and Justo stated he would take care of the issue and we have not noticed any concerns since. Would it be possible to have US Silica to complete an air quality test- Peter will follow up with Justo to find out if they can be completed, or if they are can we get copies of the report.

**New Business**

Single Use Plastic Update- Peter talked Chris Finch and they now have bailers for single use plastic and Peter will get the green bins and will post them around the township to begin collecting plastics again. Chris will transport them to the bailer. Pat will ask the Port Norris post office to see if we can place a bin there. Some recommended ideas are Lalli’s liquors, the post offices and Haleyville center. We will just need to collect from the bins and bring them to Peter for Chris to pick up.

Millville water connection- There was a township meeting and there was discussion that it was possible to connect Laurel Lake to Millville water supply. They are also looking into building infrastructure to add sewer as well. Trying to make it as minimal cost to residents as well. They are looking into grants to make it so you do not have to pay to get hooked up, and the only fees will be the monthly fee. This will also help improve property value, but public education will be needed to help the community understand the importance of this project.

Bayshore center: Peter and Mary-Ann met with the new director and she was very open to connect with the commission and help with projects we might have.

Shade Tree Commission Creation Update- Dustin thinks that we can incorporate shade tree plans into resiliency plans. The recommendation will be to encourage use of native trees.

**Open to the public-** Ken McGuill- Mauricetown, NJ- The county has repaved certain roads and putting in new drywells, but what is the plan to maintain them? Mike stated they struggling them to get maintained, but cannot speak for the county. Second question- When the recycle trucks come through there have been a couple of incidents that it seemed the recycling and trash has gone into the same truck, so it is important to call township hall and report these concerns to Heather. Third- Important to keep in mind the possibility of requests for smaller building lots if the water and sewer gets approved since there is not the need for distance for septic systems.

**Correspondence-** request to replace a malfunctioning septic system at 1639 Main St., no concerns noted.

There will be an upcoming vote for new positions on the commission so please think if there are any positions you would like to serve.

We did have a table at Riverfest and there was a lot of names and requests for a newsletter that Katie will work to create in the new year.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:00 made by Dale seconded by Lorainne.