

PRINCETON ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 26, 2014– 7:30 pm
Meeting Room A, Municipal Building
400 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ 08540

I. Opening Statement

Adequate notice of this meeting as required by Sections 3d and 4a of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided and filed with the municipal Clerk.

II. Wasserman opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Present were: Wasserman, Zemble, Fichtenbaum, Chorney, Marcus-Levine, Molina, Miller

Absent was: Birge, Welles, Spindel, Herlihy and Crumiller

III. Approval of Agenda:

Chorney asked that Avalon Bay and a subcommittee to review ordinances be added to the agenda.

A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

IV. Minutes:

A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of February 26, 2014.

V. Public Comment:

There was no public present for the meeting.

VI. Discussions and Decisions:

- a) **Council Update:** Wasserman noted that Crumiller was unable to attend the meeting however she sent an email with a list of ordinances that will be discussed and a timeline of when they would be discussed. Chorney noted that the timing of the discussions range from 2014 to 2017 and that there are 26 ordinances up for discussion in 2014. Wasserman said he will move this discussion until later on in the focus areas.
- b) **Broad Waste Ordinance:** Chorney said she met with Welles and Spindel and noted that Marcus-Levine would also like to join her group. Wasserman noted that if the four of them are going to meet, it must be noticed. Chorney said she called a few towns regarding the “pay as you throw” program to see how it was working and if there was a cost savings. She then met with Crumiller, Pellichero, Sustainable Princeton Rep,

Princeton University rep, and Welles to gather information. It was decided that the group would meet once a month. She said they set goals with the timeline of 1-3 years. Each month they will try and meet to work on a specific goal. She read off the list of goals which contained issues such as enforcing recycling downtown, business recycling, residential composting, yard waste, solid waste removal, greening events, increasing composting and getting it ordinance, new local compost facility and adding a fee to bags. She said the State said that the “pay as you throw” program does not necessarily decrease the town's waste but she said the EPA told her that it does. She noted that in her conversation with Crumiller and Pellichero, they both did not think that the “pay as you throw” program had to be ordinance. She said it is something that can or cannot be included in the waste removal contract and handled by Public Works. Wasserman noted that when he spoke to the Mayor about the waste issue, she did note that waste is not on the list of priorities that Council will be working on this year. Chorney noted that waste is on the 2015 Council priority list. She said that Crumiller thinks it will be hard to make all of this mandatory after the town has offered free trash pick-up this year. She said Crumiller said it may be more realistic to put this program in place by 2016-2017. Molina noted that the town needs to push the merchant's downtown to compost, that way when it does become mandatory they are already doing it. Fichtenbaum said that understanding the timeframes is helpful so that the public can be educated and there will be ample time to advertise. He said that she thinks if the town does have a “pay as you throw” program, it will increase the incentive to compost. Chorney did note that she does not think that the PEC should be doing the financial analysis on the waste. Wasserman said the town has not done it so far, so he would like to do it, present them with the analysis and then let them come back with their numbers. Chorney said there is a group working on an ordinance to add a fee for the use of bags at a store, however there is concern from the stores that if it is not statewide they do not want to see it approved. For instance, if McCaffreys were to charge for the use of bags and ShopRite does not, then there will be more people going to ShopRite. Wasserman asked Chorney how she sees the PEC in all of this. She said she would like to see the PEC work together on an ordinance and also work together with Public Works on the waste contract. She said she thinks that the subcommittee needs to keep meeting so they are ready for the contract in 2015.

- c) **Leaf Ordinance:** Zemble said she met with Pellichero to discuss costs of the leaf pickups based on truck routes but Public Works does not have the numbers broken down that way. She said the numbers vary according to the weather and the quality of the trucks. She said Pellichero is going to send her more numbers to work with. Fichtenbaum said there is a schedule that is sent out to all of the residents each year; however it is hard for Public Works to stick to the schedule. She said she thinks it's good to understand how they come up with the schedule each year. Zemble said right now they have more pickups than what is in the plan because the public is demanding it. Molina said the PEC should be able to say they want them to see the leaf and branch pick up decreased simply for safety reasons. Fichtenbaum noted that it would be good to get track the pickups for the 2014 fall leaf pickups. Zemble noted that Pellichero told her that it is much easier for the trucks to pick up the leaves when they are in the bags. Zemble noted that Council is pushing back on making the bags mandatory because of the large lots up the ridge. Wasserman said it would be good to understand the other options available other than

having leaves on the streets. Chorney noted that the public needs to be eased into a new way of doing things. Wasserman said he spoke to some towns a few years back and Highland Park for example, had leaf pickup once a week and 95% of it is in bags. He said they deliver the bags to the residents for 20 cents each. Middlesex he said has leaf pickup in the fall 2 days per week and they give 20 bags free to the residents.

Fichtenbaum said in order to make this work, you need to build political will and you need a vocal public voice to write letters to newspapers in order to build public support and political will. Zemble suggesting hiring someone to do the waste analysis.

Wasserman said that is something they can look in to.

d) Greening Ordinances:

Wasserman said there will be ordinances that will be discussed at the first Council meeting. He discussed the ordinances that were listed and came up with the ordinances that the PEC is most interested in “greening”. Some of the ordinances that were discussed were parades, landscape registrations, amusements, trees & shrubs, demolition of structures and taxicabs. The PEC decided to concentrate on the #'s 27, 25,24,23,22,16,15,17,11,8, and 5 of the list of ordinances that was provided to them. Wasserman said he will get copies of each of the ordinances and the PEC can discuss at the next meeting.

e) Sustainable Princeton Update: Malcolm said that the key focus areas of Sustainable Princeton are energy and waste. She said they have working groups in place – municipal, residential, schools and business. She noted that all of the groups are up and running except the business group – that has had a slow start. She told the PEC that they can think of her and Diane Landis as staff personnel and they would be willing to help the PEC with whatever they can. She said Sustainable Princeton has a program called the “Energy Smart Homes Program” and that is a campaign to get homes to do assessments to save money and energy. She said currently they have 80 home assessments and will be doing an outreach campaign to increase that. She said they also have a municipal green team that is working with Sustainable Princeton to gain Silver Certification and right now there are 40 items that they are keeping track of. She said they are also looking at the municipal fleet inventory to find ways to reduce use. She also noted that the Police Dept has a drug disposal effort. She said they used to have a drug disposal day a few times a year, but now they are working on a permanent drop box. She also suggested that the PEC look at the Sustainable Jersey website to help with its review of ordinances. She also suggested working on greening ordinances that would help Sustainable Princeton gain points towards its Silver Certification.

f) PEC Ordinance: Wasserman noted that Crumiller sent the most recent draft of the PEC ordinance to everyone. Zemble said that there were some changes made to the PEC version of the ordinance. She also noted that the group was not enthusiastic about the PEC increasing its powers. The group talked about striking letter “f” from the ordinance, but after much discussion and an uncertainty about its fund raising powers, Wasserman said he would speak further to Crumiller about letter “f” and report back to the PEC. Zemble also noted that it may be helpful if a few members of the PEC attended the ZARC meetings.

g) PEC One Page Overview: The PEC discussed some minor changes to the document. Wasserman said he will keep the official copy and send a copy to Welles. He said this

documents needs to be put on the website so people can see exactly what the PEC's function is. Zemble suggested that the PEC also create a Facebook page.

- h) **Parks:** Molina said that the Parks Task Force has pulled the parks under the prevue of the Recreation Dept. She thinks the name of the department should be changed to Parks and Recreation, not just Recreation. Wasserman said the PEC can draft a memo and send it to the Council in the form of a recommendation. Molina said they are going to need adequate staff and Fichtenbaum suggested having a volunteer coordinator. Molina said she would draft a memo and bring it back to the PEC to approve.

VII. Updates and Regular Business:

- a) **Chairs report:** Wasserman reminder everyone of the Stream Clean Up at Turning Basin Park on April 5, 2014 at 1:00. He also noted that there has been some discussion about the use of the old "Blockbuster" building as a 7-11 store. He said this will be discussed at SPRAB and said the PEC needs to have a rep there. He said Molina and Marcus-Levine will be the PEC reps.
- b) **Board of Health:** Miller said the town has hired a new Health Officer. He said the health officer received an ear full at the last BOH meeting when the objectors for Avalon Bay were there. He said they were telling the BOH it is their job to protect the health of the community and they are very concerned about the demolition phase. He said the BOH will now provide oversight on this site and make sure it is done correctly. He also noted that there will be more air monitoring than originally anticipated. He also asked anyone with concerns about the Meningitis outbreak to read Krystal Knapps article on Planet Princeton. He said it is very informative and one of the best articles he has read on the subject.
- c) **Avalon Bay:** Chorney said she was at the Council meeting when the demolition was discussed and she wondered if it wasn't time for the PEC to come out with a statement regarding the demolition. Fichtenbaum said she had sent a list of questions to one of her neighbors who was attending that meeting and suggested that the PEC look at those questions and see if any of them can be incorporated into the memo. Fichtenbaum said she has seen asbestos removal done and it is very regulated. She read her list of questions to the PEC. Wasserman said there are 4 or 5 of those questions that are environmental issues. He said he will forward the list to Crumiller and the Mayor and will highlight the 4 or 5 that are environmental issues and also noting that all of the questions are important.

- VIII. Adjournment:** A motion was made and seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Debra Rogers, Secretary

Date Approved: April 23, 2014