

Princeton Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes Wednesday, March, 23 2022 at 7:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting
Princeton, NJ 08540

Land Acknowledgement: "We gather today on the land of the Lenni Lenape. As members of the Princeton community, we aspire to show appreciation, respect, and concern for all peoples and our environment. We acknowledge the genocide and continuous displacement of indigenous peoples and the harm inflicted upon the indigenous communities and people of color across the country. We honor the Lenape and other Indigenous caretakers of these lands and waters, the elders who lived here before, the Indigenous today, and the generations to come. We further acknowledge the millions of enslaved Africans and their descendants on whose backs this nation was created."

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 Princeton Clerk

Present: Deieso, Persky (7:50), Sands, Soos, Tech-Czarny, Watson, Zemble, Jones and Niedergang; **Guest Presenters:** Deanna Stockton, Jim Purcell, Dan Van Abs; **Public:** Erika Moser, Sophie Glovier; **Absent:** Fichtenbaum, Marcus-Levine, Hodach-Avalos

- I. **Approval of Agenda** -Approved with revision to let guests present prior to Council report motioned by Deieso, second by Zemble, with all in favor.
- II. **Approval of Minutes** -Motion to approve by Deieso second by Soos, with all in favor.
 - a. Feb 23, 2022
- III. **Public comment** -None.
- IV. **Council Report (Niedergang)** -Ordinance passed for establishing a special improvement district on the 28th to revitalize the downtown; Approved a resolution to hire a company for updating the Master Plan; Graduate Hotel construction update road has to be changed to one way during construction; Sustainable Landscaping in relation to meeting with assembly and senate leaders to share Princeton's environmental justice component; Community Compliance Officer will start in mid-April; Road treatments being used are salt with ice begone, a byproduct of vodka and rum, which is environmentally safe. Sands added that the Drinking Water Quality purview BOH vs PEC has to be clarified before proceeding.
- V. **Discussion & Decisions**

- A. **Flood & Storm Water Commission Update** (Van Abs/Purcell/ Stockton) -Primary focus and activities for 2020-2021 and community stormwater (SW) management plan, SW utility feasibility study, SW mitigation plan and drafting of a redevelopment ordinance for 2022 discussed by Abs. Major and minor developments, small and large projects, changes to the stormwater ordinances as well as how the current SW ordinance has caused an equity issue discussed by Purcell. Limited staff working on SW systems and sewers given the severe storms experienced and the details for the SW utility study discussed by Stockton. Presentation on file with PEC. Deiseo highlighted the issue of all the redevelopment data that was highlighted by the Princeton Coalition for Responsible Development in the Town Topics. Councilwoman Niedergang clarified that the data does not accurately reflect the affordable housing numbers.
- B. **Open Space/Community Science Event** -Watson stated that in partnership with the Princeton Public Library (PPL) & Rogers Wildlife Refuge the event will be held on May 1st. Sands stated that the donation to obtain additional backpacks and supplies for them was made by Deiseo and will be named for his grandson, Cole Morano. Watson requested commissioners to help with the logistics of the day. Sands thanked Watson and Deiseo for all their support in making this event a success.
- C. **Stream Cleanup 2022** -Sands stated that in partnership with The Watershed Institute, Princeton is confirmed for Sunday, April 24th from 9-11am at Hill Top Park area -including along Bunn Drive -not by a stream but preventative measures from ending up there- park at Hilltop Park.
- D. **Status for Achieving Annual Goals** -Soos discussed that the Community Energy initiative RGGI's first meeting will take place so the process is beginning again. Soos explained the resource that West Windsor created for solar installation and feels that Princeton should do the same for solar and electric vehicle installation. Persky reported that she attended the plastic presentation by ANJEC -where the enforcement part of the new law was under discussion. Persky also highlighted that during the education session with PMA business owners asked where they could get rid of their excess plastic bags that they are no longer allowed to use. This is being looked into by Sustainable Princeton. Sands mentioned the Virtual ANJEC Earth Day Fair will be held on the 22nd from 11am-2pm and asked the commissioners what should be highlighted this year as last year environmental justice was highlighted. Sands also mentioned that ANJEC's Highly Functioning Environmental Commissions Round Table will take place on April 5 at 7pm.

VI. **Reports:**

- a) **BOH** -Sands relayed information that Hodach-Avalos had provided via email. There are no new updates on the water.

Hodach-Avalos spoke with Diferdinando and he was on the same page regarding NJAW being something that is within the PEC's authority, and not needing any BOH approval. But certainly keep BOH posted on what PEC plans to do and what is found out from the discussion with NJAW -especially if there is a specific health concern that you hear of -like people getting sick from the water. From the BOH side, most of our last meeting was taken up again by the Cannabis discussion. BOH will be reviewing some code revisions which cover a number of nuisance items such as grass height, lead paint, etcetera but did not get to it at the last meeting. BOH discussed the process of returning to in person meetings for boards and commissions but logistics are still being determined.

- b) **Sustainable Princeton (SP)** -Jones discussed that a new series Sustainable Minds will be kicked off on March 30th; Mercer County Sustainable Coalition will have its Green Day event on April 30th; SP will recognize all the CAPERS students at a council meeting since they have been very helpful in mapping the SW outlets; May 14th hard to recycle event. Sands inquired about the content of the Sustainable Minds topic as PEC will be conducting an educational session in partnership with PPL that will focus on providing the public with details on the process related to development. Niedergang mentioned that The Watershed Institute (WI) has a program like this and possibly they could support PEC. Glovier agreed to connect with Sands, Fichtenbaum and Marcus Levine and provide a video of the course WI held. Jones stated that on April 1st she will be stepping down as the Executive Director but will be staying on part time for a few months to support as Symington gets used to the role.
- c) **Flood and Storm Water Commission** -Sands thanked Deiseo for attending the last meeting on Zemble's behalf and that Sands received a couple of text messages stating that he did a great job at representing PEC.
- d) **Planning Board** -Tech-Czarny stated that the Lanwin 90 acre development was canceled from the agenda and unsure if rescheduled; The 40-42 North Tulane development project was approved and had a lot of beneficial environmental initiatives; The landscaping subcommittee will be meeting to discuss many Princeton University projects and on April 7th the Simplified Living application on 39 Linden, which is controversial, will be reviewed.

Glovier highlighted upcoming WI events items including Seth Segal's recent presentation about the quality of our drinking water including

pharmaceutical pollutants; Watershed Wednesdays -next one focuses on backyard composting and Technical Fridays -new MS4 permit will be held. WI presented micro plastics at World Water Day as we are ingesting a credit card of plastic a week.

VII. **Adjournment** -Motioned by Zenon and second by Soos.

*As a result of the unexpected death of PEC secretary, Deb Mercantini, minutes were drafted by Sands on August 10, 2022 from March 23rd video recording.