
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Lisa Fleming. The secretary read the public notice.

In attendance were: Lisa Fleming, John Casadia, Brad Giordano, John Pedersen, Christine Brown, Anthony Coffee, and Diane Amico.

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2016 meeting was made by John Pedersen and seconded by Christine Brown. All were in favor.

Chairperson's Report: Lisa reported that the Commission's budget now reflects the dollar amounts in each line item. The Liaison position is not funded yet. Lisa gave an update on the vine on Maurice River Parkway that was discussed at last meeting. It appears to be greenbriar. The laurels are still there but have fewer flowers. Lisa attended a NJ Strike Team meeting in Millville. There was discussion of the balance between invasive plants and nature which requires management.

Site Plans are not yet available for electronic review. The East & Landis plan was reviewed. Lisa did talk to Brian Myers regarding planters, and the contract is already in place. John Pedersen said there are specs for placing stone, but the location is not specified, so it can be put somewhere else rather than pave and/or place pavers right up to the trees. It is preferable to leave a 5' x 8' open tree planter. The contractor is currently storing stone and construction debris in the open tree areas. Pictures were passed around. New York City's methods were cited as an example of proper planning. Vineland previously spent \$90,000 for a tree study, but is not following the suggestions. It was discussed that the Commission could write guidelines to provide to Engineering that could be attached to bid specs.

Lisa said that City Engineering was forced to take over a subdivision on Linda Lane where a contractor fell through, and the City needs trees to complete the project. There was discussion of whether the Commission should purchase trees for a subdivision considering the City's repeated poor treatment of trees during construction. It was decided that before the Commission provides the subdivision trees, some changes should be made with the Landis Avenue construction. John Pedersen will make a list of locations and Lisa will speak again with Brian Myers. Lisa will find out how many and what kind of trees are needed for Linda Lane, and will offer these in exchange for changes to the planters currently affected by construction on Landis Avenue.

There is another application by Lucca Freezers for expansion, along the stream but not going closer to the stream. Increases in impervious cover are increasing the stormwater problem, but this is zoned Industrial so the variance, even though significant, will most likely be approved. It is the desire of this Commission to try to hold the line on impervious cover.

Lisa visited the Giampietro Park raingarden yesterday. John passed around pictures. There is nothing growing in the areas with terra-grow. Lisa planted 2 blue-flags and weeded. More logs are needed for the border. Some plants are not doing well, including some beautyberries. It is possible dogs are going into the raingarden. Tiara had put some labels on some of the plants. More mulch may be needed. There is still a need for signage designating the area as a raingarden. Lisa asked for volunteers to assist with weeding and maintenance. She will do the rest of the month, and John Pedersen will take care of August. After that, it will be asked at meetings for volunteers for future months, and maybe also for Willow Oak litter cleanup.

John Pedersen said that David was going to the Romano Park milkweed area to check for Monarch eggs, and purchasing this area would be a good addition to the park.

Regarding the footbridge at Maurice River Conservation area, the Mayor's presentation to Greg Wallace took place and the Environmental Commission received a thank you letter from the Eagle Scout.

The field has been cut at Willow Oak and the Maple Avenue parking area has been cleaned up a little bit.

Diane put pictures on Facebook for both the raingarden and Arbor Day.

The Land Trust property across from Vineland High School was turned over to the Vineland Board of Education. It is unknown what the property will be used for, but the Commission should look out for this type of opportunity to link greenways in the city.

There may be a guest at next month's meeting from the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

Tree Committee - Sue Fenili, John Casadia, David Lowenstern, John Pedersen

John has a list started with 24 stumps. He will forward it to Diane. Diane knows of a few on 2nd Street. John is also working with the VDID to plan for center city tree plantings. Lisa said the iTree software looks useful for estimating canopy.

A motion to adjourn was made by all.