

Vineland Environmental Commission
Minutes – Regular meeting
July 12, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chairperson Diane Amico. Present, in person, were: Diane Amico, Sue Fenili, Charles Valentine, and John Pedersen. Present virtually was guest Ellen Pedersen. John Casadia entered the meeting later.

The public notice was read into record.

A motion to approve the **minutes** of the June 14, 2021 meeting was made by Charles Valentine and seconded by John Pedersen. All were in favor.

There is nothing different in the **budget report** from last month. John Pedersen could use more mulch soon.

A **Stewardship Saturday** volunteer event was set up for July 31 for a center-city cleanup starting out from East Ave. & Wood St. at 9:00 a.m. Diane will send out the email announcement. A date for tree planting at Pilla was scheduled for Saturday, October 2 at 9:00 a.m.

John Casadia entered the meeting.

The trees for Pilla School have not been picked up because that is now postponed for Fall planting. Also, Public Works has given John Pedersen a list of parks where small trees can be planted. He still has many seedlings available. He noted that the Pin Oaks at his office are sick. This is the same species we have ordered from the nursery. John P. did return to Giampietro Park to water the Rotary plantings around the flagpole.

Diane received a call from Karla at Citizens United regarding the **herbicide spraying** at various areas on roadsides, especially at guardrails. It appears it is happening mostly on County roads. Someone did spray at Willow Oak and at one location across from Giampietro Park. Most sprayers are using products containing glyphosate.

John P, said Public Works wants to put a shed at **Willow Oak** with mowing equipment for us to use to cut our own grass. The perimeter road has been mowed but the grass is already tall again. There is a big fallen tree over one trail. John Pedersen and John Lauria have done a lot of work there this past year. There are almost 2 full miles of trails. There has been less vandalism lately.

Diane discussed **Sustainable Jersey's** requirements for City to earn points through the program. There are specific requirements for Site Plan reviews, Annual Report, and the Tree Maintenance Plan.

The Environmental Commission was mentioned in the **City's newsletter** that was included in the Electric Bills. There was a writeup on the tree seedling giveaway and the work we did at Giampietro.

Diane received a call from Cheryl Reardon, who said Rutgers will return to the Annex **raingarden** to inspect it. There is one weedy-looking plant that is overly aggressive which they have been removing from other raingardens. It was noted that the raingarden at the Veterans center at Landis & West has been emptied of vegetation this year.

Diane discussed **Stormwater Utilities**, as she has been getting calls from ANJEC and the League of Conservation Voters about doing a Stormwater Feasibility Study in Vineland. One challenge for creating a Stormwater Utility in Vineland is that the assessing of fees cannot be directed to only one area, but has to be across-the-board to all properties. Vineland is so large that not all areas have flooding or stormwater issues. Cheryl Reardon would like to go to City Council to promote completing a Feasibility Study to identify problem areas, and to advise of the financial benefits available after we have a Study done. For example, grant money would then be available for stormwater projects such as the aeration fountain at Giampietro Park pond, or for cleaning out storm drains. There is an upcoming webinar that Diane recommends members watch to become informed on what is a Feasibility Study and what are the benefits. Diane has asked both ANJEC and NJLCV if they have any information on how the assessing of fees could be targeted to either a specific area or to a specific class of properties. Neither of them have been able to confirm that.

National Night Out will be held August 3. Diane discussed the details of what we would need to do to participate. Members are in favor of hosting a table. John Pedersen, John Casadia, and Sue Fenili offered to set up. Diane can help with tabling after 5:00. Since we need handouts, a motion was made by John Pedersen to spend \$200 for printing smaller copies of the large Educational Boards. Sue Fenili seconded. All were in favor. Sue has some Arbor Day handouts, and Ellen will reach out to Jersey-Friendly Yards.

Diane would like to do more outreach on the **Spotted Lanternfly** pest problem. These are being seen all around South Jersey now. Proper sticky traps (that will not inadvertently kill woodpeckers) should be part of the education.

Site Plan Reviews:

The area around the proposed development in East Vineland for UMH Properties was reviewed. Members discussed zoning, lot sizes, density, location of waterways, and tree clearing. The developer is asking for substantial relief from current zoning standards in a large area of approximately 132 acres. The Master Plan has specifically preserved this area, indicating it is meant to be woodlands. The EC's comments will be combined into a memo.

Miller's Car Lot is a long narrow lot at 1462 N. Delsea Dr. The application proposes additional paving, but no landscape plan. Impervious coverage is below the requisite.

Tractor Supply only provided architectural drawings but not an actual site plan showing property lines.

There are several applications for existing non-conforming duplexes seeking zoning approval. Members expressed general concern about parking.

Remington & Vernick Engineers are working on a reconstruction of part of Landis Avenue. The drawing shows a sidewalk, but no trees. The sidewalk dead-ends at the bridge and then picks up on the other side. Since the road has no shoulder, pedestrians would have to go out onto the road to cross the stream.

A motion to adjourn was made by John Casadia and seconded by Sue Fenili. All were in favor.