

CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
February 27, 2024

The secretary called the meeting of the Chesterfield Township Environmental Commission to order at 6:30PM. The Open Public Meetings Act Statement was read and compliance noted.

Present: Suruchi Batra; Sarah Dyson; Rebecca Hughes; Ryan Rathbun; Jane Ryan.
Absent: Rachel Dekovitch and Nany Scarafile.

MINUTES

January 23, 2024

A motion was made by Ms. Hughes second by Ms. Ryan to approve the January 23, 2024 meeting minutes. All were in favor, motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

PLANNING BOARD APPLICATIONS

None

DISCUSSION

ERI

The current status is they are waiting for the comments from the Historic Society. Once its finalized then it will be sent to the Township Committee as a document to help the Planning board and also helps with Sustainable points and other grant opportunities.

Conserve Wildlife NJ Education Session

Discussion was table

Sustainable

The 1st round has been submitted and we currently have 210 points. Not all the points are guaranteed and we are hoping for 150. The second submission gives us the opportunity to go back and fix anything.

Compressor Station Task Force

The members had a meeting with the Township Committee and asked for a budget of \$29,500 for an air quality testing. Ms. Hughes stated that this would be a follow-up to the original testing that was done in 2018. Ms. Dyson stated that this would be a different type of testing then what was performed before. The Township expressed concern with the cost and the overlap of data that is already there. With that much of a cost they would have to get multiple bids, the Township tabled the discussion

Volunteer

The board was asked to keep track of all their time spent doing emails and volunteering their time. This is helpful when filling out the Tree City USA Recertification application.

ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Community Garden – For the past few years there has been talk about having one. The location plan was circulated. Ms. Dyson expressed the concern of the location and the proximity to the meadow behind the Municipal building. There are bird houses there that signs that they are being used. There was talk in the past about expanding the meadow and perhaps a walking path and by expanding there is the potential of bringing in more bird species. Ms. Batra stated that there are a lot of residents in favor of having the garden and there are benefits. Ms. Dyson stated that she has read that gardens are more successful if within walking distance. Mr. Rathbun suggested it would be better to have it within the Old York Village. The board talked a little about the water process and the cost associated.

Ms. Batra asked about the plant swap at the Green Fun Fair. Last year was last minute so hopefully by advertising earlier it will be more successful. Ms. Dyson will send the flyer from last year to Ms. Hughes and Ms. Batra.

They are looking for more vendors so Ms. Batra asked the board to spread the word about the Green Fun Fair.

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Rathbun second by Ms. Hughes to open for public comment. All were in favor, motion carried.

Ms. Roseann Greenberg, 17 Iron Bridge Road stated that the layout of the Community Garden is just a proposal right now. The members of the Community Garden would like to have a spot at the Green Fair to promote the garden. There are 44 people presently signed up and the goal is to have 70-73. There will be two sizes offered, 4x8 ft. and 12x18 ft. within a 108 x 240 foot area which includes an area for a shed. There would be a driveway through the area so people can drive up to their plots and unload items then they would go to a parking area. A full size plot is \$30 and the smaller plot is \$15. Proposed is a 3 rail 4 ft. high fence on the outside perimeter and a wire fence on the inside. They are proposing a rain water harvesting system which will be 1,000 gallons or more filtering cistern. Rutgers Water Resource gave a name of a company who will come out and measure the rain water from the roof and give an evaluation of what to use as a primary source of irrigation. There will be no overhead watering only drip watering. On average a garden needs 1 inch of water a week, a 12x18 plot would need 67 gal. a week which is 268 gal a month times 73 plots equals 19, 564 gal. The price of water per gallon .006250 is \$126.23 a month. If the filtering cistern can't be fulfilled due to a drought then they could use the Township water at the cost from fees collected. The cost to start-up the garden will come under the MS4 permit requirements, they are hoping to fund it under the DEP Stormwater Management grants, Ms. Greenberg is also looking into other grants. She said Mr. Ulshafer suggesting using the existing access lane and there would be no issue putting gravel down for parking. She talked briefly on the blue birds and how they perch to hunt and having the fence gives them that ability. Ms. Dyson feels that people in the garden would detour the birds from going in. There were 7 locations in the Village and 1 at Charlotte Rodgers Park at these locations the size of the garden is limited and visible, there is also a concern of vandalism. In the Village or the Park there would

have to be rain barrels and when they are empty Public Works would have to fill them. There are 11 people that want to be on the Community Garden team. The team will write the rules, find the grants, getting the funding and get everything set up. Sewa also would like to be a part of the community garden, they also help with gardens in other Townships keeping up with maintenance. Sewa wants to have a plot so they can donate food to local pantries. The Community Garden team are willing to join the Green Team, because the Green Team is already a Township organization which then the members would be able apply for grants. Ms. Dyson brought up how the money would be exchanged and who would control that. The EC are the members listed on the Green Team Ordinance, all other members are volunteers to run projects. Aggie will check to see what the volunteers need to do to get onto the Green Team.

Hearing nothing further, a motion was made by Ms. Hughes second by Mr. Rathbun to close public comment. All were in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion was made by Ms. Hughes second by Rathbun to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Aggie Napoleon, Secretary