

***Franklin Township Environmental Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
November 16, 2009***

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM. The Sunshine Law notice was read. The roll was called. Present were: B. Beringer, T. Chase, D. Pydeski, E. Roman, A. Schmidt, D. Triggs, and A. Vernick. J. Walker arrived at 7:33 PM. J. Clyde arrived at 8:17 PM.

The minutes of the meeting of Nov. 2 were approved.

Chair A. Vernick reported correspondence: a LOI request for L'Oréal, 100 Commerce Drive, and from the NJDOT for work on the bridge footings of the Rte. 27 bridge over the Millstone River; a letter from the Entec Group concerning solar electric installations. A. Vernick and A. Schmidt reported on the Nov. 7 clean-up of the Butler Rd trails. A. Vernick represented the township at the Nov. 10 kick-off meeting of the Sustainable Raritan initiative.

One e-mail was received at our web site, from Andrew Dinger concerning community gardens. He was invited to tonight's meeting and was in attendance with his wife Caitlin. Also in attendance were Planning Board members Harry Weber and Ceil MacIver.

Sustainable Jersey: a meeting of the Green Team has been scheduled for Dec. 15. T. Chase reported on actions sent to Sustainable Jersey (cluster and tree protection ordinances).

Environmental Stewardship awards: some delay occurred in issuing a purchase order for the awards because Harry Weber, owner of Franklin Stamp, is on the Planning Board. The awards will be presented at next week's Council meeting.

Community gardens: J. Walker has gotten one preliminary verbal estimate for materials for the fence, from National Fence: slightly over \$5000. He will seek other estimates. The north end of the garden will have to be shifted slightly to the east because of an electrical conduit to the pumphouse of the swimming pool. The Dept. of Public Works has not responded to an inquiry about digging the holes for the poles. There should be both a gate for DPW equipment, 8' wide, and a gate for users, 40" wide for wheelbarrows. J. Walker suggests providing water by a dipping tank rather than by a faucet.

Andrew Dinger reported on plans for a community garden, 75' x 75', at the Lutheran church, 1640 Amwell Rd. It would be a community garden, not restricted to members of the church. At least 15 people have already expressed interest. However, it would require 150' of water line from the church building to the garden. Application could be made for a Community Development Block Grant to pay for the water line, but not till next spring.

We could publicize this garden in the township newsletter along with the garden planned for Naaman Williams Park. Harry Weber suggested that land near the Senior/Community Center could also be used for a community garden.

The draft Water Conservation ordinance was discussed. D. Pydeski noted that the Montgomery Township drought emergency ordinance has an exception for daily watering of new lawns being established, and ours should have such an exception. Also, there is no provision for power washing of houses, decks, etc. J. Clyde noted that non-emergency restrictions needed to be supported by findings of fact that New Jersey has an actual need to conserve. C. MacIvor noted that there are moisture meters which sense soil moisture and set off sprinklers when, and only when, soil moisture is low. These could be an alternative to rain sensors. A. Vernick will transmit these comments, and those previously circulated by A. Schmidt and D. Triggs, to Tom Zilinek, for consideration in the next draft.

New business: A. Schmidt suggested that the Environmental Commission could join with the Open Space Committee and the Shade Tree Commission for a joint holiday party. J. Clyde added the Trails Committee.

Four plans were reviewed.

Suggested members for next year were discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 PM.