Environmental Commission

August 14, 2025 7:30pm – at Boro Hall and via Zoom

Minutes

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance Mr. Yarin called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm with the Open Public Meetings announcement.

Attendance

Paul Yarin-present
Krishna Rege-absent
Shelagh McCaffrey-present
Council Liaison Cho-present
Conway Wong-present

Approval of Minutes tabled

Open Meeting to Public Comments
Arati Navar, who was referred by Ms. Rege, spoke about her possible interest in joining the Commission.
Flynne Wiley spoke about spotted lantern flies. Mr. Yarin spoke about the removal of some trees of heaven. Discussion.

Executive & Treasurer's Report
There are no major changes to the core budget. The ANJEC funds have been devoted to Buzzoni Park. Mr. Yarin will be asking the Mayor and Council for funds for an ERI. The Community Energy Planning Grant for the report has been received.

The Buzzoni Garden is coming along nicely. Native grasses and plants have been moved from MacBain Farm to Buzzoni. New signage has been commissioned. Another recycled bench has been purchased. The birdhouse installation has been delayed due to pond work at the Closter Nature Center. Installation at Reuten Park may be more tricky, as it is private property.

Ms. McCaffrey reported that Flynne is now the administrator of the social media.

There are ordinances on the books that make home beekeeping problematic. Work is underway by Ms. McCaffrey and Councilman Cho to try to remedy this.

Mason Ben-Yair from Ciel Power spoke to the Commission. Mr. Yarin stated that the Commission does not recommend specific contractors and that having this speaker visit

the commission is not an endorsement of this specific company. Mr. Yarin used this company to seal his house and reduced carbon emissions by 28%. Some slides were shared. This company's main focus is performing energy audits including structure, how energy is used in the structure, and how energy is used in relation to the weather. Then specific improvements are recommended. The improvements can trigger rebates from the state, as well as subsidized financing. The speaker shared that the attic is often a problematic area. He spoke about the ways in which carbon emission can be reduced including wrapping houses and filling spaces. The company can partner with a specific municipality. Letters are sent out to residents by the company to raise awareness about this issue, and the audit price can be reduced. Mr. Yarin shared that 30% tax credits are currently available but are going away.

Plan Review and Comment
Mr. Wong discussed the land use application from 61 MacArthur Avenue. The applicants want to add a pool to the property. The current building will be knocked down and a new house built. Nine trees will be taken down, and the electricity will be overhead. The Planning Board tries to require underground wiring, but in this case the electric pole is on the opposite side of the street. No tree plan has been submitted at this time.

Liaison Reports

a. Governing Body (C. Cho) Planning Board work was discussed.
b. ~~Shade Tree Commission~~ (postponed pending new appointment)
c. ~~Planning Board~~ (postponed pending new appointment)

Adjournment Mr. Wong moved to adjourn, second Ms. McCaffrey. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marti Francis
Recording Secretary