Environmental Commission

November 15, 2023 7:30pm via Zoom Minutes

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance Chair Yarin opened the meeting at 7:34 with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Open Public meetings act announcement.

Attendance
Present: Rachel Suter, Conway Wong, Krishna Rege, Modi Feibish, Paul Yarin

Absent: Jim Oettinger, Councilman Scott Devlin

Approval of Minutes (October 12) Mr. Wong moved to approve the minutes, second Ms. Suter. All in favor. Carried.

Open Meeting to Public Comments Mr. Wong's daughter Ava shared a flyer that she made on composting. Ms. Suter asked to be able to use parts on the website. Mr. Wong will share it with the Commission. Chair Yarin asked if she would be willing to share pictures of the family's compost for the website.

Executive & Treasurer's Report Chair Yarin shared that he has visited several events (e.g., Environmental Congress, Hackensack Riverkeeper event). The New Milford EC received a $20,000 grant for an ERI. Chair Yarin hopes to work with the Demarest EC on initiatives. Trees for Schools: The proposal is to plant trees near Memorial Field. He shared a schematic. Concern for the concrete when the trees grow large was raised. Also, the question of who maintains the trees came up. The Chair shared information about a company promoting a GIS tool for the ERI. Budget slides were shared. Chair Yarin suggested increasing the communications budget to communicate more effectively with the residents. Discussion of budget items. The budget requests are due within the next couple of weeks. Discussion of passive parks: where they are, who is responsible for their maintenance, what was done in the past. A link to the map of these parks will be sent to Ms. Suter for the website. Chair Yarin moved to adopt a budget similar to what was shown on the right side of the Zoom screen at the meeting pending approval by the administrator, second Ms. Suter. Discussion. There was some concern about the process. All in favor except Ms. Rege and Mr. Feibish.

Unfinished Business

a. SustainableCloster.org website update Ms. Suter spoke about the existing domains and which should be renewed. The general feeling was that several of the domain names could be allowed to lapse. Discussion of website hosting costs. Ms. Suter will ask the assistant to the Mayor/Administrator how to be

reimbursed for the hosting costs she has already incurred. EC members cautioned that the Borough does not want to reimburse for costs already incurred. Discussion of Mail Chimp. The town has an email service as well. Jim Oettinger has connection to that. Perhaps blurbs could be put into a town email and the Mayor's newsletter.

b. Buzzoni pollinator garden update Ms. Rege shared that a fence was installed at Buzzoni Farm on October 28 by a group of volunteers. The DPW dug the trench. There remains a little gap that needs to be closed. Chair Yarin shared a warning that he had severe poison ivy afterward.

Meetings will be generally the second Thursday of the month 7:30 to 9:00. Discussion. Hybrid meetings seem a good option. Chair Yarin will look into this.

Plan Review and Comment

Liaison Reports

a. Governing Body- no report
b. Shade Tree Commission-no report
c. Planning Board A work session was held November 1. 180 Homans Ave wants to put in a second drive-through lane. One tree will be taken out and replaced by two. Provisions for an EV charger will be made. 470 Anderson put up a fence without a permit. That is now being addressed. 25 MacArthur is coming to Planning Board. Mr. Wong asked for comments; Chair Yarin will share the drawings. 10 Railroad Avenue and 42 Harvey Street are also coming to the Planning Board. The Chair will start forwarding all Planning Board plan emails.

Adjournment Mr. Wong moved to adjourn, second Ms. Rege. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Francis
Environmental Commission
Recording Secretary