

## Vernon Township Environmental Commission

Minutes: Monday, **September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Meeting was called to order by Chair Stephanie DiBrienza at 07:00 pm.

Chair Stephanie DiBrienza read the statement of compliance.

Chair Stephanie DiBrienza led the commissioners in the salute to the flag and the pledge of allegiance.

**Roll Call** was taken for attendance by Chair Stephanie DiBrienza

Stephanie DiBrienza	Present
Ann Larsen Land Use Board Liaison	Present
Barbara Jaggi	Present
Catherina Sawoszcyk	Present
Debbie Coulson Vice Chair	Absent

Catherina Sawoszcyk volunteered as the minutes recorder for tonight's meeting.

Stephanie DiBrienza presented the August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting minutes written by Catherina Sawoszcyk and emailed to members for review, comments, and edits. Barbara Jaggi motioned to accept the minutes as written, and Stephanie DiBrienza seconded the motion. **The motion carried. Minutes accepted as written.**

Barbara Jaggi handed out the ANJEC handbook to all commissioners.

### **NO PUBLIC PRESENT**

Ann Larsen reported no new applications or actions from the Land Use Board's previous meeting.

Two new Land use board files were reviewed.

- 1) 3 Baker Road, Block 366, Lot 3 A copy of a request to the NJ DEP for a permit to replace the septic located on wetlands. No concerns noted.
- 2) 7 Price Switch minor site plan Block 228 Lot 3. HPA No. 24-341. This application was discussed at the August EC meeting. The new site plan with pictures was reviewed with no new concerns from the EC.

### **Old Business**

Chair Stephanie DiBrienza updated commissioners about her discussion with the mayor re: increasing the number of commissioners. Stephanie reports that there is a town ordinance that limits the commission to 5 commissioners. Discussion ensued regarding the absenteeism of one commissioner for 6 of the 7 meetings held. Catherina noted that the commission has been working without a full board since January. Barbara Jaggi noted that the commission, the town, and the mayor would benefit from having a full board with members actively interested and experienced in the environment. Stephanie

stated she had spoken to the absent commissioner today and she expressed interest in continuing with the board and Stephanie was sure she would make October's meeting. The commissioners agreed to have the chair request appointment of an alternate commissioner available for situation as the present.

Catherina asked the newer commissioners if they were receiving the ANJEC emails, Ann Larsen said she was, and Stephanie said she would check as she has had chronic email and computer issues this year.

Catherina asked again this month why the meeting minutes and agendas were not posted on the town web page as required. Stephanie responded that she had given all the material to the town clerk today to be posted.

Stephanie reported that the mayor requested the commission schedule a presentation from the solar power company that had given the proposal to him last month. Catherina stated that this company had given a proposal at a prior meeting, and the commission agreed last month that it supported solar/alternate energy sources for the township. That the EC had no authority to make decisions as to which proposal was best. The commissioners agreed that it was up to the mayor to discuss with the town council and business manager the next steps.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Stephanie brought up there was a new sign ordinance and farm assessment information for discussion.

Ann Larsen brought forward her concern for the town testing different road repair materials being used in Storms Estate for road coverage and repair. Discussion ensued, and it was noted that the state is using this same material on Route 206. Stephanie agreed to research the name/ type of material for the commission to assess. Continued discussion is needed to determine if there are any environmental concerns.

Catherina brought up the ANJEC 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Environmental Congress scheduled for September 27<sup>th</sup> at Rowan College. Discussion about the event and workshops offered occurred. Stephanie and Barbara stated they would check their schedules to see if they were able to attend.

Catherina brought up a discussion of Torus expanding free composting service to NJ to combat food and waste and climate change. Commissioners discussed looking further into this program. Although offered in central NJ, commissioners agreed further research could bring educational and current compost practice information to be utilized in education via the township web page or for township events i.e., Earth Day. Barbara Jaggi volunteered to contact Torus.

Ann Larsen suggested voting to utilize the commission budget to hire a recording secretary and fund a commissioner to attend the 51<sup>st</sup> annual ANJEC ENVIRONMENTAL Congress on 9/27/2024. Stephanie motioned for a vote.

Stephanie DiBrienza voted yes.

Ann Larsen                      voted yes.

Barbara Jaggi                 voted yes.

Catherina Sawoszczyk      voted yes.

Motion carried.

Catherina suggested making ANJEC information a standing agenda item. Stephanie motioned for a vote.

Stephanie Vecharello voted yes.

Ann Larsen voted yes.

Barbara Jaggi voted yes.

Catherina Sawoszczyk voted yes.

Motion carried.

Stephanie motioned to adjourn.

Ann Larsen seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 0830pm