

CAPE MAY POINT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES

September 11, 2024 – 10:00 am

Start Time: 10:01 am

End Time: 11:22 am

EC Members present:

() Sandy Allison
(x) Barb Bassett, Chair
(x) Commissioner Catherine Busch
(x) Peg Fraatz

(x) Elise Geiger
(x) Isabelle Neary
(x) Paula Massanari, Vice Chair
() Emelia Oleson

The Environmental Commission of the Borough of Cape May Point was called to order by Chair Barb Bassett (BB) at 10:05 AM and the Open Public Meetings Statement was read. This meeting was held electronically via ZOOM under local operation guidance from the NJDCA pursuant to P.L. 2020, c. 11.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of EG seconded by PM, the minutes of July 10, 2024 were approved.

ON-GOING BUSINESS

Invasive Patrol: EG reported that she and PF worked at the circle this past Monday, where water continues to be an issue with the drought conditions we are experiencing. They are now ready to address areas at the lake that they hadn't reached before. Invasive plants and vines continue to come back by the Friends of Lake Lily beds along the west side of the lake. For anyone interested in joining the effort they continue to meet on Mondays around 9:15 am. EG said that the time given to the community by the volunteers is great savings to the Borough, and that she will send the total hours to BB for her records.

Commissioner's Report: KR said that Commissioner Busch was unable to attend today's meeting.

Planning Board: BB said that last month's meeting was cancelled, and there are no applications on the agenda for the September meeting for the EC to review. The agenda does, however, have a resolution listed that pertains to "eco-pavers" and whether they should be considered as pervious. There are a variety of pavers and while some may be listed as being pervious, it depends spacing between pavers and the compacted substrate below the pavers. EG agreed, and said this all relates to stormwater runoff.

PM asked if the Planning Board could review this recommendation with the Environmental Commission before presenting it to the Commissioners for consideration, or whether the Planning Board would review this with Commissioner Bush. BB said that she will propose to the Planning Board that if they pursue the idea that "eco-pavers" are pervious that they verify this with the Borough Engineer or Flood Plain Manager.

BB made a motion that the EC formally recommend to the Planning Board that they look more closely at whether "eco-pavers" are truly permeable with the assistance of the Engineer. PM second the motion, and all present agreed in the affirmative.

Mayors' Monarch Pledge: BB said the annual report is due December 1, 2024, and she will send a first draft to KR and IN.

Light Pollution: BB has not heard back from the Commissioners on the EC report on light pollution. She is supposed to make a presentation to the Planning Board on the topic, and will contact Matt Brown to schedule. PM said that as a town you can earn a certification from DarkSky International. She will look into it and email BB that information.

NEW BUSINESS

What Should I Plant? EG said she regularly gets questions on what people should plant on their properties in Cape May Point. The Borough of Avalon had created a brochure for their community on the topic, and while she isn't

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advocating that Cape May Point do something that extensive, we could consider a “slim-jim” accordion flyer that people take to a nursery or garden center with them. We could email it to the community or make a printed version to hand out. PF suggested it could be provided to the Cape May Point Taxpayer’s Association to print and give out at their annual meeting. PM said that as an EC we should not be promoting anything with printed materials and that we should just use digital formats. She also said the Environmental Commission Native and Invasive Plant List needs updated, and that she has forwarded it to CB for review. BB said that we should take the list and review it for the next meeting.

Following discussion on whether the list that the EC publishes should match the Tree Removal and Replacement Ordinance (15-2024), KR said that they are two different lists, and that the ordinance deals specifically with the approved native trees that can be used by a property owner if they remove a tree on their property. The list from the EC includes non-native/non-invasive plants, shrubs and trees. PF asked if we can just use the list from The Audubon Society, or just insert a link to their site. KR said the ordinance can’t include any links to outside organizations.

BB said we should point people to places around town where native species have been planted and are doing well. PM suggested that we schedule a nature walk around the Point as the EC did for birds this past winter and spring. PM asked if the EC could also consider doing a communication on plants around town that support monarchs. EG agreed and said Triangle Park has a great pollinator garden, and that Cape May Bird Observatory recently asked if they can plant more in the park to attract pollinators. BB said she would take the pictures, send them to KR and she will arrange the communication. It was then determined that there would be three items added to the October agenda including a discussion about trees, a future educational plant walk and a communication about nectar producing plants that support pollinators tied to the Mayors Monarch Pledge.

Upcoming Meeting Conflicts: KR will be out of the office October 9. BB will work individually with everyone to find another date that suits the group. In November, there is an additional conflict. Rather than reschedule that meeting it will be cancelled, and the EC will reconvene in December.

CORRESPONDENCE

BB said we received notice of an application from an application the DEP regarding the now vacant lot at 605 E Lake Drive. Although this lot had a house, because the house was demolished the builder must reapply to the DEP for approval to build on that particular lot because of its proximity to the lake. The full application is on file at the County Clerk’s office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

PUBLIC PORTION

On motion of PF seconded by PM, the meeting was opened to the public. Garrett Bergman of the Friends of Lake Lily said they have said out their annual request for charitable contributions and that they are on par with prior fund-raising efforts. He said the Friends of Lake Lily are upset with the appearance of the south end of the lake, and that they are exploring what can be done. He closed by saying that in listening to the discussion on the porosity of pavers he recommends that it be further researched because it is more complex than what was discussed at the meeting today.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of PM seconded by PF, the meeting was adjourned at 11:31 am.

Respectfully submitted, Kelly L. Redington, EC Secretary