

FAIR HAVEN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (“FHEC”) MEETING MINUTES

October 11, 2023 at 7:30 pm HYBRID MEETING (IN-PERSON at Borough Hall 748 River Road and Zoom)

1. Call to Order @ 7:35pm
2. Sunshine Law Notice, J. Murray
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call:
 - a. Present: Kelly Flanagan, Jessie Murray, Brian Olson, Gary Patterson, Jonathan Peters, Brian Rice, Ralph Wyndrum, Councilwoman Cole, Borough Secretary Krystie Larsen
 - b. Absent: Michal DiMiceli
5. Approval of September 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes: Approved, all in favor.
6. Current Business

A. 2024 Meeting Dates (Krystie Larsen)

B. Rice made a motion to move meetings to 7pm; the majority did not agree. The FHEC consensus is to continue meeting the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm, with an August recess.

B. Green Team (Kelly Flanagan, Michal DiMiceli)

K. Flanagan noted GT hosted Bike Walk and Roll to School Day at Sickles and Knollwood School. It was well received by parents and administrators and students enjoyed the bike accessory raffle. J. Peters asked about carbon footprint and volunteered to work on calculating Fair Haven’s carbon footprint. The Junior Green Team at Knollwood School is being run by a new advisor this year, Jen Amabile. There seems to be high attendance/interest this year thus far. Kindergarten students are gathering acorns in McCarter Park, then are transferred to Knollwood for sorting and a 7th grade planting (hosted by Mark Olson and Bonnie Torcivia). Fall sports swap/gear exchange is potentially scheduled at Knollwood to promote sustainability/reuse/recycling.

C. Deer Mitigation (Brian Rice, Gary Patterson)

Councilwoman Cole noted the topic is anticipated to be on a November Council agenda with the NJDEP presenters.

D. ERI (Jessie Murray, Michal DiMiceli)

J. Murray noted there are no new updates.

E. Living Shoreline and Pocket Parks (Brian Rice, Jessie Murray)

At the last Council meeting, Councilwoman Cole suggested having Planning professionals look at all seven spots along the 1.5 mile riverbanks to distinguish what areas would be best for passive, recreational and other use. K. Flanagan asked about the funds already set aside for DeNormandie? Councilwoman Cole said that \$78,000 is only to be used at Williams, Albert and Robards Park, or require a Council vote to reallocate. R. Wyndrum asked about the status of the bulkhead at the end of Grange Avenue? Councilwoman Cole responded that the contractor has two years to complete the job. R. Wyndrum asked Councilwoman Cole to confirm that the end of Hance Road project was left out of the bid process? Councilwoman Cole said there is a plan to apply for funds to work on that area next.

F. Navesink River (Brian Rice)

B. Rice noted there are no changes since the last report. There is still an issue with a hot spot in Red Bank. Fair Haven water quality is better. B. Olson asked if the significant rainstorms last week impacted the data? B. Rice will speak with a colleague and look into the numbers.

G. McCarter Pond (Brian Rice)

Councilwoman Cole advised she is not at liberty to speak about McCarter Pond, as it is still in Executive Session. She noted that it flooded twice in the last two weeks (three times this year). Councilwoman Cole was concerned about the bank that is the lowest point. K. Flanagan noted a rain garden was discussed for that area. J. Peters asked about the status of the inlets and outflow pipe. R. Wyndrum asked if the pipes have been cleaned out that lead to Fourth Creek. Councilwoman Cole said, by statute, the pipes should be cleaned out every year. Councilwoman Cole noted the Brush and Leaf committee is working on a solution to mitigate brush and leaves from clogging the drains by removing the "Zone system" and revamping the schedule (with DPW worker input). She suggested EC/GT may want to work on an education piece regarding vegetative waste pickup. B. Rice shared that the StormX net at the end of Fair Haven Dock is filled with leaves and will circulate a picture. Councilwoman Cole will follow up on an inlet/outflow map.

H. Environmental Roundtable (Brian Rice)

The Roundtable Meeting was September 27. The ERI was shared with all the Commissions and Boards that attended as well as Borough Engineers. There was discussion that a map of open spaces in Fair Haven would be beneficial and suggested J. Peters can help create. Constituents would like to see the Borough as a whole, then open spaces individually in order to help manage. Councilwoman Cole advised that a principal of the EC is to maintain maps. J. Peters volunteered to draft and share. There was also interest to understand Fair Haven's water story. Zoning and Planning Board reps discussed stormwater management. The consensus was to adopt stronger stormwater regulations. B. Rice will circulate the white paper from Clean Ocean Action regarding model ordinances. Councilwoman Cole noted that ANJEC offers trainings on this topic that EC may attend. All Commissions present agreed to put stormwater management as a priority on their annual reports.

7. Planning Board Update (Brian Olson)

B. Olson advised the last time he discussed sustainable best practices at the Planning Board meeting, the concern was rules that creep versus suggestions. A checklist seems administrative; B. Olson suggested narrowing down the list to prioritize and use more graphics instead of paperwork. He noted that stormwater management is discussed with applicants at Planning Board meetings. K. Flanagan asked if the new BP Gas Station has been discussed? B. Olson responded no. Councilwoman Cole said there is a lot of attention to this site. B. Olson provided an update on the Habitat for Humanity project on Hendrickson Place; the Shade Tree Commission will work on the landscaping plan, with native plants on these properties.

8. Council Update (Councilwoman Cole)

Councilwoman Cole suggested EC to add their Annual Report to the agenda. J. Murray asked members to bring their top three priorities for next year to discuss. Councilwoman Cole asked for Third Street Trail to be on the EC agenda for policy considerations. Councilwoman Cole noted a grant she is proposing that Council apply for to add review Fair Haven's downtown. J. Peters added that Fair Haven should have a great downtown. He offered to send the Project for Public Spaces report that was done for Fair Haven in 2007.

9. New Business

B. Rice asked Commission members to send their three 2024 EC top priorities to Secretary Larsen prior to the next meeting.

10. Public Comment: *The FHEC welcomes comments, suggestions, and inquiries from residents of Fair Haven. You must wait to be recognized by the Chair. IDENTIFY YOURSELF BY YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS FOR THE RECORD. Limit your comments to three (3) minutes.*

Susan O'Brien noted a correction to the motion regarding 2024 FHEC meeting dates: Wednesday meetings vs Tuesday meetings; K. Larsen to correct.

Mark Olson asked about the replacement plan for the three trees removed from McCarter Park? He spoke to a DPW worker who said the Borough is not planning to replace the trees. He asked why the Borough doesn't have the same obligation to replace removed trees as private residents? Councilwoman Cole responded this is Shade Tree Commission jurisdiction. Mr. Olson advised there are no new updates on the Third Street Trail. He is hoping to raise money to complete the projects. B. Olson asked if deer were eating the plantings in the Pollinator Garden? M. Olson said yes, nothing is deer resistant. K. Flanagan asked if J. Peters can create a tree canopy heat map to view coverage? Councilwoman Cole noted the Shade Tree Commission applied for a grant to purchase a Tree Inventory.

Bonnie Torcivia advised that she met with an expert on invasives and will share the report with EC. She asked if EC can include being stewards of the environment, including residents in their own yards, in its annual report? She doesn't think the deer have eaten many of the plants, but rather step/run over them. She appreciates EC support of Third Street Trail project.

Councilwoman Cole thanked the Commission for all their hard work.

11. Adjournment @ 9:07pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday November 8, 2023 @ 7:30pm