

FAIR HAVEN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (“FHEC”) MEETING MINUTES

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

1. Call to Order @ 7:33pm
2. Sunshine Law Notice, B. Rice
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call:
 - a. Present: Michal DiMiceli, Kelly Flanagan, Jessie Murray, Gary Patterson, Brian Rice, Ralph Wyndrum, Councilwoman Cole, Borough Secretary Krystie Larsen
 - b. Absent: Brian Olson, Jonathan Peters
5. Approval of March 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes: All in favor.
6. Current Business
 - A. Green Team (“GT”), (Kelly, Michal)

The GT is awaiting notice results of their PSEG grant application. GT is working with the Knollwood GT to restore and improve the rain gardens at the school, targeting May 19. J. Murray will forward the previous plant list for reference (a combination of Rutgers and J. Murray’s recommendations). They will also be working with Girl Scouts. Love Where You Live Day is May 7 – the lawn signs are approved to be displayed in town. They are having more vendors this year. The EC table should showcase rain gardens and stormwater management – possibly the Clean Ocean Action soak it up activity. M. DiMiceli to ask J. Peters for maps to display. K. Larsen to send Sign-up genius for staffing the table.

B. Pocket Park Plan Discussion (All)

The Commission reviewed the Pocket Park plans and provided feedback as follows:

Grange Avenue: R. Wyndrum noted the sand is soft and the bulkhead needs to be replaced as soon as possible- there should be a temporary fence put up and no trespassing signage to warn the public. M. DiMiceli thinks it is a nice spot for a rain and pollinator garden. K. Flanagan suggested a gravel switchback path down would assist with steep grade. R. Wyndrum responded that it would wash into the river and needs to be stabilized, so B. Rice suggested terracing it. B. Rice suggested having the stormwater pipe be fitted for a StormX net. J. Murray noted there are too many impervious surfaces and the manhole cover is not in a good spot. She believes that development of this area doesn’t add value – it is a pathway to nowhere. B. Rice suggested repairing the bulkhead and greenscaping it as a natural grassy knoll area for river viewing access, no pathway to the “beach” or impervious coverage on site. If a path is deemed necessary, it should be meandering and impervious. All members in agreement; G. Patterson abstained.

Hance Road: R. Wyndrum provided background that tar then concrete was used for the river access pathway at the end of Hance Road 35 years ago. It is ugly and dangerous. M. DiMiceli commented that improving this site is a priority for her in this location for walking and kayak access. B. Rice suggested site remediation and stabilization, then building a pervious natural pathway without a concrete pad, just perhaps terraced stairs and a small ramp. R. Wyndrum wasn’t sure if a ramp would work with the slope/incline. K. Flanagan believes a living shoreline with an educational component would work well in this location.

Battin Road Boat Ramp: B. Rice does not think the Boat Ramp is usable in its current state. There is only a breakwater on the east side; one must be added on the west side. J. Murray advised the ramp is too short as designed now; dredging would have to occur annually.

C. ANJEC Open Space Grant (Kelly)

K. Flanagan is working on the \$1,500 ANJEC grant application due April 17. If awarded, the funds will be used to create a rain and pollinator garden at McCarter Pond. It would be a great finish to the hydro-raking project the EC advocated for and will beautify and contribute to the natural habitat and ecosystem of the area. The grant requires 80 volunteer hours.

D. Third Street Trail Project (Brian)

An Arbor Day planting project was approved by Council to take place on Arbor Day 4/28. FHEC sent a memo to Council in support of the signage for trees in the Third Street Trail for Eagle Scout Max Ansell.

E. Deer Mitigation (Gary, Brian)

B. Rice is working on a meeting with the DEP in April or possibly the EC May 10 meeting to discuss a deer mitigation plan for Fair Haven. Councilwoman Cole asked if the plan will be customized for Fair Haven or generic best practices? G. Patterson said it would be akin to the Princeton report circulated at the last meeting. She would like a document of recommendations specific to Fair Haven to bring to Council.

F. Navesink River (Brian)

The river is clean except for a pet fecal waste issue near the Rumson Police Department that has become a hot spot, along with parts of Red Bank and Middletown. The river is loaded with fish earlier than normal this year. B. Rice is working with the County on the storm pipe issue in Rumson by the Oceanic Bridge. M. DiMiceli asked if it is safe to swim in the river? B. Rice said yes, just advised not within 24 hours of a major rain storm.

G. ERI (Jessie, Michal)

J. Murray asked the Commission to send updates. She will work with J. Peters to design maps to incorporate.

H. Living Shoreline at Park on DeNormandie (Ralph, Jessie, Brian)

FHEC sent a memo to Council with a recommendation to create a Living Shoreline at Williams, Albert and Robards Park. K. Flanagan showed a picture of a tree that has been uprooted by erosion of the shoreline that may be lost. M. DiMiceli asked if there are funds available to help with this project? J. Murray responded the State and/or Littoral Society was in a position to help fund the project years ago. K. Flanagan asked what the next steps are to move this project along? Councilwoman Cole said an environmental engineering firm would need to work on the scope of the project and bid out. \$78,000 is already earmarked for this project.

I. Rain Garden at Knights of Columbus (Gary)

G. Patterson spoke to the President of the Knights of Columbus in Fair Haven about incorporating a rain garden on their property. The organization would be in favor of creating a rain garden when the parking lot is redone, estimated to be a 2024 project. EC can provide guidance on location, types of plants and best practices. R. Wyndrum added that this location would be a good example for homeowners. G. Patterson asked if there are funding sources for the project? K. Flanagan noted it is private property. She suggested it could be part of the pollinator pathway in town.

J. Schwenkers Pond (Brian)

FHEC sent a memo to Council regarding a conditions assessment for Schwenkers Pond. M. DiMiceli asked how a conditions assessment would be paid for? Councilwoman Cole responded that there is a previous allocation of funds and will look into it. She added that the memo creates awareness with Council members and she will continue to advocate for the FHEC. M. DiMiceli asked if Rutgers comes to assess the Pond, would that classify as a conditions assessment? Councilwoman Cole said likely an Environmental Engineer would need to conduct the assessment. However, if Rutgers does come out, she suggested looking at Fourth Creek as well.

K. Waste Receptacles (Michal)

No new updates.

7. Council Update (Councilwoman Cole)

Fair Haven Road Phase 2 roadwork project beginning soon and will incorporate the Pond Area. Hydro-raking equipment was staged today. She encouraged monitoring results for a maintenance plan. B. Rice suggested taking measurements once or twice a year. He asked if the aerators will be redeployed post hydro-raking or new fountains will be required? K. Larsen will email Avakian Engineering to confirm. Councilwoman Cole suggested asking DPW to monitor and send results to the EC. B. Rice asked if the contractor could provide baseline stats. K. Flanagan said the residents around the Pond should be educated regarding leaf clean-up and fertilizer implications.

Councilwoman Cole asked about StormX collection? B. Rice responded nothing substantial. He noted that the net gets buried during high winds and wondered if it impedes performance.

8. Planning Board Update (Brian Olson)

Absent.

9. New Business

FHEC requested to add "Mapping, J. Peters" to the next agenda.

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.*

Marti Egger, Hance Road, appreciates the Commission's thoughtful comments on the pocket parks and is in agreement to keep them natural.

Bonnie Torcivia, Battin Road, echoed the sentiment to keep the pocket parks natural. She asked if it is possible to connect neighboring bulkheads at the end of Grange? B. Rice responded that you can't go further in the river without a DEP permit. He estimates bulkhead cost of \$1,200-1,300 per foot or \$300,000-400,000 total. It is more expensive at this time due to prevailing wages.

Stephanie Adams, Oxford Avenue, likes the Living Shoreline idea at the end of Hance and the ramp/stairs access for kayaks. She believes the end of Grange Ave is a nice spot for memorial benches. She asked if the Boro collects fees for stormwater/metered water use? EPA website recommended this could be a way to fund stormwater projects (average is \$11/quarter/household). Councilwoman Cole will look into it.

11. Adjournment @ 9:35pm