

FAIR HAVEN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (“FHEC”) MEETING MINUTES

May 10, 2023 at 7:30 pm HYBRID MEETING (IN-PERSON at Borough Hall 748 River Road and Zoom)

1. Call to Order @ 7:34pm
2. Sunshine Law Notice, B. Rice
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call:
 - a. Present: Michal DiMiceli, Kelly Flanagan, Gary Patterson, Jonathan Peters, Brian Rice, Councilwoman Cole, Borough Secretary Krystie Larsen
 - b. Absent: Jessie Murray, Brian Olson, Ralph Wyndrum
5. Approval of March 30, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Passed, all in favor.
6. Current Business

A. Green Team (“GT”) (Kelly, Michal)

Love Where You Live Day May 7 was a great success. There were 25 vendors, 300 attendees and offered a great sense of community. M. DiMiceli asked for LWYLD budget from FHEC – \$1,500 was spent by members on out of pocket expenses. B. Rice suggested going to local businesses for donations. GT planted a pollinator garden with Knollwood students, donated by Green Team members. Can EC/GT be added to the Community Appeal to receive donations? B. Rice will reach out to Michael Halfacre to ask. K. Flanagan submitted an ANJEC grant for a pollinator/rain garden at McCarter Pond and is waiting to hear if awarded. Six Green Team members went to the Sustainability Summit at Bell Works and will report back with key information.

B. Deer Mitigation (Gary Patterson)

B. Rice advised that he and other Boro officials will meet with Jodie Powers of NJDEP on June 14 prior to the EC meeting to walk property and make an assessment on deer mitigation. She will also attend the EC meeting to discuss.

C. Third Street Trail Project (Brian Rice)

B. Rice advised that Mark Olson dedicated a tree to Ralph Wyndrum in the Third Street Trail.

D. ERI (Jessie, Michal)

No new updates.

E. Mapping (Jon Peters)

J. Peters requested EC members to send information and he can create maps. Councilwoman Cole asked for a map to show all water sources/streams/inlets and open space surrounding Fair Haven. M. DiMiceli asked how topography is calculated in Fair Haven? J. Peters will create and send to K. Larsen to distribute to the Commission.

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

Councilwoman Cole asked for the Living Shoreline project to be listed on the Council agenda and will follow-up. She advised there is a prioritization matrix being developed by the Boro for intake projects. This should include how the shoreline parks are classified.

G. Schwenkers Pond (Brian Rice)

EC sent a memo to Council regarding the health of Schwenkers Pond to get it on their radar. Councilwoman Cole noted this is on the Engineering and DPW agenda to be discussed.

H. Rain Garden at Knights of Columbus (Gary Patterson)

No new updates, likely a 2024 project.

I. Navesink River (Brian Rice)

B. Rice said the Navesink River is very healthy based on wildlife activity. He received an email from a concerned citizen on the Colts Neck EC to collaborate on river health: the headwater of the Navesink River starts in Colts Neck where there is a high horse population. K. Flanagan asked about oysters in the river and heard harvesting may be allowed by private riverfront residences. She wondered if the oyster law could change from state-wide to town-specific mandates, solely for the purpose of cleaning the river (they can clean 50 gallons of water working and buffering to improve water quality), not for farm-raising/profit. Oyster shells at Monmouth Boat Club prompted a study by ALS, but it never materialized. B. Rice to look into laws regarding hanging them from private docks. He believes the River lends itself to oysters and would like to reintroduce oysters somehow. B. Rice believes that local municipalities do not have jurisdiction over river-life regulations and if someone got sick from eating them, it would be harmful to the industry.

J. Waste Receptacles (Michal DiMiceli)

No new updates.

7. Council Update (Councilwoman Cole)

Councilwoman Cole advised that McCarter Pond hydro-raking is not going according to plan. B. Rice observed there isn't much organic material coming out of the pond and the equipment being used is rented. Councilwoman Cole will provide more information when she is able. Council is in receipt of the Pocket Park recommendation memo from the EC. The end of Hance Road redesign/access and the small launch area (Boat Ramp) caution received by Council. Regarding the outstanding maintenance issue at Grange Ave, there are many variables. Council voted to in favor of Colliers creating bid specs/go out to bid on the Grange Ave repair. B. Rice asked the Mayor to reclassify "Boat Ramp" to a small raft launch area. J. Peters believes the Boro missed the mark on capital expenditures and this problem should have been addressed before other new projects like tennis courts. B. Rice suggested a Zane Letter be used to bypass the DEP re-permitting process. J. Peters asked if the grant money was still available for Grange? Councilwoman Cole said yes. He asked if it makes sense to do the project just to use the grant? M. DiMiceli said the original plans were done 7 years ago and asked if they are up to date with the newest stormwater management and protocols? B. Rice said the current plans go against the Environmental Commission mission given the significant amount of impervious surfaces. G. Patterson warned that the landing should be ADA compliant, perhaps that is a compromise in design criteria. M. DiMiceli said stormwater management in Fair Haven needs to be improved. J. Peters believes it is important to have public access points and safety is critical. He does not want to give up the Boat Ramp as a public access point. Council met with the Open Space contacts: Hance Road shoreline is off the table for now so Fair Haven can do it right in the future. J. Peters provided history of his time on Council: creating a walking town to access public destinations was a priority. Grange Ave is an access point/amenity for the westside of town. B. Rice agrees with having more usable public access, but EC's job is to make recommendations based on environmental conscience.

8. Planning Board Update (Brian Olson)

Absent. J. Peters suggested revisiting the Master Plan with regard to waterfront access points.

9. New Business

Councilwoman Cole asked if River Road residents should bag leaves? B. Rice said the farm in Colts Neck where leaves are collected don't want bags. He noted the state of storm drains needs improvement, is there a schedule to clean the drains? Councilwoman Cole said yes, by statute. M. DiMiceli asked if there is a way to request more clean-outs? K. Larsen to request schedule from Engineering/DPW. StormX net was full, which may have contributed to stormwater back up. J. Peters suggested leaf pick-up should be more regular on River Road, Third Street, Hance Road and Fair Haven Road.

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.

Bonnie Torcivia thanked J. Peters for the interesting history of waterfront access. She asked the EC to be very involved in the Hance Road waterfront access design, if it is too late for Grange recommendations. She suggested leaving leaves in the yard and composting instead of leaf pickup.

Susan O'Brien noted a resolution already exists for River Road residents to bag leaves. DPW rips bags and puts them in the truck. The grant for Grange/Hance/Boat Ramp was contingent upon waterfront access, which may explain the stairs in the design on Grange Ave.

Sarah Schiavetti thanked the EC for funding the Sustainability Summit fees for Green Team members. She learned about mapping resources and will forward to K. Larsen for distribution to EC. She is an advocate for greener parks.

11. Adjournment @ 9:36pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday June 14, 2023 @ 7:00pm