

City of Lambertville
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
7:00 P.M., Wednesday, March 30, 2022
Justice Center
MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to order and statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act

2. Roll Call

3. Lindsay Hansche

Andy Rdesinski

Doug Hara

Cyndy Jahn

Kate Millsaps

Kelly Kappler

Liz Magill Peer

4. Approval of Minutes

Cyndy made a motion to approve the minutes, Doug seconded it. The minutes were approved (6-0). Kate abstained as she did not attend.

5. Stormwater Utility Presentation – The Watershed Institute, Mike Pisauro, Policy Director presented on a recently enacted law that allows local governments to establish stormwater utilities.

Mike noted 1800 to 2000 stormwater utilities currently exist in US. Nationwide the median fee is around \$3-8 per month. Utilities typically give credits for improvements that reduce stormwater so land owners can reduce their fee.

The law would allow for regional utilities to be established and this is the Watershed Institute's recommended approach. The City could work with the Amwells and the Hopewells to do regional projects and have a regional assessment.

Liz asked if money from the assessment could be used to pay DPW hours for clearing existing basins before and after storms. Mike said this would be possible.

Liz asked about Grant funding for feasibility studies, but Mike noted there is nothing concrete yet. DEP has stated they may make funds available and the Infrastructure Bank could be another option. Mike did not have cost information for the feasibility study immediately available but noted he could ask Princeton what they have budgeted as they currently have RFPs out.

Lauren Kovacs, attending on behalf of Lambertville Goes Wild (LGW), noted LGW endorses the concept. They are working on pilot projects on the hills to encourage bio swales and stormwater management.

6. Old Business

a. LGW

i. Earth Month

LGW, the EC, and the City will be holding a seedling distribution on April 16th.

Lindsay noted other events include the creek clean up, a presentation on minimizing paper products in your house, and the sustainable story time, poetry session and art display at the library.

b. Sustainable Jersey

No updates

c. Green Business Certification

No updates

d. Build Your Own Rain Barrell

Liz needs to confirm dates with the watershed ambassador.

Lauren noted that Bob Heath lent his U-haul as a donation to go pick the barrels up when the EC previously held such a workshop. Lauren said she could store the barrels in her garage if necessary.

e. Planning Board

Kate noted the board is still hearing the application on the old auto parts site, the cannabis retail applications, and voted to recommend an area in need of redevelopment recommendation for the Village Apartments site. Liz noted the EC will do a site plan review and needs to request to participate in a site visit as part of the redevelopment for Village Apartments.

f. Pesticides

Liz wants to put together tips for Lambertville Matters as gardening season approaches. Liz asked Lauren to share some information LGW already has.

g. Waste Stream

Mayor Nowick requested the EC look at private food composting companies currently servicing the municipality and make recommendations on how the program can move forward.

Liz noted Cindy Ege put out an RFP for a waste hauling contract if the City offered a single drop off collection site and the City did not get any bids.

Cyndy and Doug will do some research.

h. Trex

Doug is trying to contact Flemington Kohls – they suspended their Trex program due to COVID, but if re-established would like to partner.

Lindsay noted there are Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops in Warrington PA that are currently collecting it and we can reach out to them about the current waste we have.

i. Environmental Resource Inventory

No updates.

j. Litter Clean-ups

Liz noted the EC is working to help coordinate the Creek clean up event this Saturday with 46 volunteers.

k. Climate Action Plan

No update at this point.

l. EV Charging Stations

Liz noted the City is currently working to get 2 stations that can charge 4 vehicles for the Union St lot. Liz, Lindsay, Lt Brown and Mayor Nowick met with JCPL to discuss their ability to help cover the cost of the stations. Their engineer will come out to parking lot and assess what needs to be done for chargers. Additionally, they will provide the total cost and how much they would cover.

DEP grant application is due May 13th for fast charging stations. The City is trying to determine the total cost before submitting an application.

m. Stormwater Rules

A resolution is being considered by Council to Lt. Governor Oliver urging DCA to allow municipalities to continue to pass stormwater rules stricter than DEP rules. DCA proposed rules would curtail this local autonomy.

n. State Plastic Ban

Kelly noted the Chamber is already sharing guidance with businesses for when the ban goes into effect May 4th.

Kelly will share info with deputy clerk to include in Lambertville Matters and City Facebook page.

o. Dog Waste Stations

Liz spoke to Mary Anne Borge, Chair of the Parks and Rec Commission, on this issue. They had considered dog waste stations in the past, but did not move forward as most locations would be near existing trash, would be more work for DPW and added expense for bags.

Liz recommended an educational campaign to include info in Lambertville Matters and Facebook pages.

7. New Business

a. ANJEC Grant

Liz noted there is a \$1500 grant for stewardship projects available, due May 1st. Doug recommended Music Mountain trails for repairs following Hurricane Ida. There is a bridge currently out. Mayor Nowick noted they are working to get a federal \$2.1 million grant for major improvements to the areas.

Mayor suggested native plantings in Wells Fargo lot. Liz noted the Union St lot also needs plantings. The EC will pursue a grant to install native plants in both those lots.

b. EV Ordinance

Council is currently reviewing the State mandated EV ordinance. Mayor will share for review.

c. Union St Parking Lot Spruce Up

Liz noted the EC has previously discussed cleaning the area up. The brick containers and patio are degraded and need to be fixed. Repairs and plantings will be part of the ANJEC grant proposal for the CBD projects.

Lauren noted Mary Anne can provide cost estimates for native plants. Lauren will also help to put together what plants should go there for the grant proposals.

d. Closson Property Grant Support Letter

The City is submitting a grant application to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for \$400,000 to do stormwater projects, passive recreation, creek stabilization, and install wildflower meadows.

Cyndy made a motion for the EC to support the grant application letter of endorsement, Kelly seconded. The motion passed (7-0).

8. Public Comments

None

9. Announcements

None

10. Adjournment

Cyndy made a motion to adjourn, Andy seconded. The motion passed (7-0).