



# LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP

## ENVIRONMENTAL & GREEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Lawrence Twp., NJ

CLEAN AIR, LAND, AND WATER

### MINUTES

September 24, 2019

**Roll Calling:** Teresita Bastides-Heron, Pam Mount, Ed Frankel, Dana Iribacher, Noemi de la Puente.

Absent with excuse: Tahirih Smith

Absent without excuse: Honorable Christopher Bobbitt, Township Mayor and Council Liaison, Donald Little and Emily Eckart

**Call to Order:** Teresita Bastides-Heron, Vice-Chair call the meeting to order at 7:35pm

**Minutes:** Approved June 25m 2019 minutes. Pam moved to accept as is, Ed seconded it

**Comments from the Public:** none

**Site Plan Review:** Ed noted that he had two sets of plans but that he was still in the process of reviewing them and did not yet have any comments to share. One plan involves a single-family home with a dry well situation and the other involves a new athletic complex at Lawrenceville School.

**Guest Speaker:** Michael Pisauro, Policy Director from the Watershed Institute gave a presentation about storm water issues. He noted that unabated stormwater water runoff from older properties throughout the state in the 70s, 80s and 90s contributed in large part to the vast and increased flooding and polluted waters we face today. Furthermore, a recent State report on stream quality finds that while our worst water quality issues appear to be improving, our best water quality issues are degrading.

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Michael said unsuccessful efforts were made to have private residential developers fund stormwater problems, so the newest solution is setting up public or quasi-public stormwater utilities that would fund improvement projects with fees charged to property owners. In March 2019, Gov. Murphy signed the Clean Stormwater Flood Reduction Act that authorized the creation of such entities to help address stream and stormwater-related problems. While individual municipalities can create these utilities, flooding and stream quality issues often, if not always, affect multiple areas and are not conveniently confined to municipal boundaries. Thus, more emphasis is being placed on encouraging regional governmental entities, such as counties, or encouraging shared service agreements between towns and cities to set up such utilities.

Michael added that the NJ DEP is currently putting together a stakeholder group to come up with more detailed stormwater rules to prod more action around the state on this subject.

**NJ Clean Energy Program:** Pam reported on the NJ Direct Install information session that took place for small businesses at the Mercer County Boathouse. Unfortunately, she noted, almost no businesses were in attendance. Everyone agreed that ultimately returning to door-to-door marketing of the program may be the only way to really get the word out about it.

**Stop Food Waste Program:** There was no news on this topic, but Pam noted that a biodigester is being developed in Princeton; we'll see, she added, what kind of partial solution it can genuinely be once it's ready for action.

**Single-use Plastic Bags:** Noemi reported that West Windsor is close to passing an ordinance banning plastic bags and that it will be an excellent opportunity to see how the business community responds, including the town's farmers market. Over 85 such ordinances have passed in municipalities around the state, she said. Teresita noted that Paramus with its huge mall also passed such an ordinance.

**Other Business:** Pam said that Lawrence can announce in November that it has again attained a Silver Certification with Sustainable NJ and that we ought to celebrate this with the town council and in a Green Drinks event.

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-Noemi noted that Trenton Mercer Airport is expanding but she feels there is already too much overhead flight noise and its disturbing area birding sites. She wanted the group to organize opposition to the expansion in conjunction with birding organizations, but our group declined that kind of involvement. Instead, it was

suggested she check with absent members to see if anyone was individually interested in joining her in her cause.

-Pam said Kathleen Fatton would like to join our group. Everyone agreed that would be nice and for Ms. Fatton to apply with the township per requirements.

-A handout on the upcoming ANJEC conference was distributed to members. It takes place October 4, from 9am - 4pm, in West Windsor.

-Other flyers distributed to members at this meeting included one on a Breast Cancer Awareness fundraiser taking place during the month of October at Fedelo's Italian Family Restaurant. Another flyer marketed the upcoming Ralph Copleman Neighborhood Bike Ride taking place on October 6 at 10:30am in the Lawrence Intermediate School Parking Lot. This ride is one of the many activities scheduled as part of the Lawrence Community Day celebration.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully,

Teresita Bastides-Heron, Vice Chair

**Approved by: October 22, 2019**