

AGENDA FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HIGHTSTOWN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Tuesday May 24, 2022 at 7 PM

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 995 6994 0569

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+19294362866,,99569940569# US (New York)

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1. Approval of Agenda
2. Open Public Meeting Act Statement: In Compliance with Chapter 213 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of the Annual Notice published in the Trenton Times and Princeton Packet by the Borough Clerk and posted on the Borough Website.
3. Attendance
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from regular meeting on March 22, 2022
5. Shade Tree Matters: Shade Tree Official's Report attached.
6. New Business:
 - a. Update on Hightstown Environmental Youth Leadership Internship:
 - i. Nine participants are enrolled in the program and successfully completed the nine week program.
 - ii. The program will culminate on Wednesday at 6:30 pm at the Peddie school with the students presenting posters on their work. This event is open to the public but participants must preregister. Information is posted on the Borough Facebook page.
 - iii. Thank you to the EC members, Julie Bond and David Zaiser, for assisting with leading various sessions.
 - iv. Thank you to The Watershed Institute, RISE, and The Peddie School for co-sponsoring the program and providing leadership, facilities, food for the participants, and funding for non-Hightstown students.

- b. Resolution on stormwater management for residential developments.
 - i. Follow-up actions needed.
 - c. Complete Streets Committee – Mobility Plan Implementation (recurring item on agenda)
 - d. Sustainable Jersey
 - i. Application submitted for 290 points which qualifies for bronze certification.
 - ii. While the application has been submitted, much documentation needs to be compiled and uploaded in order for application to be approved.
7. Parks and Recreation:
8. Planning Board Update:
9. Grants and Funding Update:
10. Plan Review: Review of the Freshwater Wetlands General Permit 10B and Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit provided by Churchill Consulting Engineers dated April 20, 2022 for the replacement of Mercer County Bridge 863.4. Review performed by Todd Frantz, Chair, Hightstown Environmental Commission.
- a. The Hydraulic and Hydraulic Design Report prepared by SWM Consulting, dated December 3, 2021, concluded the proposed replacement bridge will not adversely decrease upstream storage volumes or increase upstream or downstream water surface elevations.
 - i. The replacement bridge will be very similar to the existing bridge with the only significant change being the length of the abutment. The new abutment will be longer to accommodate the new, wider bridge.
 - ii. The Environmental Commission concurs with this finding.
 - b. Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit Environmental Report prepared by Churchill dated April 20, 2022.
 - i. Anticipated disturbance of less than 0.25 acres of transition area and permanent disturbances not anticipated to exceed 0.1 acres
 - ii. New impervious surface of less than 0.25 acres. Two new stormwater inlets will be added which will discharge to an outfall into Peddie Lake, current stormwater in this area flows overland toward Peddie Lake.
 - iii. Only one tree is scheduled for removal to allow for an ADA compliant walkway; however, other trees may be removed if necessary once construction starts.
 - iv. Although work will take place within a transition zone, work will be complete in winter which will minimize impacts on wildlife. Construction in the winter will also reduce impacts to recreational uses of the lake during construction.
 - v. The proposed bridge replacement complies with applicable regulations and requirements. The bridge replacement is necessary as the current bridge is obsolete and closed due to safety concerns. Attempts have been made to minimize the impact on the environment during bridge replacement.

11. Liaison updates:

- a. The Watershed Institute –
- b. Meadow Lakes –
- c. Peddie School -
- d. Hightstown High School –

12. Correspondence:

- a. Received an inquiry from a resident asking if it was possible to have Peddie Lake stocked with fish as the fishing has declined in recent years. Reached out to NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife. NJDEP will perform a fish population assessment on Peddie Lake in 2022 to evaluate the fish species and populations in Peddie Lake and determine if a stocking program is needed and for what species.
- b. Received an email from George Chin inquiring about the Greenway along Cranbury St. Road. George received a complaint from a resident regarding a fence that is in poor condition and collapsing into the Greenway. Our understanding is that the Greenway is a public right-of-way owned by the Borough and the responsibility of the Borough to maintain; however, the Borough did not install any fences and the fence is the responsibility of the private owner to maintain.

13. Conferences and Workshops:

14. Calendar:

- a. Hightstown Youth Leadership Program Final Presentations on Wednesday May 25, 2022 at 6:30 PM at The Peddie School.
- b. The Hightstown Harvest Fair will be held again in 2022. The EC has traditionally had an information table and volunteers at the event along with operating the paddle boat rentals. More information to follow.

15. Adjournment

Borough of Hightstown Environmental Commission

Shade Tree Official's Report

To: Environmental Commission
From: David Zaiser, Shade Tree Official
Date: 24 May 2022 Meeting
Re: Shade Tree Official's (STO) Report – New items in **boldface**

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1.0 Tree Work

- 1.1 Tree removal at Mercer and Rogers was not authorized and is under investigation. Still attempting to determine how these removals were authorized.
- 1.2 Two large oak street trees located on the east side of Park Way near the intersection with Stockton had been reviewed by the STO and recommended for pruning. DPW is recommending removal, but the STO maintains that removal is not warranted at this time. Review on hold until after trees leaf out.
- 1.3 **Issued memo highlighting problems with recently completed tree planting that was part of Taylor Ave Improvement project. Roberts Engineering following up.**

2.0 NJ DEP (Forestry) Grant Project

- 2.1 Scope of Work: Plant 43 street trees along North and South Main Streets. Targeting Mid-May 2021 for planting.
- 2.2 North and South Main Streets re-surveyed for existing tree conditions in July 2020.
- 2.3 Grant Executed by Borough/ State on 11/2/2020.
- 2.4 Letter of Support received from Mercer County DOT dated 10/15/2020.
- 2.5 Approval of Tree Species Schedule by Mercer County DOT on 12/3/2020.
- 2.6 Planting Plan submitted to NJ DEP for review on 12/4/2020. State responded on 12/14 that their review is ongoing.
- 2.7 State has returned comments and STO has responded with additional questions (1/26/21).
- 2.8 State has addressed STO questions (2/10/2021). Final submission w/ minor edits due to State. Final Submission approved by the State. (2/27/21)
- 2.9 Bid Documents reviewed by Borough Clerk (3/15/21). Project is out to Bid. Targeting planting between April 15th and May 31st.
- 2.10 Two proposals received. Low price proposal from Brightview. Proposal reviewed with Brightview to confirm scope. Plant letters hand delivered to residents at potential tree locations. P.O. being processed by Borough. P.O. issued.
- 2.11 Utilities marked and tree locations determined.
- 2.12 Tree Planting Begins Monday 5/25. Yan Troizier and Adam Zaiser observing for EC. Tree work completed Thursday 6/17 with some replacements for early losses. Gator bags installed and DPW is filling frequently. Trees are guaranteed for 2 years.

- 2.13 Submission to State for Grant Reimbursement Underway.
- 2.14 State has approved the virtual inspection and 90% Grant Reimbursement paperwork is underway.
- 2.15 STO has submitted paperwork with volunteer hours to Borough of inclusion in the 90% Grant Reimbursement submission. Awaiting Borough reporting.
- 2.16 STO has asked DPW to remove and store gator bags. Gator bags have been removed.
- 2.17 Annual Progress Report submitted for State Grant. Annual Report approved by the State.
- 2.18 **Will issue report to the contractor identifying trees that are to be replaced because they do not meet the contract requirements for livelihood (in essence they are dead trees).**

3.0 Lincoln/ Hagemount/ Rocky Brook Streetscape Project

- 3.1 Investigating participation in the 11-month walk through with respect to new street trees.

4.0 Improvements to Railroad Ave, Dey St, Center St, and S Academy St Project

- 4.1 STO has been asked to identify locations for new street trees to be included in the project. Area surveyed and new trees (up to 20) are being documented.

5.0 Community Forestry Management Plan

- 5.1 STO submitted CFMP Annual Progress Report to the State.
- 5.2 STO submitted re-certification to Tree City USA
- 5.3 Submitted request to Council for Arbor Day 2022 Resolution (April 23). On agenda for 3/21/22 Council Meeting. **Council passed resolution.**
- 5.4 **STO led Tree Workshop for EC interns on 5/7/22. Poor weather required that the workshop be held indoors. Covered topics of tree resource management and tree maintenance (PowerPoint available).**

End of Report