

Vineland Environmental Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
December 12, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chairperson Lisa Fleming. The public notice was read by Diane Amico.

In attendance were Lisa Fleming, John Casadia, Sue Fenili, David Lowenstern, Anthony Coffee, Christine Brown, and City Liaison Diane Amico.

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2016 meeting was made by Sue Fenili and seconded by David Lowenstern. All were in favor.

**Chairperson's Report:** Lisa attended two NJ Native Plant Society meetings, one in Millville and one at Stockton. The Barnegat Bay Partnership has a Jersey-Friendly Yards website ([jerseyyards.org](http://jerseyyards.org)) with a lot of helpful information as well as cards for handout. The possibility of setting up a table in the lobby of City Hall was discussed. Lisa is trying to find out if we can get some of the cards. There are a lot of already-existing handouts that could be used, so the Commission would not have to create its own pamphlets. Some handouts were passed around and this topic can be discussed at the next meeting.

Lisa said S227 State Senate bill has passed requiring the Turnpike Authority and other State Agencies to use native plants whenever they are doing projects.

Diane passed out the proposed **2017 meeting schedule**. A motion to approve the schedule was made by David Lowenstern and seconded by John Casadia. All were in favor. Diane will verify that November 13, 2017 is not a holiday before posting the notice.

**New Mayor and Council:** No one has spoken to the new Mayor yet. Diane will try to meet with him to give a summary of the Commission's activities after he is in office and gets settled. If someone sees him in passing, they can invite him to a meeting.

**Sustainable Jersey:** Diane said the City has a target date of June for submitting for Certification. One action coming up is a proposed change to the City's Water Conservation ordinance. Our current ordinance only places restrictions on water during an officially declared drought. The new ordinance would require conservation measures at all times, along with a less frequent lawn watering schedule than the current every-other day model. This is an important priority action in the Sustainable Jersey Program.

**Native Plant Brochures:** Brochures for handout were passed around. All were in agreement that we should try to get some copies of already-existing handouts. Different handouts and their sources were discussed. Sue and Lisa will make some contact to see if we can get some printed literature for handout.

**Engineering Meeting regarding signalization.** John Pedersen had forwarded information regarding an upcoming meeting. Lisa looked into the purpose of the meeting, and it will likely not involve anything environmental, but rather has more to do with the traffic light signals.

**Green Infrastructure Guide:** Lisa had picked up a copy of this guide, and it appears that it might be useful for Engineering to reference during projects or for the Commission to purchase for our or Engineering's use. Lisa will talk to Engineering to see if they might use it, then we may consider purchasing some copies.

**Volunteers:** Sue tried to contact the Mormon volunteers but has not received a response. The Commission would like to recognize them in some way, possibly getting the Mayor involved.

**Newspaper Articles:** David presented a draft of an article regarding the importance of trees. The content of the letter was discussed. It was discussed that it is important in the articles not to focus on the negative aspects of trees. There were no objections to David's letter and he will send it to the newspaper.

**Giampietro Park plantings:** Possible locations to plant milkweed were discussed, such as at the circle. Lisa asked if anyone knows where swamp milkweed seeds can be purchased or obtained. It is too late to plant it this year.

**Burnt Mill Pond:** There was another meeting that Lisa attended, and Dale Elbeuf was in attendance. Three different parks were discussed as possibilities for improvements, including trails around **Giampietro Park** lake. Lisa said she has concerns about cutting down vegetation around the lake. Diane said there may be an approved subdivision on the next property south of the pond at Giampietro. Also at the Engineering meeting, there was discussion of putting a picnic area at Burnt Mill Pond, and a short trail that goes over the bridge along the side of the pond. Members were in favor of this.

**Maurice River Conservation Area:** Lisa said that John Pedersen, David Lowenstern, and Scott Fenili put up the No Hunting signs and she extended thanks to them.

**Willow Oak controlled burn:** Diane has filed the application and this project is on-track for this winter. When we are ready, John Casadia will take care of the birdhouses. The bluebird houses are still being used. He needs to know in advance when the burn will be.

**Trees on School properties:** John Casadia spoke to Wayne Weaver, and we can put the tree bark guards on the trees on school properties. If John Pedersen can let John know in advance, he will call Wayne in advance to let him know someone is coming, to avoid any confusion with security at the schools.

**Budget/Year end spending:** Diane did the requisition for the items discussed at the last meeting, the augur, lopers, and tree bark coils. All requisitions must be entered for the end of the year. Diane also processed the annual ANJEC membership encumbered the money for Arbor Day trees. A motion was made by John Casadia and seconded by Sue Fenili to approve these two expenditures. All were in favor. Regarding the balance of budget money, a motion was made by John Casadia to spend \$300 on mulch and/or tree guards for tree maintenance, and up to \$136 on various literature. If literature cannot be secured in time for the end of the budget year, the \$136 can be shifted to additional tree supplies for John Pedersen's use. The motion was seconded by David Lowenstern. All were in favor. Members discussed the possibility of setting up a booth and display in the City Hall lobby. If a display was purchased, there could be storage issues when it is not being used. Various literature samples were reviewed. There was some concern that Vineland residents may not think the Barnegat Bay literature applies to Vineland.

**Site Plan Reviews:**

B.D.G.S. development application is showing clearing of woods, but it is in an industrial area and is allowable.

**New Business:** Lisa asked members about purchasing binders to put together ordinances and other printed materials that would be useful in reviewing projects or site plans. Members would like to see links online to those ordinances but did not want binders. Lisa will forward links to the ordinances.

**Community Forestry Management Plan:** Lisa said the website is not showing our active Management Plan. Diane will look into this. There were several continuing education credits earned this year, so this aspect was fulfilled.

A motion to **adjourn** was made by Sue Fenili and seconded by David Lowenstern. All were in favor.